

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISEASES OF WILD AND PET BIRDS

The Committee developed and submitted to the members of AAAP three reports which we made available in newsletters. In addition, a misleading news release in the September 15 issue of the Wall Street Journal was brought to the attention of the AVMA for public comment.

The first report of the Committee contained in the October newsletter outlined the problem of the control procedures governing the importation of exotic birds. It indicated a need for a close control of importations for the safeguarding of the domestic and wild birds from exotic diseases and to protect the domestic birds from competition by invasion of new species in the environment. The release and multiplication of the large parakeet now present in Michigan, New York, and Illinois is an example of the latter problem.

The second report to the members was contained in the December newsletter. The release outlined the need to obtain proper authorization from the Department of Interior to conduct studies on migratory birds. The law is very broad in this respect and few veterinarians are aware of the limitations contained in the law. Persons working with any migratory birds should obtain information concerning the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1916 and 1936. Copies can be obtained from the U. S. Department of Interior.

A third report was sent to the AAAP members in March to alert all interested persons to a USDA proposal to institute a quarantine requirement for all imported birds. A hearing was planned for April to review the proposal. The release asked that members submit their views to the Department of Agriculture.

On September 15, an article was published in the Wall Street Journal suggesting the outbreak of Exotic Newcastle Disease was a fantasy of the poultry industry and the Department of Agriculture to increase the price of poultry products. As the chairman of the Committee, I requested the AVMA respond to clarify the issue. The AVMA did respond through several articles and sent a letter to the Secretary of Agriculture concerning the problem.

The Committee would like to acknowledge and commend the Department of Agriculture for its action to prohibit importations of exotic birds until satisfactory new procedures can be developed and for its proposal to develop a method of quarantine and inspection of importation of exotic birds in the future.

The resurgence of duck enteritis in the wild water fowl population this spring emphasizes the need for constant surveillance of exotic diseases. Policies must be developed to assure adequate reporting of exotic disease outbreaks and formulation of control procedures.

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