

Reducing Zoonoses: Controlling Animal Importation through Federal-Local Collaboration



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Presenter Disclosures

Karen Ehnert, DVM, MPVM

- (1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:**

No relationships to disclose



Objectives

- List 5 instances where imported animals posed a threat to the public or animals.
- Describe current federal and local animal importation oversight roles.
- Describe findings of animal importation surveys at Los Angeles International Airport.
- Identify potential weaknesses to current animal importation procedures.
- Discuss how the LAX animal importation collaborative could serve as a model to address this issue.



Nature of the Problem

- Between 2000 and 2004:
 - Over 1 billion live animals imported
 - About 588,000 per day ¹
- Risks:
 - Zoonotic diseases
 - Foreign animal diseases
 - Carrying vectors



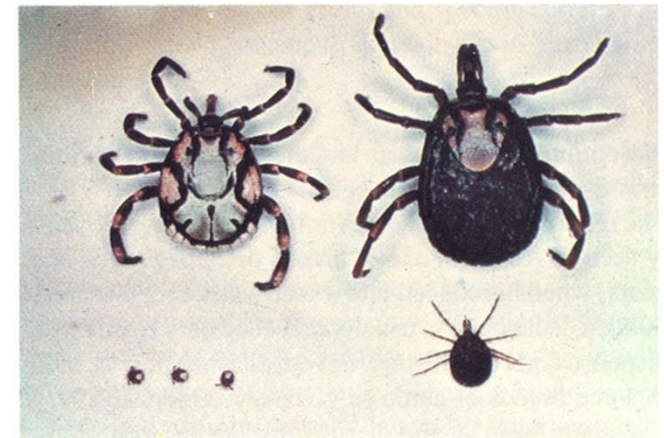
Zoonotic Threats

- **Imported Rabies:**
 - 2008: Operation Bagdad Pup ²
 - 2007: dog from India ³
 - 2004: puppy from Thailand
 - 1987: cat from Mexico
- **Monkey Pox:**
 - 2003 Outbreak
 - Source: imported Gambian Rat
 - Spread: Prairie dogs and 47 people ⁴
- **Leishmaniasis:**
 - 2011: Dog from Turkey



Other Threats

- **Foreign Animal Diseases:**
 - 2002 – 2003: Exotic Newcastle Disease ⁵
- **Vectors:**
 - 2000 – ticks on imported tortoises in Florida infected with bacteria that causes heartwater in cattle ¹
 - Dogs sporadically imported with screwworm infections. ⁶



Source: John Kirk and Heidi Hamlen, UC Davis Veterinary Medicine Extension
http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/vetext/INF-DA/INF-DA_HEARTWATER.HTML



Federal & Local Animal Importation Roles

- **Federal**

- **CDC** – Dogs, cats, primates, other PH threats
- **USDA, Animal Care** – animal welfare act
- **USDA, APHIS** – birds, livestock, hoof stock
- **USFWS** – wildlife, fish
- **Customs & Border Protection** – assists, tariff

- **Local**

- Dog confinement agreements



Los Angeles Animal Importation Surveys⁷

- **Reason:**

- 3 dead puppies at LAX in 1 month
- Mismatched age



- **Multi-agency collaboration**

- VPH, CDC, CBP, numerous animal control agencies
- 3 weeks, all species
- Two follow up surveys, a year apart



LAX Animal Importation Survey Results

	First Survey - 2008	Second Survey - 2009	Third Survey - 2010
Length of Survey	3 weeks	2 weeks	2 weeks
# Animals Inspected	6048	118	337
# Dogs Inspected	183	118	126
# Large Dog Shipments (4 or more)	3	6	8
# (%) Dogs Younger than Listed Age	71 (39%)	12 (10%)	50 (40%)



Other Findings

- Animal welfare violations
- Health/rabies certificates not always accurate
- Some dogs not healthy
- External parasites present
- Mice in boxes not inspected
- Puppy shipments listed as for personal use



Potential Weaknesses Identified

- “Official” paperwork not reliable
- Not all animals inspected
- No requirement for animals to be treated for parasites
- What to do with problem shipments?
- Not enough staff



Potential Model for Federal Local Collaboration

- Surveys to support effort
- VPH assist CDC Quarantine Station
- Local animal control provide quarantine site
- Humane officers available for animal welfare issues
- Required pre-notification
- Animal Importation Working Group



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For More Information

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Thank you!

