**One Health News Bits**

**April 11, 2011**

[**White-nose syndrome identified in 17 U.S. states**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cRbjBXzCwNBYAjpECicOlzCicNIzEk?format=standard)

White-nose syndrome, an infectious fungus that thrives in cold weather, already has spread to 17 states and killed 1 million bats since its discovery in New York four years ago. Little brown bats have been the most affected, having lost roughly 20% of their population in the northeastern U.S. to the fungus. Scientists are endeavoring to discover the origin of the fungus and effective measures for fighting its spread. Biologists have expressed growing concerns over the ecological imbalance that could ensue if the bats disappear because of the fungus.

[**High-sensing biochip could aid in pollutant, disease detection**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cQxLBXzCwNBYzDvaCicOlzCicNZfyF?format=standard)

Researchers in South Korea have devised a biochip that they say is 100,000 times more sensitive than traditional screening tools in identifying pollutants and diseases. The technology can "better detect cancer growth in the body, foot-and-mouth disease virus in animals and the existence of harmful materials in water and the earth," the lead researcher said.

[**Siberian husky has custom-made leg implant fused to its bone**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cQAiBXzCwNBYzSkwCicOlzCicNlfdt?format=standard)

The North Carolina State College of Veterinary Medicine performed an osseointegrated titanium implant in the front paw of a Siberian husky. Surgeon Denis Marcellin-Little said the four-hour procedure "went very well." The dog will need 10 to 12 weeks to recover before it can use its new prosthetic front paw.

[**Group: Human metapneumovirus virus caused mountain gorilla deaths**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cQAiBXzCwNBYzSkxCicOlzCicNoEkg?format=standard)

The Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project, a U.S. veterinary research group, has reported that tissue samples from two dead mountain gorillas in northern Rwanda in 2009 showed evidence of the human metapneumovirus virus. The virus causes respiratory disease in humans. The group also said outbreaks of respiratory disease among the gorillas in Uganda, Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo are increasing. "Although human proximity to mountain gorillas is essential for their conservation, also crucial is minimizing the risk for human-to-great ape transmission of respiratory pathogens," according to the group.

[**Fish version of Ebola virus caused massive fish kill in Milwaukee**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cRbjBXzCwNBYAjpKCicOlzCicNtToJ?format=standard)

A massive fish kill last month in the Milwaukee harbor has been linked to a deadly fish virus that was first discovered in Lake Michigan in 2007. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources reports it is the first time the disease known as viral hemorrhagic septicemia, or VHS, has been found in Lake Michigan waters since 2008.

[**Research on humans could help zoos' nocturnal animals**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cReyBXzCwNBYAzzjCicOlzCicNMoFq?format=standard)

Research on how working at night and sleeping during the day affects melatonin levels, and sleep patterns in humans may help zookeepers take better care of their nocturnal animals, including pottos, bush babies and lorises, which typically spend their days in displays that re-create night and their nights in bright lights aimed at imitating daylight. Research on third-shift workers found artificial light at night suppresses melatonin production and can lead to a host of ailments from chronic fatigue and depression to higher rates of breast cancer.

[**Scientists create vaccine for people with cat allergies**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cReyBXzCwNBYAzzlCicOlzCicNRSue?format=standard)

A team of researchers is formulating a vaccine that they say can help mitigate cat-allergy symptoms in people. Preliminary testing indicates the shot's beneficial effects outlast current allergy-shot treatments. The scientists say a single shot of the new vaccine would be tantamount to a year's worth of allergy shots in terms of reducing allergic reactions to cats.

[**Researchers develop a nanoparticle that works against superbugs**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cReyBXzCwNBYAzzmCicOlzCicNWMcF?format=standard)

Researchers at [International Business Machines](http://online.wsj.com/public/quotes/main.html?type=djn&symbol=IBM) Corp. said they developed a tiny drug, called a nanoparticle, that in test-tube experiments showed promise as a weapon against dangerous superbugs that have become resistant to antibiotics.

[**Administration to propose waiting period for meat**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cReyBXzCwNBYAzzyCicOlzCicNYQKG?format=standard)

The Department of Agriculture is expected to release a proposal that would require companies to delay sending meat to customers until it has been properly tested by agency workers, in an effort to make the food supply safer. The agency, which inspects billions of pounds of meat each year, said 44 of the most serious meat and egg recalls between 2007 and 2009 would have been unnecessary if the proposed rule had been in place.

[**African swine fever detected in Russian pigs, watchdog group says**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cRhOBXzCwNBYARwJCicOlzCicNjpnL?format=standard)

April 6 (Bloomberg) -- African swine fever was found in hogs in the northern Russian region of Murmansk, according to Rosselkhoznadzor, the food safety watchdog.

[**Denmark's example shows hog farmers can successfully cut antibiotic use**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cRlEBXzCwNBYBhqHCicOlzCicNLZUF?format=standard)

Pork production in Denmark has gone up since the country began phasing in a ban on low-dose antibiotics for growth promotion in hogs 18 years ago, and its a model producers in the U.S. and other countries can adopt, according to opinion writer Ralph Loglisci. Denmark's producers achieved their results through a combination of changes that included switching to lower-density housing models, cleaning barns more frequently and extending the weaning period of piglets.

[**Assistant sues veterinarian after contracting MRSA infection**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cRlEBXzCwNBYBhqJCicOlzCicNRDJt?format=standard)

A League City veterinary assistant is suing a River Oaks veterinary group after, she says, she contracted a serious disease while working with a sick animal. League City resident Lori Marsh filed a lawsuit on April 4 in the Harris County District Court against Gulf Coast Veterinary Internists of River Oaks, alleging negligence.

[**Activists and circus officials debate risks from TB-infected elephant**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cRlEBXzCwNBYBhqMCicOlzCicNkudM?format=standard)

Some animal activists say an elephant performing in Baltimore with the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is a public health risk because it tested positive for tuberculosis, but circus and public health officials say the animal doesn't have an active form of the disease and isn't a danger. Federal rules call for quarantines only when infected elephants have active cases, but Karen the elephant was previously banned from entering Tennessee, a state where nine animal refuge employees caught TB from an infected elephant.

**Outbreak of Invasive Listeriosis Associated with the Consumption of Hog Head Cheese --- Louisiana, 2010**

During January--June 2010, a total of 14 cases of laboratory-confirmed invasive listeriosis were reported to the Louisiana Office of Public Health (OPH). Isolates of *Listeria monocytogenes* from the blood samples of eight patients were identified as serotype 1/2a and had pulsed-field gel electrophoresis (PFGE) pattern combinations that were indistinguishable from one another.