

Participate in USDA's Feedlot 2011 Study

In August 2011, the USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS), in collaboration with the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), will begin the Feedlot 2011 study. This national study will take an in-depth look at beef feedlots in the United States and provide the industry with an update of critical information last collected 12 years ago during the NAHMS Feedlot '99 study.*

Study focus

NAHMS worked with an array of stakeholders to define the most critical information gaps to be addressed in the upcoming study. Five study objectives were identified:

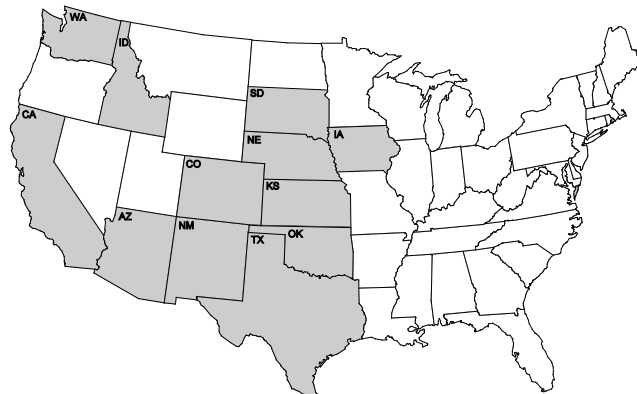
1. Describe changes in management practices and animal health in feedlots.
2. Describe the management practices in feedlots that impact product quality.
3. Identify factors associated with shedding of potential foodborne pathogens or commensal organisms by feedlot cattle.
4. Describe antimicrobial usage in feedlots.
5. Describe biosecurity practices and capabilities in feedlots.

What participation involves (large feedlots)

Participants on feedlots with a capacity of 1,000 or more head in 12 States (figure 1) will be asked to provide important health and management information to characterize the feedlot industry. Biological samples (e.g., feces) will be collected for analysis on a subset of feedlots. Data collection will begin August 2011.

- Representatives from NASS will visit large feedlots to complete a questionnaire.
- Beginning in October 2011, large feedlots will be contacted by APHIS personnel for a followup interview and biological sample collection.

Figure 1. Large Feedlot* Study States



*Feedlots with a capacity of 1,000 or more head.

What participation involves (small feedlots)

Participants on feedlots with a capacity of less than 1,000 head in 13 States (figure 2) will also be asked to provide health and management information about their feedlot. Data collection will begin August 2011, and participants will be contacted by telephone to complete a questionnaire.

Figure 2. Small Feedlot* Study States



*Feedlots with a capacity of less than 1,000 head.

*Feedlot '99 reports are available at: <http://nahms.aphis.usda.gov>

Who benefits from the Feedlot 2011 study

Participants in Feedlot 2011 will receive:

- In-depth reports and information sheets that will enable them to compare their operations—including management decisions and practices—with other feedlots.

The cattle industry will receive:

- Information on contemporary management practices to assess the success of producer education efforts and the need for additional education efforts.

Policy makers will receive:

- Information on the health and management of feedlot cattle that can be used to develop appropriate policies and augment the decision-making process.

Researchers and allied industry will receive:

- Information on current challenges and issues facing the industry, which will help identify new or updated solutions.

The general public will receive:

- Information that accurately portrays cattle feedlots as part of the U.S. beef production system and enhances their understanding of animal agriculture.

A scientific approach

NAHMS collects and reports accurate and useful information on animal health and management in the United States. Since 1990, NAHMS has developed national estimates on disease prevalence and other factors related to the health of U.S. beef cattle, sheep, goat, dairy cattle, swine, equine, poultry, and catfish populations. The science-based results produced by NAHMS have proven to be of considerable value to the U.S. livestock, poultry, and aquaculture industries.

NAHMS studies are

- National in scope,
- Voluntary and confidential,
- Statistically valid,
- Scientific, and
- Collaborative.

Confidentiality

Because NAHMS studies rely on voluntary participation, the privacy of every participant is protected. Only those collecting the data know the identity of the respondent. No name or contact information will be associated with individual data, and no data will be reported in a way that could reveal the identity of a participant.

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Photo courtesy The Beef Checkoff Program