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New FREE Booklet Details Johne's Disease in Goats

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO—Although it is not known how widespread Johne's disease is in goats in the United States, the infection has been confirmed in many goat herds throughout the country—in milk, meat, heritage and other breeds. The cost of this infection in goats range from economic losses due to reduced production and increased culling for meat and milk animals to emotional losses for those whose goats are more pets than agricultural investments.

A new 16-page booklet developed by the National Johne's Education Initiative in cooperation with USDA-APHIS-VS, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin-Madison shares facts about Johne's disease as it applies to goats and goat owners. Delivered in an easy-to-read format, the Q&A booklet provides answers to questions such as "What is Johne's disease?", "How do I know if my herd has Johne's disease?", "How can I help keep Johne's disease out of my herd?", "Should I test my herd for Johne's disease?" and more.

"We are excited to have a booklet that is totally focused on Johne's disease as it relates to the goat population and goat owners," states Dr. Elisabeth Patton, chairman of U.S. Animal Health Association's Johne's Disease Committee. "There is no cure for Johne's disease, and there is not an approved vaccine for goats in the United States to help protect them from infection. Therefore, education about Johne's disease, and the prevention of Johne's disease, is extremely important."

Dr. Michael Carter, National Johne's Disease Control Program Coordinator, National Center for Animal Health Programs, USDA-APHIS-VS, points out that symptoms of Johne's disease in goats are vague and similar to other ailments: rapid weight loss and, in some cases, diarrhea. He explains that infected goats become emaciated and weak despite continuing to eat well.

"Kids are much more susceptible to infection with *Mycobacterium avium* ss. *paratuberculosis* than adults—the bacteria that causes Johne's disease—and often become infected through by swallowing manure containing MAP, such as from suckling manure-stained teats, swallowing milk that carries MAP or eating feed, grass or water contaminated with MAP-containing manure," adds Dr. Becky Manning, Senior Scientist, Johne's Disease Information Center, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin. "Bottle-fed kids can also become infected if the milk was contaminated. Since goats usually produce more than one kid per birthing, Johne's disease can spread swiftly through a herd, especially if the infection remains undetected for several kidding seasons."

Goat owners and veterinarians can obtain a free copy of the new Johne's disease Goat Q&A booklet by contacting their state Designated Johne's Coordinator, calling the National Institute for Animal Agriculture at (719) 538-8843 or by ordering a booklet online at www.johnesdisease.org.

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The National Johne's Education Initiative is a cooperative effort of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture, USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services, in association with the National Johne's Working Group & United States Animal Health Association

