

Provides assistance to the AVIC in the animal identification program. Performs animal identification duties and provides program planning and problem solving advice in this area.

A. Duties

1. When positive reactors are identified, the incumbent is responsible for identifying the herd of origin through the use of the animal identification program. This requires gathering information from the various individuals and/or organizations that owned and/or handled the animals prior to the animal(s) being identified as a reactor(s) and tracing the movement of the animal(s) back to the herd of origin.

2. In consultation with the AVIC, organizes and obtains the data collection system, documents program problems, and proposes improvements to plans and procedures for animal identification program(s). Reviews data to determine program effectiveness, to identify problem areas, and/or to detect trends or developments.

3. As far as possible, standardizes the program within the area of responsibility. Initiates measures to reach established program goals. Monitors all activities in support of the animal identification program (i.e., ear tags, vaccination tags, bangle tags, reactor tags, backtags, etc.).

4. Works with officials and employees in the livestock industry, meat packing industry, livestock markets, market association, county and state extension services, Food Safety and Inspection Service, other Federal Agencies, State diagnostic laboratories, accredited veterinarians, and other interested persons to explain the requirements of the animal identification program and enlist their voluntary compliance through a better understanding of the program requirements.

5. Observes/monitors contract or fee basis personnel to assure that they are performing work as agreed to in the contract or fee basis agreements.

6. Adjusts priorities as a result of information gathered from traceback of animals infected with contagious or communicable diseases as directed; or to provide sufficient time to complete the many tasks.

7. Periodically reviews inventory of supplies and equipment used in the animal identification programs to ensure sufficiency. Reviews problems such as hemolyzed samples from slaughter establishments or livestock auction markets or samples otherwise not usable, determines alternatives, and selects the most appropriate corrective action.

8. Monitors blood samples, identification systems, and records to correlate information from markets and slaughter plants.

9. Reviews VS Forms, such as daily kill sheets, health certificates, station forms, herd records, brand records, dock cards, laboratory reports., blood collection records from Food Safety and Inspection Service and contractors for completeness and accuracy of program identification procedures to assure that tracebacks from lab to farm of origin can be accomplished. Suggests changes when information is insufficient.

B. Factors

1. Knowledge Required by the Position

Must know applicable sections of Title 9, Code of Federal Regulations. Knowledge of APHIS Directives, Veterinary Services Memorandums, Uniform Methods and Rules pertaining to identifications, and statutes to monitor the movements of livestock. Knowledge of marketing practices and trace areas to ensure animal identification for traceback to herd of origin. Must have knowledge of mathematics in order to establish trend lines, measure the progress of identification problems, and develop adequate data collection systems. Detailed knowledge of domestic animal health problems.

2. Supervisory Controls

Incumbent is under the program and administrative supervision of the Area Veterinarian in Charge, who outlines the broad program requirements and periodically reviews the status of the programs for effectiveness and adherence to policy guidance.

Proceeds on own initiative and judgment within guidelines established by AVIC. Technical advice or assistance is provided by the Area Veterinarian In Charge.

3. Guidelines

CFR, Title 9 (various chapters); VS Memorandum; APHIS Directives; Uniform Methods and rules; State statutes, regulations, and policies; Meat Inspection manuals; laboratory procedure manuals; policies set by Regional Director; and Civil Service Memorandum. In unusual circumstances (i.e., where no guidelines are available), AVIC reviews suggested course of action and/or provides advice.

In ordinary situations, incumbent determines guidelines to follow or implement. As program needs and priorities change, the incumbent proposes new and/or revised procedures and modifications to equipment that will improve the identification program and adjusts work priorities as needed.

4. Complexity

Animal identification involves the correlation of information from many sources; i.e., several different States, livestock markets, livestock dealers, farmers, ranchers, slaughter establishments, veterinarians, Food Safety and Inspection Service, contractors, laboratory personnel, etc. The material is reviewed to establish a clear trail of movement of affected livestock to and from these different sources to identify the origin of the infected animal.

As this is being accomplished, the incumbent must determine the adequacy of procedures, compare various records for discrepancies in information, provide guidance when it is needed, and propose changes to procedures and/or program controls.

The variety of sources of information necessary to complete a traceback requires the incumbent to determine starting point and, on paper, trace the particular animal(s) back to the herd of origin. This often requires originality and initiative because of the variety of individuals and information sources worked with.

5. Scope and Effect

Provides information and assistance to the Veterinarian in Charge, Section Veterinary Medical Officers, Animal Health Technicians, Livestock Inspectors, market personnel, slaughter personnel, and Food Safety and Inspection Service personnel on backtagging, blood collection, and traceback procedures.

Failure to properly perform the duties of this position can seriously hamper disease eradication and/or control efforts. Proper performance contributes to an effective control and/or eradication program as disease is controlled prior to opportunity for spreading. The public health impact and the economic savings of proper performance are significant and can have no less than area wide impact.

6. Personal Contacts

Contacts are with State-Federal veterinarians, accredited veterinarians, animal health technicians, State livestock inspectors, employees of other Federal agencies, office personnel, laboratory personnel, contract employees, and animal identification coordinators in other states. Contacts are also made with management and employees at markets, slaughter plants and manufacturers, members of the livestock industry, and the public in general.

Contacts are with persons and/or groups who can be uncooperative due to direct financial interests.

7. Purpose of Contacts

Contacts are to provide direction, give or exchange information, resolve problems, and to provide services. Contacts are also to motivate, influence, and justify, and to further the various identification programs.

8. Physical Demands

Standing, walking, running, bending, crouching and is sometimes required to wear various types of protective clothing. At times, lifts weights up to 100 pounds.

9. Work Environment

Must work in hard hat areas, mud, slush, wind, snow, blood, swine, and cattle pens, slaughter plants, and is required to drive many hours at a time.