

Hog Cholera Committee Calls For Identification Of Swine

Identification of all swine being shipped across state lines was strongly recommended last week by a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) advisory committee to help rid the nation of hog cholera.

Hog cholera is a highly infectious viral disease that is usually fatal to swine, but does not affect other animals or humans. The national hog cholera eradication program, initiated in late 1962, is coordinated by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

Convening in Kansas City, Mo., in conjunction with the annual meeting of Livestock Conservation, Inc. (LCI), the 12-member USDA Hog Cholera Eradication Advisory Committee stressed the need for identification to facilitate rapid tracing of infected animals back to their herds of origin.

State or federal regulations currently require that most feeder and breeder swine be individually identified by ear tag, ear notch, tattoo or other marking if they are to be shipped across state lines. However, hogs marketed for slaughter are not covered by such regulations.

The advisory committee also recommended that states be encouraged to halt the feeding of garbage to swine, after allowing a reasonable time for garbage feeders to convert to another feed source. The committee heard a report on a process, developed in Georgia, that converts garbage into a safe, nutritious feed supplement for poultry or livestock.

During 1972, over 18 percent of the hog cholera cases were caused by feeding improperly

cooked garbage to swine, USDA officials said. Hogs can contact the disease by eating pork scraps or bones with traces of hog cholera virus in it.

Nine states--Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Dakota, Virginia and Wisconsin--now prohibit feeding any garbage or food wastes to swine. All other states require by law that garbage must be cooked if it is to be fed to swine. The committee acknowledged, however, that these laws requiring cooking of garbage have been very difficult to enforce.

Taking note of the most recent hog cholera outbreak, the committee also recommended that surveillance for hog cholera be greatly intensified along the entire U. S. Mexico border, through cooperative efforts of state and federal inspection agencies. This outbreak was diagnosed May 2 in a herd of four swine near Progresso, Tex., less than one-half mile from the border with Mexico. Two Texas counties, Hidalgo and Cameron, remain under federal quarantine for hog cholera while a task force of state and federal veterinarians checks all herds in the area.

The Progresso case has been the only infection found in the United States in over 100 days. Two other cases in Puerto Rico were found in late March.

Hog Cholera eradication has been handled on an emergency basis since October 1972 when widespread outbreaks threatened eradication progress in the Southeast and Midwest. Forty-four states are currently classified as "hog cholera free."

The LCI, host organization for

the Kansas City meeting, is a national organization representing the livestock industry, including swine producers and market operators.

Chairman of the advisory committee is Dr. Francis J. Mulhern, Administrator of APHIS. Other committee members attending the meetings in Kansas City were: Dr. Dewey Bond, Washington, D. C.; Dr. Dale L. Brinkmeyer, New London, Iowa; Jasper DeVore, Arkansas City, Kan.; Dr. Paul Doby, Springfield, Ill; Earl W. McMunn, Columbus, Ohio; Dr. John W. Montgomery, Poteau, Okla.; Keith Myers, Grundy Center, Iowa; Donald Kruger, Olympia, Wash.; Mrs. Dorothy Collins, Clarion, Iowa; Dr. Howard Dunne, State Univ., Pa.; Alfred W. Keating, Park Ridge, Ill.

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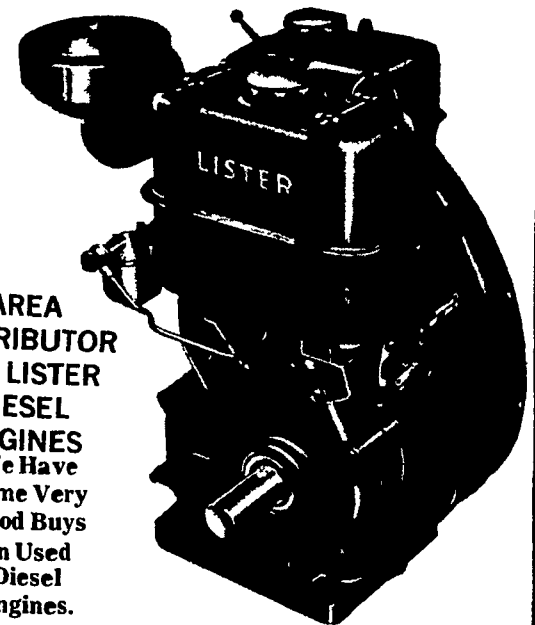
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