



NEWS

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“Protecting Our Livelihood”: A Governor's Conference on the Potential for a Livestock Disease Crisis

(Pierre) --- Concerns regarding animal diseases and food safety have intensified after outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease and BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy), known in the media as “mad cow” disease, in Europe. To address these concerns, Governor Bill Janklow will host a multi-state conference on foot-and-mouth, BSE and other animal diseases. The conference will be held Thursday, May 17, in Sioux Falls.

“We have lined up some of the world’s most prominent authorities on animal diseases to speak at the conference,” said Governor Bill Janklow. Alfonso Torres and Linda Detweiler of USDA Veterinary Services will discuss foot-and-mouth disease and BSE and Elizabeth Williams from the University of Wyoming will speak about chronic wasting disease. Other nationally renowned speakers have also been invited.

The goal for the conference is to provide information about foot-and-mouth disease, BSE, chronic wasting disease, and differentiate these diseases. Food safety issues and efforts to protect South Dakota and other states from the threat of these diseases will also be covered.

The conference is scheduled to begin at 8:30 a.m. on May 17 and will be held at the Sioux Falls Arena. Registrations will begin at 7:30 a.m. Tickets to the conference are available for \$20 each and will include conference admission, videotape of the conference, lunch and refreshments. To attend, send your name, mailing address and payment to:

South Dakota Department of Agriculture
Attn: Governor's Conference
523 E Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

Requests for tickets must be received no later than May 10, 2001. Questions should be addressed to George Williams at the Department of Agriculture’s in-state, toll free number: 1-800-228-5254 or at (605) 773-5425. Tickets will be mailed upon receipt.

“I cannot stress enough how extremely important attendance to this conference will be. We must be informed about the potential crisis we face,” said Governor Janklow. “While the livestock industry would obviously be impacted from the occurrence of these diseases, we need to realize that the livestock industry will not be alone. These diseases could potentially affect everyone.”