

ASI Testifies At Congressional Hearing On Department Of Homeland Security

DENVER, Colo. — The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) participated recently in the hearing held by the House Committee on Agriculture concerning the movement of the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) into the proposed new Department of Homeland Security.

ASI, along with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and the National Pork Producers Council, collectively presented testimony addressing the organizations' questions and concerns about the proposed move.

The organizations expressed their support "to better streamline the work...by different agencies to protect America from

those who wish to cause international harm" and commended the Administration for including threats to the agricultural sector in the proposed new department. However, many witnesses stated that numerous questions should be addressed before "we can make an educated decision on what is best to ensure the continued protection of American agriculture."

Agricultural organizations and state ag officials expressed concerns on the effect of moving APHIS into the new department on "APHIS missions that do not relate to protection from terrorism." These include existing APHIS programs that have taken many years to build and effec-

tively implement, and the many APHIS tasks that are more domestic in their nature, such as disease eradication, monitoring and surveillance programs, along with trade issues and programs.

"Members of the ASI executive board at their June 22 meeting discussed how the movement of APHIS into the proposed new department might affect key APHIS programs of importance to the U.S. sheep industry, such as Wildlife Services," said ASI Executive Director Peter Orwick, who participated in the testimony to the committee. "Several lawmakers and industry witnesses mentioned the functions of APHIS at our borders obviously fit the new department while other programs are less clear."

Black Fly Spraying To Resume Along Susquehanna River

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Helicopter spraying for black flies on the Susquehanna River and several tributaries in South-central Pennsylvania resumed Tuesday, July 9, following a break for security reasons over the Fourth of July holiday weekend, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary David E. Hess said.

"We suspended aerial spraying for black flies over the long holiday period as part of the Commonwealth's enhanced security procedures," Secretary Hess said. "We now want to let the public know we are resuming the spraying."

Aerial spraying is scheduled to resume on the Susquehanna River on Tuesday morning, July 9. The spraying will begin in the

Selinsgrove, Snyder County, area, and proceed south along the river, finishing south of the Marietta area in Lancaster County. Spraying on the river also will be done from Sunbury, Northumberland County, north to the Bradford/Wyoming County line.

Spraying also is planned for a number of creeks feeding the Susquehanna River. Areas to be sprayed include Penns and Middle creeks in Snyder and Union counties, Mahantango Creek in Dauphin County, Tuscarora Creek in Juniata County, Aughwick Creek in Huntingdon County, and the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River at its confluence with the Susquehanna River and ending in Huntingdon County.

In addition, spraying will be conducted on the West Branch of

the Susquehanna River from Sunbury, Northumberland County, to Williamsport, Lycoming County; along Tunkhannock Creek in Wyoming County; and Loyalsock and Pine creeks in Lycoming County.

"Because of rains that occurred in May and early June, spraying in much of the Susquehanna Valley was delayed because river and streams levels were too high and flows too fast for the spraying to be effective," Secretary Hess said.

"This has resulted in a larger number of black flies than normal, but the resumption of our spraying operations should reduce these numbers."

DEP uses "Bti," a naturally occurring bacteria, to control black flies. This bacteria degrades quickly in the environment and does not harm the aquatic ecosystem.

Sheep Industry News



Robert J. Melchior
Northeast Sheep And
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COBLESKILL, N.Y. — By now most producers should be aware that the sheep and lamb checkoff commenced July 1. Instructions have not fully filtered down to slaughterhouses and sale barns yet, and so implementation has been spotty at best.

Producers should be aware, however, that when selling their lambs or culls in slaughter marketing channels, they will receive a charge of 1/2 of 1 cent per pound.

These funds, along with additional monies collected directly from the slaughterhouses, will be accumulated at the slaughter level and forwarded to the USDA, to be held pending formation of the Lamb Promotion Board. The Board will direct how the funds will be spent for lamb promotion and research.

Nominations for the Promotion Board were due in Washington July 5. The nominating committee of Empire Sheep Producers Association, after caucusing with other approved Northeastern state sheep associations, submitted the following slate of nominees to the Secretary of Agriculture; Producers — David Major (Vt) and Susan Schoenian (Md); Seedstock — Jean Walsh (NY); Feeder — Joe Harper (WV).

The Lamb Promotion Board will consist of 13 members selected by the Secretary of Agriculture from nominees submitted by sheep organizations from around the country. Three positions (of the 13) on this Board will represent slaughterhouses. It is anticipated that the Secretary will announce Board appointments later this summer, with the Board meeting to commence promotion efforts by early fall.

APHIS Discusses Scrapie Eradication

DENVER, Colo. — The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) conducted a meeting June 20-21 regarding the National Scrapie Eradication Program for state veterinarians.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss methods for adding uniformity and simplicity to the program, as well as increasing its overall effectiveness.

"We understand that they had a very productive meeting and came to consensus on a number

of issues," said Paul Rodgers, director of animal health, product safety and technical services for the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI). "We are very pleased that APHIS is working closely with their state stakeholders and we look forward to receiving communication from APHIS regarding the future direction of the program."

ASI and several State veterinarians have been urging APHIS to engage in formal consultation with states regarding the matter for some time.

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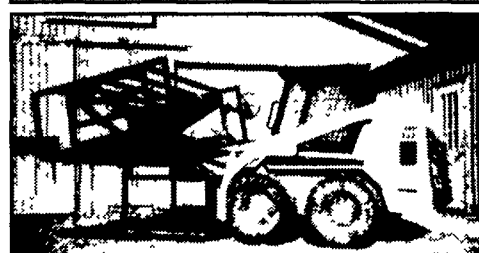
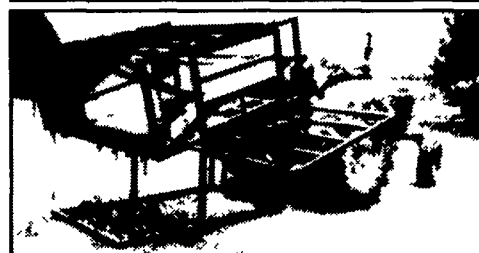
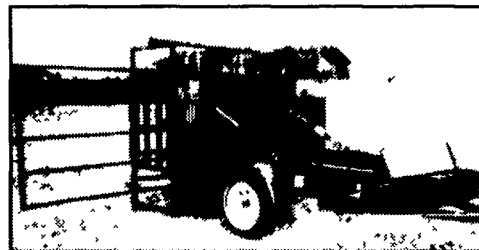
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