

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: Wisconsin prioritizes animal health in federal policy discussions

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MADISON, Wis. – Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Secretary Randy Romanski participated in the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) [2023 Winter Policy Conference](#) in Washington D.C. this week. While there, he proposed two action items related to animal health, which passed the organization with unanimous support.

The first action item encourages USDA to publish rates or guidance explaining which disease response costs the federal government will cover in order to reduce confusion for producers and aid states in developing emergency plans. These changes will enable states to confidently move forward with contracting and purchasing to facilitate a rapid response.

The second action item encourages USDA to develop incentives to help producers develop depopulation and disposal plans to prepare for animal disease emergencies. This will allow impacted farms to complete depopulation and disposal more efficiently when needed and allow them to return to production quicker. “Over the past several days, I participated with my colleagues in robust discussions about the challenges we are facing responding to animal diseases such as highly pathogenic avian influenza,” said Romanski. “With the passage of these action items, NASDA will now work with federal government officials and industry stakeholders to move them forward.”

While in Washington D.C. the regional [Midwestern Association of State Departments of Agriculture \(MASDA\)](#) group met, and Secretary Romanski was elected Treasurer of the organization. The [Food Export Association of the Midwest USA](#) also met at the Winter Policy Conference. Romanski was also selected to serve as the next Secretary/Treasurer of Food Export-Midwest.

“As Secretary/Treasurer, I will serve on the Executive Committee and look forward to increasing my involvement in the details of the Food Export-Midwest board to increase our region’s agricultural exports around the world,” added Romanski. “I look forward to this new position and identifying opportunities for Wisconsin to advance its agricultural exports.”

The [2023 Farm Bill](#) is a priority for NASDA. NASDA has identified 10 policy areas including agriculture research, animal disease, conservation and climate resiliency, cyber security, food safety, hemp, invasive species, local food systems, special crops, and trade promotion.

“The theme of this year’s Winter Policy Conference was ‘United We Thrive,’ and it is clear that our messages are amplified when we work together on federal policy issues,” explained Romanski. “I will continue to work with my colleagues to advocate for Wisconsin agriculture.”

A student from the University of Wisconsin–Madison Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) organization, Confidence John, participated in the Winter Policy Conference through the [Agriculture Policy Summit](#). The Agriculture Policy Summit teaches undergraduate and graduate students about federal agriculture policy through hands-on experiences.

“I am proud Confidence was selected to be part of the Agriculture Policy Summit, and he was a wonderful representative for Wisconsin throughout the conference.” concluded Romanski. “As a native of Nigeria and a Master’s student studying agroecology, Confidence brings a valuable perspective to the agricultural policy discussions.”

NASDA is a nonpartisan association including all 50 states and four territories. To learn more about NASDA, visit <https://www.nasda.org/>.