BIO-SECURITY ON THE FARM:
PREVENTING FOOT AND MOUTH AND OTHER DISEASES
VIDEOCONFERENCE JUNE 13, 2001

On June 13, 2001, 218 separate sites in 34 states participated in "Bio-Security on the Farm: Preventing Foot and Mouth and Other Diseases." (See Table 1 for participating states and the number of registered sites per state.)

Of the registered sites that participated in the videoconference, 26 site facilitators returned their evaluation forms to 432 N. Lake Street, Madison, Wisconsin by August 14, 2001, yielding a site-level response rate of 12 percent.*

The findings of this evaluation study are based on the responses of 111 participants of "Bio-Security on the Farm."

The results described in this evaluation briefing are from data provided by 111 respondents who participated in the videoconference. We have no available measure of the total number of participants.

Thirty-nine percent of the respondents attended the videoconference at a location in Wisconsin. (See Table 2 for the number of respondents per state where they attended the videoconference.)

The primary occupation indicated most often by respondents was Extension agent or specialist (22 percent), followed by dairy farmer (11 percent) and livestock producer (10 percent). Each occupational category presented on the evaluation form was selected by at least one respondent. (See Table 3 for numbers of respondents in each occupational category.)

Seven of the 111 respondents indicated that they were local government officials.

Forty-two respondents who were not farmers indicated that in an average work week in the month before participating in the videoconference, they had come into direct contact with livestock production.

Thirty-one respondents reported having participated in a University of Wisconsin-Extension videoconference prior to this one, ranging from one previous time to fifty previous times.

Overall, respondents reported that their knowledge increased as a result of their participation in "Bio-Security on the Farm."

Those who responded to the evaluation reported increases in their perception of their own level of knowledge of the following as a result of their participation in "Bio-Security on the Farm":

- Foot-and-Mouth disease;
- The difference between foot-and-mouth disease and "mad cow" disease;
- Ways in which outbreaks of infectious animal disease can be prevented;
- Specific measures they could take to help prevent outbreaks of infectious animal diseases; and
- Specific steps they could take in the occurrence of an outbreak of an infectious animal disease.

These increases in perceived knowledge level before and after the videoconference were statistically significant at ($p < .001$)**.

On average, participants reported a one-point gain on a scale where 1 = "low level of knowledge" and 5 = "high level of knowledge." (See Table 4 for average scores).

Respondents who reported that they intended to do something differently as a result of the videoconference most frequently cited ways that they would now work to limit the transmission of disease.

Nearly half of the respondents (46 percent) indicated that they intended to do something differently as a results of their participation in the videoconference. The content of most of the responses can be classified into two general categories – limiting transmission of the disease and taking general bio-security measures that might include increasing awareness of bio-security.

Of those who responded to this question, approximately 65 percent focused on limiting transmission of the disease. Examples of respondent answers include:

- "I will be more aware of how clean my equipment is as I travel from farm to farm."
- "Have people wear plastic boots and clean clothes on my farm."
- "Eliminate visitation of unidentified visitors to farm. Use foot baths and protective clothings."
- "Keep facilities cleaner."

Of those who responded to the question, approximately 18 percent focused on general bio-security measures and awareness. Examples of respondent answers include:

- "Better preventive measures."
- "Increase bio-security."
- "Incorporate bio-security on our farms, especially visitors."

- "Practice basic bio-security when visiting farms, encourage producers to adopt bio-security measures."

A majority of respondents agreed about the importance of bio-security measures. They also reported being able to explain bio-security measures to others.

On a scale where 1 = "strongly disagree" and 5 = "strongly agree," 87 percent of participants answered a 4 or a 5 to "The bio-security measures I enact are important to the wholesomeness of the nation's food supply." Seventy-nine percent of participants answered a 4 or a 5 to "I can explain to others why bio-security is important to the food produced in my area." No pre-post measures of change are available for these attitudinal items.

A majority of respondents deemed the delivery of the program "very good" on five different measures.

Approximately 80 respondents answered questions regarding the delivery of the program. On a scale of degree of quality (e.g. poor, fair, good, very good and excellent) the category that respondents chose most frequently was "very good" for all of the following:

- The quality of video production,
- The usefulness of the participant packet to them,
- The usefulness of the information presented,
- The helpfulness of the question and answer session to them, and
- The overall rating of the useful of the program to them.

Tables and Endnotes

Table 1: Number of registered sites per state	
State	Sites
Alabama	1
California	1
Colorado	4
Connecticut	1
Delaware	1
Florida	2
Georgia	1
Hawaii	1
Idaho	12
Illinois	8
Kentucky	1
Louisiana	1
Maryland	3
Michigan	7
Minnesota	5
Missouri	19
Montana	1
Nebraska	1
New Hampshire	2
New Jersey	1
New Mexico	2
New York	18
North Carolina	7
Oregon	4
Pennsylvania	20
South Carolina	1
South Dakota	1
Tennessee	2
Texas	2
Utah	9
Washington	9
West Virginia	3
Wisconsin	67
Total	218

Table 2: Number of participants who responded to the evaluation per state where they attended the videoconference	
Georgia	4
Idaho	4
Illinois	2
Kentucky	1
Maryland	4
Missouri	3
Nebraska	1
New York	4
Oregon	1
Pennsylvania	4
Washington	4
Wisconsin	43
West Virginia	7
Missing	29
Total	111

Table 3: Primary occupation of respondents	***Count***	***Percentage***
Extension Agent or Specialist	24	22
Dairy Farmer	12	11
Livestock Producer	11	10
Gov't Ag/Enviro Agency	9	8
Media Professional	4	4
Non-livestock Ag Producer	3	3
Private Ag/Enviro Agency	3	3
Ag Business Consultant	3	3
Veterinarian	3	3
Farm-to-farm Service Provider	2	2
Lender or Banker	1	1
Instructor	1	1
Other	1	1
Missing	34	31
Total	111	100

Table 4: Self-reported level of knowledge before and after participation in bio-security videoconference

	Before	***After***
Foot-and-Mouth disease	2.71	4.02
The difference between foot-and-mouth disease and "mad cow" disease	3.25	4.19
Ways in which outbreaks of infectious animal disease can be prevented	2.80	4.22
Specific measures I could take to help prevent outbreaks of infectious animal diseases	2.95	4.29
Specific steps I could take in the occurrence of an outbreak of an infectious animal disease	2.64	3.99

* The findings discussed here describe those who returned their forms rather than the larger audience of those who participated in the videoconference. Had the response rate to the evaluative aspect of this project been closer to 70 or 80 percent, we could consider our findings more generalizable to the larger audience, if no other response biases were present. Participating site facilitators were given two reminders regarding the return of their evaluation forms.

** Using the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test, the values of the test statistics ranged from 6.4 to 8.3, all significant at $p < .001$.