**One Health News Bits**

**6-20-12 (Summer Solstice)**

[**Biosecurity board changes position on publishing H5N1 research**](http://www.smartbrief.com/redirect.action?link=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nature.com%2Fnews%2Fus-biosecurity-board-revises-stance-on-mutant-flu-studies-1.10369&encoded=dAsfBXzCwNCcyZgQCidalECicNYlVO)

Following the U.S. government's announcement last week that all federally funded dual-use research will be reviewed and managed to prevent biosecurity breaches, the U.S. National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity announced Friday that it supports full publication of the controversial H5N1 avian influenza research from the University of Wisconsin and publication of some of the research from the Netherlands. (3/30)

[**Common weed killer alters development of vertebrate species**](http://www.upi.com/Science_News/2012/04/02/Weed-killer-causes-animal-shape-changes/UPI-74951333402187/)

University of Pittsburgh researchers found the commonly used weed killer Roundup altered tadpole hormones, resulting in larger tails that are similar to those that develop in tadpoles living in close proximity to predators. "This discovery highlights the fact that pesticides, which are important for crop production and human health, can have unintended consequences for species that are not the pesticide's target," said biological sciences professor Rick Relyea. (4/2)

[**White nose bat syndrome spreads west of Mississippi River for first time**](http://articles.boston.com/2012-04-03/news/31282152_1_white-nose-syndrome-bats-white-fungus)

Wildlife officials say a disease that’s killed millions of bats across in the U.S. and Canada has moved west of the Mississippi River for the first time. The Missouri Department of Conservation says white nose syndrome has been confirmed in three bats north of St. Louis. The name describes a white fungus found on infected bats that doesn’t infect humans or other animals. The ailment has killed an estimated 5.7 million bats in 16 states and Canada. (4/3)

[**How new FDA antibiotic rules could affect food animal production**](http://www.startribune.com/lifestyle/health/146035755.html?page=1&c=y)

Proposed FDA guidelines are expected to curtail the use of antibiotics in poultry and livestock, but some say animal health could be jeopardized if the limits are too great. The judicious use of antibiotics for combating disease is essential, says avian veterinarian Jill Nezworski, who also points out that the increased demand for free range turkeys means those animals are exposed to new soil pathogens. Opponents are concerned about the use of antibiotics to stimulate growth and the effects antibiotic use in animals could have on humans. (4/4)

[**South Dakota sees incidence of rabies jump**](http://www.ksfy.com/story/17322797/rabies-cases-rise-in-south-dakota)

The Department of Health says the number of animal rabies cases rose to 40 cases last year, up from 32 cases in 2010. 63 counties submitted 711 animals for testing in 2011 and positives came back from 23 counties. The 28 wild animal positives included skunks, bats and raccoons. (4/3)

[**Researchers harness electricity from snails**](http://www.metro.co.uk/news/895263-snail-cyborgs-that-produce-electricity-could-transform-military-intelligence)

Scientists have successfully produced electricity from snails by combining tiny electrodes and the animals' own metabolism, which could have great implications for military intelligence-gathering. "[The research] provides new knowledge about coupling of living systems and machines" and could set the stage for "interfacing electronic systems and living bodies," said Clarkson University researcher Evgeny Katz. (4/4)

[**Weather changes are increasing zoonotic disease risk**](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/04/global-warming-lyme-disease-west-nile_n_1400692.html)

Diseases including Lyme, dengue fever, Chagas and others are on the rise in North America as weather trends promote the life cycle of insect vectors such as mosquitoes and ticks. The CDC and other organizations are monitoring zoonotic disease infection trends and educating people on prevention, symptoms and diagnosis. (4/4)

[**Keeping pets healthy will help protect children from disease**](http://www.wptz.com/tv/firstwithkids/Enjoy-the-Family-Pet-While-Avoiding-the-Germs/-/9281492/10206588/-/plnwaf/-/)

Pets can be a source of infection for children, especially those under 5 years old. There are steps parents can take to help prevent disease transmission between pets and children, writes Dr. Lewis First, chief of pediatrics at Vermont Children's Hospital at Fletcher Allen. Children should wash their hands after handling pets, but routine veterinary care including up-to-date vaccinations and a good-quality, veterinarian-recommended diet are essential for keeping pets healthy, says Dr. First. (4/4)

[**Scientists study Fukushima disaster’s effect on Calif. sea life**](http://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Scientist-Study-Nuclear-Contamination-Fish-Kelp-Japan-Tsunami-Ocean-California-Shores-146359685.html)

In a recently published study, researchers reveal that sea kelp along the coast of Southern California had as much as 250 times the normal amount of radioactive iodine within weeks of the Fukushima nuclear disaster last year, raising concerns that radioactive compounds could be moving up the food chain toward humans. The researchers plan to study whether fish and kelp are contaminated with other radioactive chemicals that persist longer than iodine, which degrades relatively quickly. (4/6)

[**Pythons in the Everglades are eating both birds and their eggs**](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/04/120405224845.htm)

Officials estimate tens of thousands of invasive Burmese pythons are roaming the Florida Everglades and their diet consists of native wildlife, including 25 bird species. New research shows the snakes also seek out bird nests and ingest the eggs, prompting concerns the snakes may affect the reproductive success of several bird species. (4/5)

[**Initiative successfully converts dog feces to clean compost**](http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/04/04/who-knew-upcycling-the-dog-poo/)

Cayuga Compost and Cornell University have successfully "upcycled" 12 tons of dog feces from a local park, turning it into pathogen-free compost that will be used as tree fertilizer in the same park. Upcycling is the processing of waste into a usable commodity, and since dogs in the U.S. produce a whopping 10.6 million tons of excrement annually, upcycling provides an environmentally friendly use for the feces. (4/4)

[**Mysterious ringed seal disease may have spread to polar bears**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/04/06/us-polarbears-idUSBRE8350MX20120406)

During routine monitoring of polar bears in Alaska, U.S. Geological Survey officials encountered nine animals with bald patches and sores similar to the lesions seen on ringed seals and walruses afflicted with a still-unidentified illness. The disease can be fatal in seals and walruses, but no affected polar bears have died so far, and officials are looking for possible links between the polar bear lesions and the seal and walrus deaths. (4/6)

[**Deadly fungus hitches ride to U.S. on bullfrogs**](http://www.baycitizen.org/science/story/despite-deadly-fungus-frog-imports-1/)

Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis, or B.d., a fungus not harmful to humans but deadly for certain amphibian species, is finding its way into the U.S. via the backs of American bullfrogs grown overseas. One study reported 62% of imported frogs tested were infected, prompting concerns from biologists. "It's jumping from species to species to species, and we have very little predictability about what species it's going to have an effect on," said Vance T. Vredenburg, a biology professor and amphibian expert at San Francisco State University. (4/8)

[**Warm weather predicted to cause surge in heartworm disease**](http://www.click2houston.com/news/Mild-winter-brings-early-parasite-arrival-for-pets/-/1735978/10375842/-/hysl8ez/-/)

According to the Companion Animal Parasite Council, warmer winter weather will likely cause an uptick in disease-carrying vectors, including mosquitoes, and the illnesses they bring. Heartworm disease is of particular concern, especially in the South. Monthly heartworm prevention administered year-round is the best way to protect pets from heartworm disease, experts say. (4/10)

[**CDC works with EPA to promote Environmental Health awareness and learning**](http://www.cdc.gov/learning/spotlight.html)

April 10-16, 2012 is National Environmental Education Week (NEEW). In support of this event, this spotlight provides environmental health-related learning products and resources for the public health community to maintain and improve the health of the American people. (4/10)

[**Spring rain brings some help to massive cholera outbreak in migrating birds**](http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/n/a/2012/04/21/state/n121216D95.DTL)

A lack of water has led to a massive die-off of migrating birds at a wildlife refuge on the Northern California-Oregon border, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service says. Up to 20,000 birds have died at the Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge since February — the worst die-off in the region in about a decade, the San Francisco Chronicle reported on Saturday. (4/23/12)

[**New case of mad cow disease in California**](http://finance.yahoo.com/news/govt-case-mad-cow-disease-191029975.html)

The first new case of mad cow disease in the U.S. since 2006 has been discovered in a dairy cow in California, but health authorities said Tuesday the animal never was a threat to the nation's food supply. The infected cow, the fourth ever discovered in the U.S., was found as part of an Agriculture Department surveillance program that tests about 40,000 cows a year for the fatal brain disease. (4/23)

[**Bartonella is linked to rheumatoid illness in people**](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/04/120423131848.htm)

Researchers found antibodies to bartonella, an insect- and sometimes cat-transmitted bacteria, in 62% of nearly 300 patients with illnesses including rheumatoid symptoms. "If the link between bartonella and rheumatoid illnesses is valid, it may also open up more directed treatment options for patients with rheumatoid illnesses," said veterinarian Ed Breitschwerdt of North Carolina State University. (4/23)

[**Disease Precautions for Outdoor Enthusiasts and Their Companion Animals**](http://www.avma.org/public_health/outdoor_enthusiasts/default.asp?utm_source=smartbrief&utm_medium=email)

There is an increasing awareness among campers, hikers, backpackers, and other outdoor enthusiasts that while we are enjoying the open spaces that nature has provided us, we should also be aware of the risks that come with the wilderness experience, and certain safety precautions should be taken. The AVMA has the following advice on certain health concerns linked with outdoor activities. (4/24)

[**BSE is confirmed in Calif. Dary cow**](http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/story/2012-04-24/mad-cow-disease-California-cow/54508580/1?csp=34news)

The USDA has confirmed a California dairy cow had bovine spongiform encephalopathy, the nation's fourth-ever case and first since 2006. Chief Veterinary Officer Dr. John Clifford said the food supply was never in danger, and the animal had an atypical case of the disease discovered via routine testing. AVMA CEO Dr. Ron DeHaven, a past APHIS administrator who was the nation's chief veterinary officer in 2003 when the first U.S. case was discovered, said the finding illustrates the success of the USDA surveillance program. (4/25)