

## Importance of an Aquatic Animal Health Plan – An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure

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## Scenario

- Fish have been imported from various sources over time and no records were kept
- No quarantine is utilized
- Fish are resorted and moved between ponds regularly
- No records of fish movement kept
- You and two employees do all the work throughout the farm
- Equipment is shared throughout all ponds
- No diagnostics have previously been done on sick fish

What percentage of your  
fish will you lose?

## On the other hand:

- Imported fish have come with health history, including disease surveillance history, and this information is maintained in the records
- All arriving fish are quarantined for at least 1 month prior to introduction into the ponds
- Fish are moved and re-sorted only as necessary and re-sorts are conducted among lots and not among all fish
- Records are kept of fish movements onto the farm and between ponds

## On the other hand:

- You and your employees divide up daily tasks so that each person covers one section of the farm
- You have three sets of seines and nets, one for each section, and you disinfect them routinely
- Fish undergo regular health checks, including surveillance testing for important diseases
- Fish are sent for diagnostics in all unusual mortality or morbidity events

What percentage of your  
fish will you lose?

## Importance of an Aquatic Animal Health Plan

- Improve the outcome in a disease outbreak
- Improve your bottom line in daily operations
  - Supports improved efficiency
  - Supports improved export opportunities

## Site Specific Aquatic Animal Health Plan

- Remember – fish trade is relatively unregulated so there is great opportunity for “inadvertent dissemination” of disease
- Risk assessment is the basis of biosecurity – “It’s your business, it’s your prerogative”
- Focus on Prevention and Detection to reduce need for Elimination

## Site Specific Aquatic Animal Health Plan

- Prevention
  - Reduce stress
  - Provide proper nutrition
  - Conduct routine preventive measures – **Biosecurity**

## Biosecurity

- Acquire from reputable sources
  - Ask questions
  - Require health records
- Quarantine
  - Large enough to adequately hold fish
  - Filtration separate from other fish holding areas
  - At least 2 weeks – 4 weeks or longer is preferred
  - DISINFECT facility and equipment after each use
  - ALL Arrivals – even fish that originated on that farm and are returning
  - Some sources suggest preventive medication during quarantine – Careful – this can mask infections

## Biosecurity

- **Address pathogen movement**
  - **People**
    - Train all personnel in biosecurity
    - Move from “clean” to “dirty”
    - Post the property – Biosecure Area
    - Restrict visitors and keep a log
  - **Animals – wild and farmed**
  - **Objects**

## Biosecurity

- **Address pathogen movement**
  - **People**
  - **Animals – wild and farmed**
    - Discourage predators by removing habitat
    - Minimize movement between ponds
  - **Objects**

## Biosecurity

### ➤ Address pathogen movement

- People
- Animals – wild and farmed
- Objects
  - Equipment
    - Avoid sharing equipment between ponds/facilities – especially quarantine and diseased fish
    - Disinfect all equipment regularly
    - If equipment must be shared, disinfect between each pond/facility

## Biosecurity

### Management

- Conduct regular biosecurity audits

## Detection

- Regular fish and pond examinations lead to early diagnosis – reduces losses
- Recordkeeping
  - Assists in identifying “trends” earlier
  - Demonstrates your aquatic animal health plan

## National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP)

- Under Development
  - Scheduled to be completed by 2006
- Purpose
  - Facilitate the legal movement of all aquatic animals, their eggs, and products in interstate and international commerce
  - Protect the health and thereby improve the quality and productivity of farmed and wild aquatic animals
  - Ensure availability of diagnostic, inspection and certification services
  - Minimize the impacts of diseases when they occur in farmed or wild aquatic animals

## National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP)

- Will include a section on Site Health Management
- NAAHP will be a guidance document ONLY
- Federal agencies will implement NAAHP via new laws, regulations, authorities, policies, and non-regulatory activities
- Input from stakeholders during development is received through working groups and direct contact with task force members

## Questions/Input

- Website - <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/aqua/index.html>
- Contact with Working Group member or Task Force Member