



FARM FORUM

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opposition to the bill on a number of issues, including the requirement of facility registration, the expanded scope of practice of veterinarians, alternate licensure of animal health technicians, and some other peripheral issues. Prior to the hearings, staff of the House Professional Licensure Committee met with representatives of the Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Association Practice Act Task Force to discuss House Bill 1418. It is now generally agreed that many provisions of the bill would have to be amended before the bill can be scheduled for committee deliberations. Before the bill is considered, every attempt will be made to find a fair solution to the concerns that have been raised.

During the critical review and amendment process, it is important that the staff and members of the House Professional Licensure Committee receive as much practical input as possible to ensure that concerns of all interested parties will be addressed. I encourage your readers to submit their written comments to me at the following address: Arthur D. Hershey, Pennsylvania House of Representatives, House Box 202020, Harrisburg, PA 17120-2020.

I will not be able to respond to their correspondence personally, but I will forward it to committee staff to ensure that every area of concern is considered.

Arthur D. Hershey,
13th Legislative District,
Pennsylvania House of
Representatives

Editor:

I would like to clarify points raised in your recent article "If passed, State Bills Could Have Large, Long-Term Effects on Animal Boarders, Farriers," regarding NJ Senate Bill S-

2048.

Before I respond in detail, I assure you that veterinarians in NJ are among the strongest supporters of the equine industry in the state. It would be contrary to our interest to handicap this industry and the revisions in the practice act will not result in such actions.

Specifically, S-2048 does not change the scope of the practice of veterinary medicine in any substantive way. The proposed changes fall into three general categories: 1. Changes in definitions. 2. Changes in licensure requirements. 3. Changes in standards that apply to the practice of veterinary medicine.

You are correct in stating that persons may continue to administer health care to their own animals. However, your statement "those who keep others' 4-H project animals or operate kennels or boarding houses could be limited on what kind of animal care, without a veterinarian's approval they could give to animals they don't own." is misleading. This is not a change in NJ law. Currently NJ law prohibits non-licensed individuals from treating animals they don't own, unless under the responsible supervision of a licensed veterinarian.

The quote from Peggy Dillon that the bill would require anybody "to get a prescription to buy Vitamin C for a horse" is not accurate. Federal law distinguishes between drugs that are restricted to use or prescription only by a licensed veterinarian, and other medications, nutritional supplements and vitamins that may be purchased over-the-counter. S-2048 would not prohibit a livestock or pet owner from continuing to purchase non-FDA restricted products without a veterinarian's prescription. A consumer's access to over the counter or prescription drugs is not affected by this legislation. Consumers are not required to purchase pharmaceuticals directly from a veterinarian. Upon request by a

client, a veterinarian must provide a prescription for pharmaceuticals he has prescribed.

Concerns expressed the affect of S-2048 on farriers are unfounded. Farriers would not be affected under the provisions of the bill. The relationship between veterinarians, and farriers, chiropractors or equine dentists is not changed by this legislation. Currently, a chiropractor or equine dentist can only treat a patient under the responsible supervision of a veterinarian. Veterinarians are the only health professionals qualified to diagnose, prescribe and perform surgery on animals. If they so choose, they can refer cases to other health professionals, but they retain responsibility for the case. S2048 does nothing to change this process.

The answer to the question posed "Could you apply gauze to an injury if the animal isn't yours?" is yes, provided it is an emergency situation or a person acting as a "good Samaritan," or is continuing a treatment regimen prescribed by a veterinarian. However, the answer to the question "Could you surgically remove a mole or a canker, is an unequivocal no, unless the individual doing the procedure owns the animal.

Upon adoption, the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners will be required to develop a set of minimum standard of veterinary practice. This will provide consumers assurances regarding standards of practice.

The proposed changes to the Veterinary Medical Practice Act will have a positive impact on the general health and well being of all animals, large and small, in New Jersey. Consumers will be assured that the veterinarians whose services they retain are qualified and aware of the latest veterinary medical advances. Developing standards of practice will encourage veterinarians to commit to practicing high quality medicine so consumers will receive a level of services that they demand and deserve.

Richard J. Alampi
Executive Director,
New Jersey Veterinary
Medical Association

Editor:

It is surprising that the Lancaster Sunday News—positioned in the heart of farm country and so much advanced farming technology and research—could imply that agriculture is poised to ruin the world through intensification (Oct. 10 front page story).

The opposite is true. And PennAg Industries Association and its members are in the forefront of ensuring that we achieve the best balance of safe, efficient food production and environmental protection.

Our members continue to help "write the book" on standards for siting and manging advanced farms. We cooperate with federal and state government on setting standards and rules. We help educate oversight agencies on advanced farming techniques. We are in the forefront of developing new techniques for everything from odor control to water conservation, improved feeds and best management practices.

And we firmly believe that the public deserves the truth.

The article points out "spiraling land costs" are a factor in encouraging farmers "to intensify." It neglected global competition, low commodity prices and the need for greater safety and efficiency as key factors in driving this inevitable trend. Modern practices make the difference between survival and failure of our farms.

The article tried to create a

picture of pathetically drugged animals wedged in giant factory barns. A tour of local advanced farm would show that is wrong. The truth is that these livestock get better care and live in better conditions than many people do around our globe.

The article also implied there are not advanced farms in Lancaster – but there are many in the county and the rest of the state. No one notices them because they are not a problem.

There were other factual errors and illogical conclusions drawn in the article – not the least of which is that eating burgers and soda will lead to the destruction of the planet.

It is okay to explore the relationship of diet and health status. But it is irresponsible to use such scare tactics and unfairly tar the agribusiness to affect dietary change.

Misleading the public about modern farming has serious implications for the future of farming in Pennsylvania and the nation, consequences for our efforts to preserve farmland and produce food.

Our industry will not tolerate the dissemination of misinformation and will continue to be dedicated to working the public interest and for public education, so that the consumer can make informed choices.

Walt Peechatka
Executive Vice President
PennAg Industries
Association

Odor Research Field Day Oct. 28

LEWISBURG (Union Co.) — An odor research field day is scheduled 10:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m., here Oct. 28 at the David Groff swine farm.

The purpose of the field day is to provide producers and the public with an opportunity to see biofilters that were installed on the swine grower finisher buildings at the Groff farm.

The study included a total of nine Pennsylvania farms on which one of three technologies were used to reduce odor emissions: dust filtration of exhausted air, floating straw covers for outside manure storages, and

biofiltration of exhausted air. Effectiveness of the odor remediation measures were evaluated by direct odor measurement and by surveying neighbors who live near the swine operations

Based on the data collected thus far, biofilters such as the one at the Groff farm, show promise for being an effective odor-reducing method.

The research project is sponsored by the Pennsylvania State University, The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, and The Pennsylvania Pork Producers Council. Allied industry participants include Hostetter Management and Farmer Boy Ag Systems.

Researchers Ken Kephart and Robert Mikesell will be available throughout the day to answer questions. A brief presentation will be made at 12:30 p.m.

Directions to the farm:

• From the north – take Rt. 15 south from Rt. 80 toward Lewisburg. Turn right on Colonel John Kelly Road (next to Bierly's Meat Market). Proceed about two miles, turn right onto Churches Road, and bear right at the Y. The two swine barns will be on your left.

• From the south – Take Rt. 15 north from the Harrisburg area. Cross Routes 45 and 192, pass the Country Cupboard, and turn left on Colonel John Kelly Road (next to Bierly's Meat Market). Proceed about two miles, turn right onto Churches Road, bear right at the Y. The two swine barns will be on your left.

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