

Preparing for the Next Big Disease: Surveillance, Biosecurity and Other Key Steps in Emerging Disease Preparedness

Glen Duizer

Chief Veterinary Office, Government of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3T1S4. Email: glen.duizer@gov.mb.ca.

■ Take Home Messages

With the rise of emerging and re-emerging diseases, producers can take many steps to protect their herds; these steps do not need to be extremely difficult and problematic. There are three key areas producers can consider to be prepared:

- building on the herd health and disease prevention activities already happening on the farm,
- expanding existing networks and communications to stay informed,
- sharing information and developing basic emergency plans that include steps needed for disease outbreaks.

Topics covered will include:

- Biosecurity: What producers can consider for basic and advanced steps in biosecurity and biocontainment. What are the different types of risk to consider, what are the easiest to mitigate, and what can be learned from other sectors?
- Surveillance: How producers can participate in surveillance and use surveillance information, especially through routine herd health and diagnostics. What WeCAHN–Dairy (Western Canadian Animal Health Network) is and how producers can make use of the quarterly reports.
- Information sharing: Why producers may consider ad hoc and formal information sharing essential for disease preparedness and response. What producers can do to share information effectively and efficiently without compromising privacy. What examples already exist and are working.
- Traceability: The basics producers already do and the importance these play in both preparedness and response. Examples of how traceability is used in disease outbreaks.
- Emergency preparedness: What producers may want to think about in preparing for a disease outbreak; what are the simplest and easiest to implement and what are the advantages of having basic plans.

In summary, producers may find value in strategically focusing on several critical areas to prepare themselves for emerging and re-emerging diseases. These need not be costly or demanding; a lot of efficiency and effectiveness can be gained with specific targeted changes and approaches.



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