



Quality Watch

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Biosecurity STOP Sign Campaign: Stopping Disease at the Farm Gate

In early April, Michigan State University Extension began a project to demonstrate farm gate biosecurity protocols and determine why it's been difficult for both dairy and beef producers to adopt and implement farm gate biosecurity practices. The project is being funded jointly by United States Department of Agriculture, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Michigan State University Animal Industry Coalition. The project is also intended to create awareness of the importance of biosecurity as well as determine producer concerns and attitudes in adopting biosecurity practices. The demonstration project will involve 100-200 dairy farms and 50-100 beef producers who will be asked to participate. Some of you will have already received a letter requesting your participation and providing you with information and details about the project. MMPA's Member Representatives and MSU Extension agents will be working with producers to assist them in the project.

Although this project will take some of your time, I encourage all

members who have been requested to participate in the project to do so. Our ultimate goal is to enhance farm gate biosecurity to reduce the risk of common diseases entering your farm and to be prepared to immediately address any foreign animal disease outbreak (such as foot and mouth disease) and effectively limit the spread. Limiting the spread of infectious diseases is critical to the economical well being of the industry. The information gathered in this project will help MSU and Michigan's agriculture industry to effectively implement biosecurity protocols on farms.

In addition to the biosecurity STOP sign project, we have been involved in developing emergency protocols for marketing milk in the event of an outbreak of a foreign animal disease. These protocols are being formulated in conjunction with MDA, Indiana State Board of Animal Health, MSU, USDA and industry leaders. We have already completed an avian influenza marketing plan and are cooperatively working toward a foot and mouth disease plan.

After witnessing what happened with the FMD outbreak in Great Britain, we all know it is critical to have a plan in place in the event of such an outbreak. The key to limiting the cost and severity of an outbreak lies in the ability to detect and limit the spread of the disease as quickly as possible. Producer education and implementation of biosecurity protocols are critical in limiting and controlling such an outbreak as well as reducing daily risk from other diseases.

To assist farmers' preparedness, MMPA carries a line of biosecurity items at our merchandise warehouse. Contact your MMPA Member Representative or the St. Louis warehouse at 877-367-6455 for a complete list of products and prices.