

USDA To Launch First National Goat Study

In July and August 2009, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will contact randomly selected goat producers in 21 states to participate in the first national study of priority health and health-management issues facing the U.S. goat industry.

Two USDA agencies—the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)—will conduct the study, which will focus on the health, productivity and management practices of the meat, dairy and fiber goat industries. USDA will collect data from producers representing 78.4 percent of U.S. goat operations and 85.3 percent of U.S. goats.

APHIS' National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS), which designed the study and will analyze the data, worked with industry representatives, academia, veterinary representatives and other stakeholders to ensure that the study addresses the industry's priority health issues. The Goat 2009 study has the following major objectives:

- Determine producer awareness of veterinary services program diseases and describe management and biosecurity practices important for the control of infectious diseases—including brucellosis, scrapie, caprine arthritis encephalitis (CAE), Johne's disease and caseous lymphadenitis.
- Establish a baseline description of animal health, nutrition and management practices in the U.S. goat industry.
- Estimate the prevalence of *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (Johne's disease) infection, internal parasitism and anthelmintic resistance.
- Characterize contagious ecthyma (sore mouth) in U.S. goats. Determine producer awareness of the zoonotic potential and practices to prevent sore mouth transmission, and assess producer interest in an improved vaccine for sore mouth.
- Examine factors (e.g., genetic and management) that correlate with CAE virus levels.
- Provide genetic and serological banks for future research.

Participation in USDA's Goat 2009 study is voluntary and confidential. Results will be presented on regional and national bases; data provided by individual participants will remain confidential and cannot be identified. Links between NAHMS data and participating operations are confidential.

Note to Stakeholders: Stakeholder announcements and other APHIS information are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS home page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov> and click on the "Newsroom" button. For additional information on this topic, contact Lyndsay Griffin at (970) 494-7410 or e-mail: Lyndsay.m.Griffin@aphis.usda.gov.

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