

Effectiveness of Train-the-Trainer for Foreign and Emerging Animal Disease Curriculum.

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GOALS/OBJECTIVES

In order to protect the vast U.S. livestock and poultry production sector from catastrophic loss due to Foreign and Emerging Animal Diseases (FEAD), the National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense (FAZD) at Texas A&M University sponsored the creation and implementation of a *Foreign and Emerging Animal Diseases Handbook: Train-the-Trainers Curriculum*. This curriculum was intended for County Extension Agents (CEAs) to educate individual livestock owners in biosecurity and the early detection and reporting of FEAD. The curricula was divided into eleven chapters and covered topics such as: *Epidemiology of Foreign and Emerging Diseases; Foreign Animal Diseases; Emerging and Endemic Animal Diseases; Biosecurity Best Management Practices, and State of Texas Foreign and Emerging Animal Diseases Response Plan*.

Regional Extension Specialists attended an in-depth, one-day workshop to receive curriculum training. Within four weeks, Specialists conducted curriculum training for their regional CEAs. CEAs were then expected to include stakeholder FEAD curriculum training in their yearly plans of work. Pre and post-curricula knowledge tests were administered at both Specialist and Agent trainings. Objectives of these tests were: 1.) determine if curricula increased participants' knowledge of FEAD and 2.) determine if location (i.e. trainers) significantly affected the rate of change in CEA knowledge pre to post- FEAD curriculum.

RESULTS

Analysis indicated a statistically significant ($\alpha = 0.05$) increase in overall mean knowledge pre to post-FEAD curricula for both Specialists and CEAs. Specialists and CEAs pre-FEAD curricula knowledge was close (1.4 percentage point difference), but Specialists demonstrated a much greater (16.3 percentage points) increase in knowledge than CEAs (6.3 percentage points). This may be due to Specialists' immediate accountability for training CEAs, whereas CEAs were not held immediately accountable to teach the curricula. Repeated Measures analysis indicated that location of training (i.e. difference in trainers) did not have a significant effect on rate of change of CEAs' knowledge.

INTERPRETATION AND APPLICATION

Results indicate the Train-the-Trainer approach to FEAD curriculum training increases participants' knowledge of FEAD issues and delivers a consistent educational experience for target audiences, irregardless of differences in trainers. Immediate accountability for trainers to teach the curricula should be incorporated to increase participants' knowledge. The FEAD curriculum training will be delivered to all States to establish a national curriculum for Extension faculty. By adoption of biosecurity measures, this national curriculum will educate and strengthen our producers. These producers serve as the first line of defense against entry of FEAD in American animal operations.

