

USDA Announces Oct. 1 as Deadline to Participate in Accreditation Program

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23, 2011 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) today announced to the public that veterinarians who are currently accredited in the National Veterinary Accreditation Program (NVAP) may continue to perform accredited duties and may elect to continue to participate in the NVAP until Oct. 1, 2011.

A previous notice announced that currently accredited veterinarians may continue to perform accredited duties until further notice, even if they had not received a date for their first accreditation renewal, because logistical difficulties prevented APHIS from processing currently accredited veterinarians (over 50,000) who elected to participate.

The USDA is now close to reaching its goal of processing these elections and is specifying Oct. 1 as the date by which veterinarians must elect to continue to participate in the NVAP. The accreditation of all currently accredited veterinarians who have not elected to participate in the program will expire, ending their authorization to perform accredited work.

For accredited veterinarians who have not yet elected to participate and would like to do so, APHIS has made available a [Web seminar](#) on the revisions to the NVAP and how to elect to participate.

For more information on the accreditation program and pending deadline, please visit the [APHIS Web site](#).

Earn Cash Back on Electricity Bills through ISVMA's Newest Sponsored Benefit Program

The Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association has partnered with Energy Plus®. Now, ISVMA members within the ComEd territory have the opportunity to choose an electricity supply company that offers Activation Bonuses and Cash Back rebates on electricity.

Members will receive these great benefits:

- \$25-\$50 Activation Bonus for each account enrolled after just two months of service*
- 3%-5% Cash Back every year on the supply portion of your bill*
- Save up to 10% – Energy Plus has a current supply rate for new customers that is approximately 10% below ComEd**
- No early cancellation penalties or enrollment fees

The best part is that nothing about your electrical service will change! ComEd will continue to deliver your electricity, read your meter, handle service emergencies, and mail your statement. You'll be earning Cash Back, while enjoying the safety and reliability of your current service so join those who have already switched.

[Learn More or Sign Up!](#) Or call Energy Plus at 877-830-6820 and mention offer code "IVM-5575".

*Members will receive a Cash Back rebate check after every 12 billing cycles of service for active accounts. Active accounts are defined as those (i) that are billing more than \$0 and (ii) for which Energy Plus has not received a request on behalf of the customer to discontinue (drop) their service. The Cash Back rebate will be 5% of the annual electricity supply charges per business account and 3% per residential account. A \$50 Activation Bonus check for business accounts or a \$25 Activation Bonus check for residential accounts will be mailed at the close of your 2nd billing cycle with Energy Plus.

**The Energy Plus rate for new customers as of August 2011 is approximately 10% below the Electricity Supply Charge plus the Transmission Services Charge rates posted by ComEd. The Energy Plus rate is variable and therefore subject to change. Current and historical rates should not be taken as a guarantee of future rates and Energy Plus makes no warranty, express or implied,

regarding future savings. Any savings claims by Energy Plus only refers to the Electricity Supply Charge plus the Transmission Services Charge rates for ComEd Customer Groups Residential Non-Electric Space Heating (currently \$0.07921) and Watt-hour Non-Electric Space Heating (currently \$0.08067). If you do not know your current Customer Group, you can call your utility company or Energy Plus. Energy Plus' price of \$0.071 for Residential Non-Electric Space Heating and \$0.073 for Watt-hour Non-Electric Space Heating is for your Electricity Supply Charge and Transmission Services Charge, and it excludes taxes, utility distribution charges, and other utility fees and charges. Energy Plus does not currently offer energy supply service to ComEd customers on Residential Electric Space Heating rate plans or Net Metering customers. Please visit www.pluginillinois.org for information from the Illinois Commerce Commission regarding electric choice. Our Illinois certification number is 10-0497.

If you are currently on a Budget Billing plan, your monthly budget billing amount may be adjusted as a result of enrollment with Energy Plus. In addition, your utility may perform a true-up upon enrollment with Energy Plus. Depending on various factors, including season, this true-up could result in a charge, or a credit.

Strong Action Taken to Strengthen Veterinary Economics

August 23, 2011 (Message from Dr. Rene Carlson, AVMA President) As your AVMA President, I'm thrilled to be the first to tell you about recent AVMA Executive Board actions directed at strengthening the economic foundation of our profession.

Today, the Executive Board approved an Economic Vision Statement that will drive a national economic strategy. The vision statement is "Veterinary medicine is a personally and financially rewarding profession."

To work toward this vision, the Executive Board also approved a number of related recommendations, including:

- Establishing a Veterinary Economic Strategy Committee, composed of AVMA members, to advise and recommend strategies to the Executive Board on economic issues;
- Creating a veterinary economics division at the AVMA;
- Setting aside a \$5 million National Economics Strategy Reserve Fund to fund tactical plans and programs consistent with the national strategy; Authorizing the continuation of the Economics Vision Steering Committee (of which I'm proud to say I'm a member) to provide additional guidance and oversee the development of alliances and partnerships with stakeholder groups to support economic programs; and
- Developing an economics communications plan including, but not limited to, a web presence, to disseminate information and resources regarding economic issues.

We know the challenges you're facing and we know that economic viability and growth are top-of-mind for you. We also know there are no quick fixes and no "magic bullets" for the problem, and we need your help to achieve this vision. If you're interested in serving on the Veterinary Economic Strategy Committee, watch the AVMA@Work blog and newsletter and/or sign up for the AVMA volunteer/leadership opportunities email alerts in our [Email Subscription Center](#). In addition, feel free to comment below on the specific issues you're facing or any other input you'd like to provide.

USDA Announces Directive to Improve Humane Handling Enforcement Measures to Ensure Consistent Treatment of Livestock

Congressional and Public Affairs
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WASHINGTON, Aug. 15, 2011 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) today issued a directive with new instructions to its inspectors that will better ensure the humane treatment and slaughter of livestock presented for processing at FSIS-inspected facilities. FSIS will train its personnel to ensure they are prepared to carry out these new instructions.

"USDA is deeply committed to ensuring the humane treatment of livestock at federally-inspected establishments," said Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Elisabeth Hagen. "We are honoring that commitment with clear guidance and better training for our inspection program personnel."

This directive provides new instructions for inspection program personnel to ensure that treatment of livestock during handling and slaughter minimizes the animal's amount of excitement, pain, injury or discomfort. Notably, this directive includes a definition for "egregious inhumane treatment". Under this definition, an egregious situation is any act or condition that results in severe harm to animals, which includes the excessive beating or prodding of disabled livestock, stunning animals and allowing them to regain consciousness, or any treatment causing unnecessary pain and suffering.

During the past two years, FSIS has implemented a number of measures to strengthen humane handling enforcement. On Dec. 22, 2010, FSIS issued new instructions to its inspectors to condemn and promptly euthanize all non-ambulatory mature cattle. On March 14, 2009, the USDA issued a final rule to amend Federal meat inspection regulations to require a complete ban on the slaughter of non-ambulatory cattle for use in human food. FSIS also created 24 new humane handling enforcement positions, including 23 in-plant personnel and a headquarters-based Humane Handling Enforcement Coordinator.

FSIS has announced a variety of new measures to safeguard the public from foodborne illnesses over the past two years in concert with the Food Safety Working Group (FSWG) created by President Obama in 2009. The FSWG developed three core principles to help guide food safety in the United States: prioritizing prevention, strengthening surveillance and enforcement, and improving response and recovery. Since that time, USDA has:

- Announced implementation of revised and new performance standards which require establishments slaughtering chicken and turkey to make continued reductions in the occurrence of pathogens. USDA expects the new standards to prevent as many as 25,000 foodborne illnesses.
- Proposed a new requirement for the meat and poultry industry called "test and hold" that, once enacted, will significantly reduce the amount of unsafe food reaching consumers.
- Launched the Mobile Ask Karen app (m.AskKaren.gov on your phone's mobile browser), a Web-based smartphone application that brings accessible food safety information to consumers in a new way—via their smartphones. Users can utilize this app at the grocery store, barbecue grill, and kitchen stovetop.
- Proposed a new rule to simplify labeling language for raw meat and poultry products that include injections, marinades, or have otherwise incorporated added solutions which may not be visible to the consumer.
- Launched the Public Health Information System, a modern repository for key data about public health trends and food safety violations at the nearly 6,100 plants FSIS regulates across the country.
- And started an initiative to cut down E. coli contamination including stepped-up meat facility inspections to involve greater use of sampling to monitor the products going into ground beef, among others.

In addition, in late June, USDA joined the Ad Council, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to debut Food Safe Families, the first joint public service campaign to help families prevent foodborne illnesses in the home. This campaign reminds Americans to clean kitchen surfaces, utensils and hands while preparing food; separate raw meats from other foods by using different cutting boards; cook foods to the correct temperatures; and, chill raw and prepared foods promptly.

For more information on Directive 6900.2, which will better ensure the humane treatment and slaughter of livestock presented for processing at FSIS-inspected facilities, contact FSIS' Office of Policy and Program Development at (202) 205-0495.

Check and Confirm the Accuracy of Your Practice Listing Using the ISVMA "Find a Veterinarian" Search Tool

Nearly 20,000 people visit the ISVMA website every day. Many of them use the "[Find a Veterinarian](#)" search tool to locate a nearby veterinarian.

There are two ways to use the "Find a Veterinarian" search tool:

1. The public can use the "[Find a Veterinarian](#)" link located just below the "Home" button on the vertical link bar at the left side of the ISVMA website. This search tool **will only list ISVMA member veterinarians**. Non-member veterinarians **will not** show up using the public search tool. Those members that have not paid their dues by July 30, 2011 (after the 30-day grace period) will no longer show up on this public search tool.

To get a listing of ISVMA member veterinarians associated with your practice, type in your practice name in the "Organization" search field.

2. If any ISVMA member logs into the [Member Center](#), you can get a complete listing of veterinarians and technicians listed for your practice in our database and their membership status using the Member Directory Link on the horizontal (orange) link bar at the top of the ISVMA website.

To get a complete listing of all veterinarians and technicians associated with your practice in our database (and their membership status), type in your practice name in the "Organization" search field.

IMPORTANT: Please take a few minutes to have an ISVMA member from your practice log in to check the listing for your practice. Review the veterinarians and technicians listed for your practice and contact ISVMA if there are any changes. If you have a veterinarian or technician that has left your practice, please let us know where they have relocated. If you have a veterinarian or technician that is in your practice, but not listed, please let us know so that we can update our database. If there are any changes to your practice staffing list, please email peter@isvma.org with the requested information.

About the Photo

[Red-shouldered Hawks](#) (*Buteo lineatus*) are large, broad-winged hawks with a relatively long tails and heavy bodies. They show reverse sexual size dimorphism, meaning that females are larger than males. Female red-shouldered hawks average 25 ounces and 19 to 24 inches in length whereas males average 20 ounces and 17 to 23 inches in length. Adults have a wingspan of 36 to 42 inches (average 39 inches). Adult red-shouldered hawks have a brown head, a dark brown back and reddish underparts with dark brown streaks. Juveniles appear similar to adults, but have creamy underparts with dark brown spots and streaks. Both adults and juveniles have reddish lesser secondary upper wing coverts, which give the impression of red shoulders, giving this species its name. The tail of the both immature and mature red-shouldered hawks is dark brown with white bands.

Red-shouldered hawks are monogamous and territorial. Courtship displays occur on the breeding grounds, and involve soaring together in broad circles while calling, or soaring and diving toward one another. Males may also perform the "sky-dance" by soaring high in the air, and then making a series of steep dives, each followed by a wide spiral and rapid ascent. These courtship flights usually occur in late morning and early afternoon.

Red-shouldered hawks breed once per year between April and July, with peak activity occurring between early April and mid June. They often use the same nest from year to year, refurbishing it each spring. Both the male and female build or refurbish the nest, which is large and deep, constructed from sticks, twigs, shredded bark, leaves and green sprigs.

Red-shouldered hawks are solitary and territorial. They do not form flocks, even in the winter. Most populations of red-shouldered hawks do not migrate. They stay in the same area year-round. Red-shouldered hawks that breed in the northern parts of their range (the northeast United States and southern Canada) migrate to northern Mexico for winter.

The diet of red-shouldered hawks consists primarily of small mammals, the largest of these being rabbits and squirrels. Other food items include reptiles and amphibians, such as snakes, toads, frogs and lizards, small birds and large insects. Crayfish are important prey for red-shouldered hawks in some regions.

Red-shouldered hawks search for prey while perched on a treetop or soaring over woodlands. When they sight prey, they kill it by dropping directly onto it from the air. They may cache food near their nest for later consumption.

Prior to 1900, this species was one of the most common hawks in eastern North America. Population densities declined substantially through most of the 20th century, probably due to hunting and destruction of wet hardwood forest habitat. Poisoning from insecticides and industrial pollutants and loss of habitat are major threats to this species. Disturbance of nesting pairs by human activity such as logging and climbing of nest trees also presents a serious threat to some populations.

This species is listed as threatened or endangered in several U.S. states, including Illinois. It is protected in the U.S. under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

I photographed this Red-shouldered Hawk on February 9, 2008 in the Jim Edgar Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area. I was very surprised and thrilled to see this gorgeous bird because it is very uncommon to see one in most parts of Illinois and very seldom does anyone get such a tremendous look!

Contact Us

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