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The National Medium- and Long-Term Plan for Animal Disease Control (2012-2020)

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Animal disease control concerns food safety and public health as well as social harmony and stability. It is an important responsibility of the government in social management and public service, and an important part of the rural and agricultural work. In order to boost animal disease control, the State Council promulgated in May 2012 the National Medium- and Long-Term Plan for Animal Disease Control (2012-2020), which charted the course for China's animal disease control efforts in the coming years.

A gist of the Plan is as follows:

Guiding philosophy

The Plan adheres to the principles of “prevention first” and “strong leadership, close coordination, scientific approach, compliance with law, mass prevention and control, and decisive response.” It designates animal disease control an important public-welfare project, and takes promoting scientific prevention and control of animal disease as the underlying guideline and transforming the development mode of animal husbandry as the central task.

With the aim of safeguarding the production and safety in animal farming, the quality and safety of animal products, and public health, the Plan outlines a strategy that features different approaches for different diseases, regions and phases, an envisions comprehensive improvement of public and socialized veterinary services. It will eventually help contain, clean up and eliminate the animal diseases that gravely threaten animal farming and public health, so as to contribute to the building of a well-off society in an all-round way and the creation of a socialist harmonious society.

Basic principles

First, the work should be led by government and draw broad social participation. Second, it should be based on national realities and appropriately oriented to the future. Third, it should formulate region-specific approaches and tailored guidance. Fourth, it should prioritize key tasks and pursue well-coordinated overall progress.

Objectives

The Plan is aimed at developing a comprehensive animal disease prevention and control capacity by 2020 that matches the cause of building a well-off society in an all-round way and can effectively safeguard the production safety in animal farming, the quality and safety of animal products, and public health.

By then, the prevention and control of the 16 priority domestic animal diseases, including foot and mouth disease and highly pathogenic bird flu, should have reached the targets set in the Plan; the incidences of animal diseases among live pigs, domestic birds, cattle and sheep should have fallen below 5%, 6%, 4% and 3%; and the incidences, fatality rates and risks to public health should have decreased significantly.

Meanwhile, the introduction and spread of the 13 priority exotic animal diseases, including mad cow disease and African swine flu, should have effectively contained, and the ability to prevent and handle such diseases should have been remarkably enhanced. Infrastructure and relevant organizations should have been further optimized, as with the legal and regulatory system and the scientific and technological support system. In addition, the financial investment mechanism should have grown more stable and the level of socialized services more advanced.

General strategies

First, the strategy to prevent and control major animal diseases and main zoonoses, which is aimed at achieving zero incidence through vaccination and thus paving the way for eradicating animal epidemics through vaccination and eventually keeping epidemic-free even without vaccination. Second, the strategy to improve animal and poultry health, which is designed to strengthen prevention at the sources and raise the overall level of animal health. Third, the strategy to prevent exotic animal diseases, which will reinforce risk control on those major exotic diseases that are spreading overseas but yet to enter China. Eventually, China will establish an animal disease prevention and control regime that features coordinated advancement of disease prevention, health promotion and risk control.

Priority areas

The Plan specifies “a belt and three areas” as the priority areas and establishes specific requirements. The belt refers to the national advantageous animal husbandry belt, and the three areas are the key endemic area of zoonoses, the high-risk area of exotic animal disease introduction, and the advantageous area of animal disease prevention and control. For each of the priority areas, the Plan set specific requirements on the prevention and control of priority diseases.

Key tasks

First, contain five major types of animal diseases, including foot and mouth disease and highly pathogenic bird flu. Second, contain five major types of zoonoses, such as brucellosis. Third, eliminate glanders and equine infectious anemia. Fourth, clean up major diseases of breeding livestock and poultry. Fifth, , prevent the introduction of such exotic animal diseases as mad cow diseases.

Capacity building

Based on the objectives and tasks and prioritizing the most critical, most urgent and weakest links, the Plan integrates the reform of the veterinary management system, the development of disease prevention and control system, and the development of the financial investment mechanism, that six abilities be strengthened so as to meet the needs of animal prevention and control in the new area.

First, enhance the ability in animal disease monitoring and pre-warning, by improving the and mechanism and expanding the professional veterinary personnel. Second, enhance emergency response ability, by securing the storage of emergency supplies and improving emergency response mechanisms and subsidization policies. Third, enhance the ability in enforcing compulsory animal vaccination, by promoting the development of a cold chain, specifying responsibilities and beefing up vaccine management. Fourth, enhance the ability in animal health law enforcement, by tightening relevant supervision and law enforcement and improving the supervisory mechanism and the standard system. Fifth, enhance the ability in digitalizing animal prevention and control information, by boosting the development of the information system and making full use of modern information technology to gather and analyze relevant information. Sixth, enhance the ability in providing socialized animal disease prevention and control services, by developing a service system, cultivating service providers and specifying supporting measures.

Safeguard measures

First, legal support. Earnestly enact the Law on Animal Epidemic Prevention, accelerate the formulation and implementation of supporting rules and regulations on such issues as strengthening the regional management of animal diseases, and improve veterinary management institutions.

Second, Institutional support. Gradually establish a veterinary management system and an operating system that are scientific, uniform, transparent and highly efficient; improve the veterinary administration system, the supervisory and law enforcement system and the technological support system; stabilize and reinforce the grassroots-level animal disease prevent and control system; and boost institution- and talent-building.

Third, technological support. The state supports scientific research on animal diseases and the popularization of advanced practical achievements, so as to consolidate the scientific basis for animal disease prevention and control.

Fourth, material support. County- and higher-level governments should incorporate animal prevention and control into the their socioeconomic development plans and annual work plans, and integrate into their budgets the expenditures needed for animal disease monitoring, prevention, control and eradication as well as the testing and management of toxic and hazardous substances in animal products, so as to realize unified management.

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