



Confronting the Issues

One Health
PFB Policy Development
June 2021

Issue

The Pennsylvania One Health Task Force was established in 2018 as a subcommittee under the Animal Health Commission of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. The task force is an interdisciplinary group of federal, state, and academic stakeholders with a stated goal of working together to achieve positive outcomes for human, animal, plant, and ecosystem health in Pennsylvania. Currently, the Task Force's authority is limited in that it is only able to make recommendations to the state that have no binding action. But recently there has been some discussion into whether the Task Force would be more effective if it were reorganized. The ultimate goal of re-organization is to give the Task Force more authority and/or the ability to advocate for recommendations on the health of animals, humans and the environment through recommendations made by the members. Should PFB support the One Health Task Force having more authority in implementing its recommendations, or having the ability to advocate for policy?

Questions

1. How can a comprehensive approach to health research affect farms and animal operations?
2. How would re-organization of the One Health Task Force influence health and environmental policy in Pennsylvania?
3. Should PFB support the One Health Task Force having more authority in implementing its recommendations, or having the ability to advocate for policy? Why or why not?

Background

The Pennsylvania One Health Task Force was established in 2018 as a subcommittee under the Animal Health Commission of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. The task force is an interdisciplinary group of federal, state, and academic stakeholders with a stated goal of working together to achieve positive outcomes for human, animal, plant, and ecosystem health in Pennsylvania.

The One Health concept is a worldwide strategy for expanding interdisciplinary collaborations and communications in all aspects of health care for humans, animals and the environment. It recognizes how the health of each individual element contributes to the health of the whole and shows how obvious impacts in one area – for example, outbreaks of wildlife diseases – are often linked to environmental stress, as well as diseases that concurrently affect the health and wellbeing of other species.

The members of the Pennsylvania One Health Task Force include the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, The PA Department of Health, DEP, DCNR, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Penn State University, Penn State Extension, the University of Pennsylvania, USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services and USDA-APHIS Veterinary Services. Pennsylvania Farm Bureau also has representation on the Task Force.

The One Health Task Force does research on various topics. Recent topics of research include the effects on wildlife and human health from free-roaming cats, and environmental and health effects of lead, including lead-based ammunition used in hunting and lead battery disposal.

Currently, the Task Force's authority is limited in that it is only able to make recommendations to the state that have no binding action. But recently there has been some discussion into whether the Task Force would be more effective if it were reorganized. One example would be to become a commission, which would require approval by the legislature. Another example would be to re-organize as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). Multiple options are being explored, though the likely scenario could be as an NGO under an organization such as the Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Association (PVMA).

The ultimate goal of re-organization is to give the Task Force more authority and/or the ability to advocate for recommendations on the health of animals, humans and the environment through recommendations made by the members.

Farm Bureau Policy

None