

**COMMITTEE MINUTES for
AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE**

Date: February 13, 2008

Place: Room 305

Convened: 2/13/2008
10:15 AM

Recessed:

Reconvened:

Adjourned: 2/13/2008
10:50 AM

Present: Senators Seng-CH, Schoenjahn-VC, Gaskill-RM, Black
Representatives Kuhn-CH, Bailey-VC, De Boef-RM, Bell, Deyoe, Grassley, Mertz, Olson,
D., Rasmussen

Absent: None

Excused: Senator Houser

Rep. Kuhn called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Roll was taken. The minutes from the previous meeting, on February 12, 2008, were approved as distributed.

Rep. Kuhn introduced President Gregory Geoffroy, Iowa State University, and Dr. John Thompson, Dean of the Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine, and Patrick Halbur, Veterinary Diagnostic and Production Animal Medicine Chair.

President Geoffroy discussed the Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Lab with the committee. The lab engages in the diagnosis of animal diseases and causes of animal death as well as the important work of researching and diagnosing disease for the purposes of prevention and developing vaccinations.

Two challenges face the Diagnostics Lab: (1) budgetary shortcomings; and (2) facilities that are in need of improvement.

Dean Thompson discussed the recent history of the Veterinary School and Diagnostics Lab both directly before and during his tenure. In 2004, the school received limited accreditation which resulted in a low national ranking and a suffering reputation. This was due largely to underfunding.

In the summer of 2005, a study was done to determine the proper level of funding. The study recommended \$4,000,000 as the minimum funding level. As a result of the study, a plan was put in place to achieve full accreditation by increasing funding and expanding the facilities. Full accreditation was restored with re-assessment on the horizon in 2010 to see if the plan put in place is being executed.

Dr. Halbur discussed the current state of the Diagnostics Lab. Last year, the lab handled 47,500 cases from local producers. The lab concentrates on an accurate diagnosis and a quick turnaround, which is usually 1-to-3 days. The lab has been successful in eliminating the pseudo-rabies scourge from the State of Iowa, an accomplishment that has opened up foreign markets but has also caused a reduction of \$2,000,000 in federal funding.

In closing, President Geoffroy noted that Iowa State produces more food-animal veterinarians than any other veterinary school in the country. Dr. Halbur stated that the livestock industry is an \$8,000,000,000/year sector of the Iowa economy and if the lab can help prevent disease and/or death in just 1% of livestock, it saves the Iowa livestock industry \$8,000,000, a considerable return on investment.

Rep. Bell moved the committee arise.

The committee adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Representative Mark Kuhn

Ben Humphrey, Committee Secretary