

Exotic Pet and Bird Clinic
903 Fifth Avenue, Suite 101
Kirkland, Washington 98033-6316
(425) 827-6613
FAX (425) 828-4240
ZooDoc@EXOPET.COM
Thursday, December 04, 2003

8912 '03 DEC 10 49:32

Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

Re: Control of Communicable diseases: Restrictions on African Rodents, Prairie Dogs, and Certain Other Animals Federal Register: November 4, 2003 (Volume 68, Number 213) and OMB control number 0910-0519 (for 21 CFR 1240.63) and OMB control number 0920-0615 (for 42 CFR 71.56)

As a private practice veterinarian and retired US Army Veterinary Officer I would like to pose a few questions and make a suggestion or two.

What other pet rodent and lagomorph species have been tested for vulnerability to Monkey Pox Virus? What steps have been taken to isolate those domestic pet species from imported African Rodents while in transport, holding, display etc. in the pet trade? Why not prohibit the keeping of Prairie Dogs (or anything else for that matter) in the same facility as African Rodents?

My clinic did \$7,560.40 in business with Privately owned pet Prairie Dogs alone in the year 2002. There are half a dozen clinics like mine in the local area, perhaps a thousand clinics in the US who handle Prairie Dogs. The impact might be \$7,560,000. Please plug veterinary medical activities into your fiscal impact section(s).

Speaking of Fiscal, I have a hard time believing the figure of \$38,000 as representing the "total worth of live African animals . . . imported into The United States"

Prairie Dog owners are generally a harmless and law abiding lot, but emotional when it comes to their beloved pets. Without a legal and practical means of sharing these creatures with their peers, they will still share. Ask the State of California about pet ferrets under their prohibition during a decade or two.

If they cannot obtain veterinary care for their pets, what about the USDA Animal Welfare Act and any references there to Humane care and treatment?

How about a practical system or policy for pet prairie dog owners based on health certificates and/or quarantine until the "Sunset" clause kicks in? By the way, I personally would not "Sunset" African Rodents.

Sincerely,



W. B. Nelson, D.V.M.

Cc: Govt. Relations Office, Attn: Dr. Mark Lutshaunig, American Veterinary Medical Association, 1101 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20005-3521 800-321-1473/202-789-0007/FAX 202-842-4360 /mlutschaunig@AVMA.org

Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20503, 202-395-3080, FAX 202-395-3888
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/contact.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1600 Clifton Rd., Atlanta, GA 30333 U.S.A (404) 639-3311 www.cdc.gov

2003N-0400

C 27