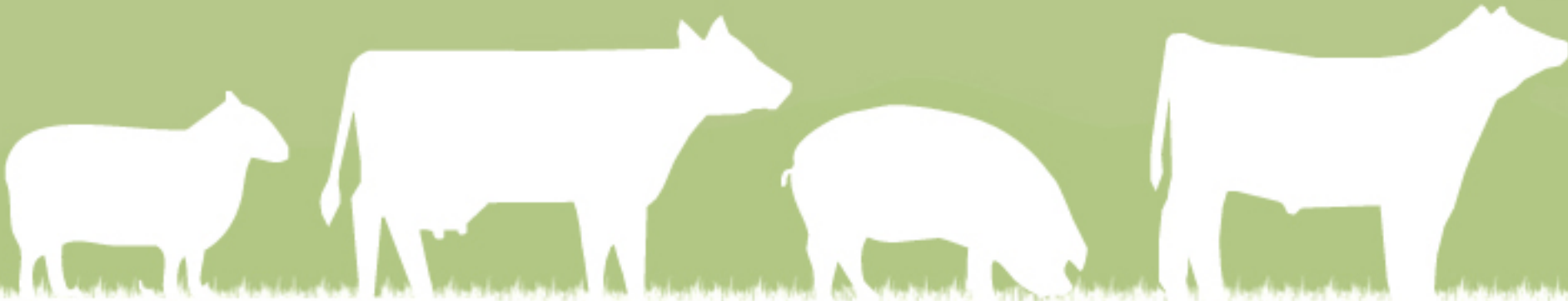


# Communicating About FMD: Industry Perspective

Stacey Stevens, Dairy Management Inc. (DMI)  
FMD Cross-Species Communications Team Representative

May 1, 2013



# Bringing the Consumer POV into FMD Response Planning

- Intro to FMD Cross-Species Communication Team
- 2012 Consumer Research Overview
- Government & Industry Coordination
- Upcoming DMI Tabletops



# Who is the FMD Cross-Species Communication Team?





# Cross-Species Team Goals

- **Protect** animal health & minimize disease spread
- **Promote** consumer confidence in meat & milk safety
- **Prevent** supply disruption to customers



# Key Activities

- **Create** unified FMD crisis communication plan for livestock community
- **Collaborate** on consumer-tested outbreak response messaging
- **Coordinate** with gov't



**BBC NEWS** WORLD EDITION

You are in: UK: **Politics**

Monday, 22 July, 2002, 15:43 GMT 16:43 UK

News Front Page

**'It was a hell of a mess'**



Africa  
Americas  
Asia-Pacific  
Europe  
Middle East  
South Asia  
UK  
England  
N Ireland  
Scotland  
Wales

About 100,000 carcasses were waiting for the army





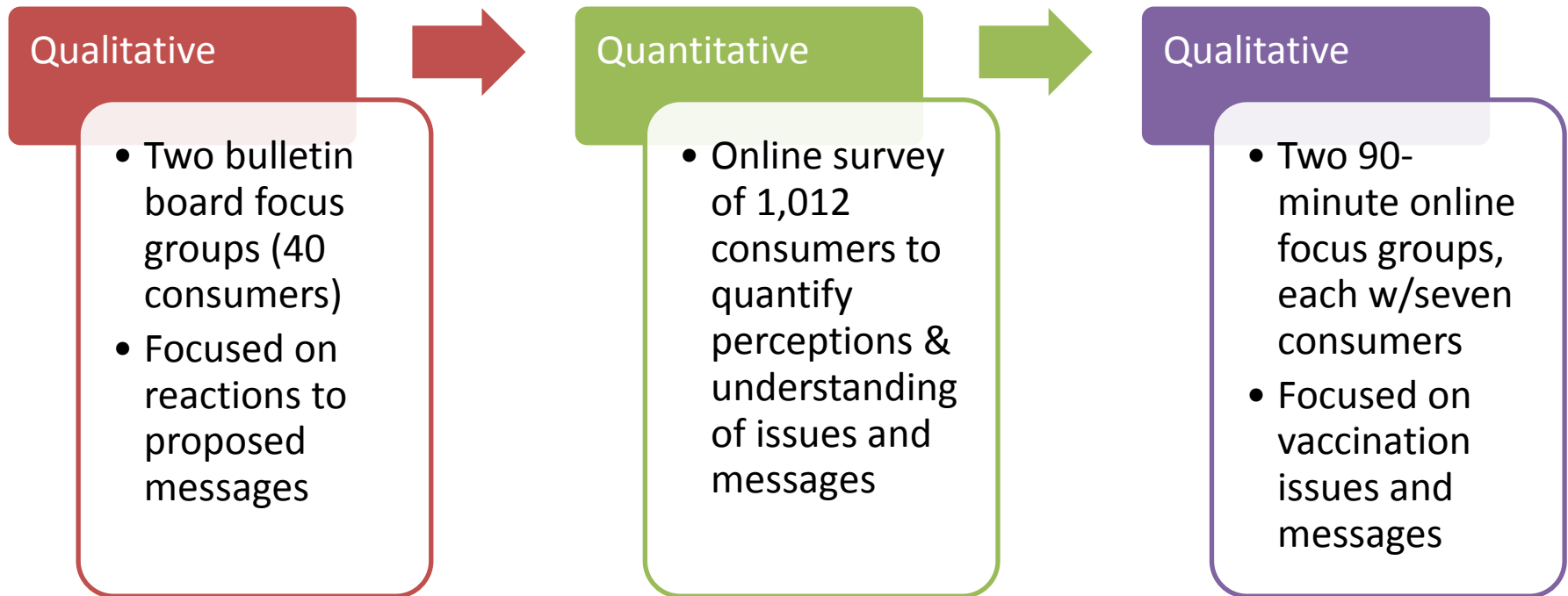
# Effective Communication in the Event of an FMD Outbreak: 2012 Research Overview



# Research Objectives

- In advance of outbreak, need to better understand:
  - Current awareness and knowledge levels regarding FMD (last assessed in 2007)
  - Consumer acceptance of messages
    - 1) Food Safety
    - 2) Disease Impact and Management
    - 3) FMD Containment
    - 4) FMD Control
    - 5) Vaccinations

# Research Process



All participants ate meat or dairy products at least two times each month.  
Mix of ages, sex, employment, education, ethnicity, income and geographic location.



# Awareness of FMD

- The vast majority (85%) believe they have heard of FMD
- Almost half (49%) believe small children can contract the disease
- Consumers are confused about the difference between FMD and HFMD

*"I have heard of that disease. I cannot think of anything specifically I know about the disease except that it is much dreaded by the farmer."*

# Consumers Want to Know:

- The location of the outbreak; type of livestock involved
- Actions taken to contain the outbreak
- The extent to which an FMD vaccine is tested and approved
- What has been successful in other countries
- What happens to infected animals after being euthanized

*“I would want to know more about what steps were being taken to keep it under control. I would very closely monitor for more information, and I would be sure to know my meat and dairy source before buying.”*



# Shifts Since 2007 Research

- BSE no longer top-of-mind
- The Internet has increased the desire for self-search and information gathering
  - Consumers are naturally information seekers
  - It is important to provide enough accurate information, but too much can frighten people
- Unease about “industrial farming” translated as fears that the animals are already receiving too many hormones/antibiotics/chemicals from feed



# Actions Consumers Say They Would Take if There Was an Outbreak of FMD

- **Not change habits much, monitor the situation through news, own research**
  - It isn't known to impact humans
- **Research FMD**
  - See if local stores are carrying products from affected producers
  - See if there is a recall of any meat or dairy products at local retailers
  - Find information on FMD, origin of the outbreak, where it occurred
- **Alter buying behaviors**
  - Not purchase from stores that are sourcing from affected areas
  - Stock up on food items that may increase in price or become in short supply, buy alternatives
  - Buy locally grown meat that was not contaminated
  - Buy more fruits, vegetables, seafood, chicken
- **Alter diet, particularly if in an area that has infected animals**
  - Not eat meat or milk for a period of time
  - Consume less meat or milk
  - Take care with milk/dairy, not consume or purchase until safe
- **Abide by the travel restrictions in a control zone**

*"I would contact my local public health agency and local retailers to see if there are any meats or dairy products that have been recalled."*

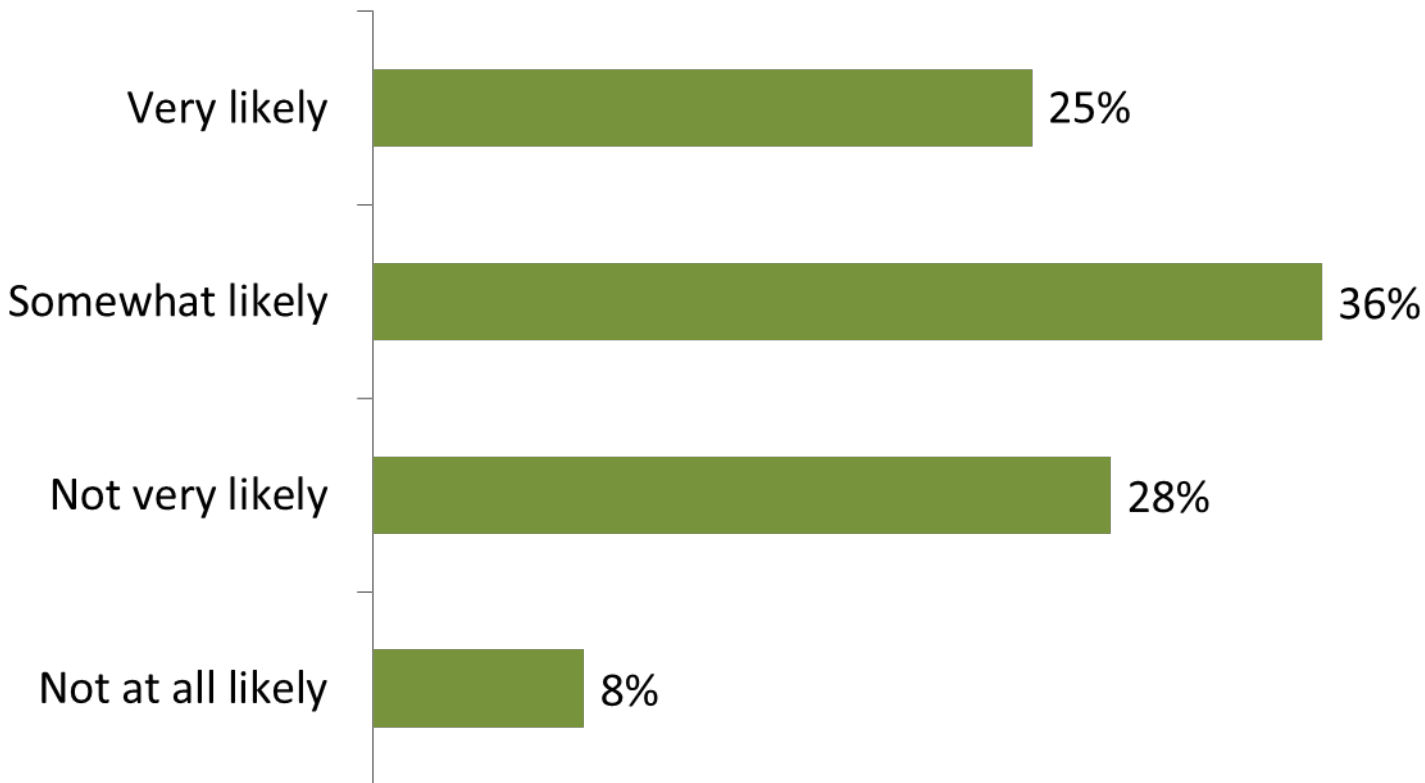
*"I would not purchase any milk/dairy products or meats until I felt that enough convincing evidence was released to make me feel safe."*

*"As FMD is an animal disease, during the crisis, I'd change my diet to more vegetarian based."*

*"The only action I would take at the time would be to keep up on the information that was presented so I would know what is going on."*

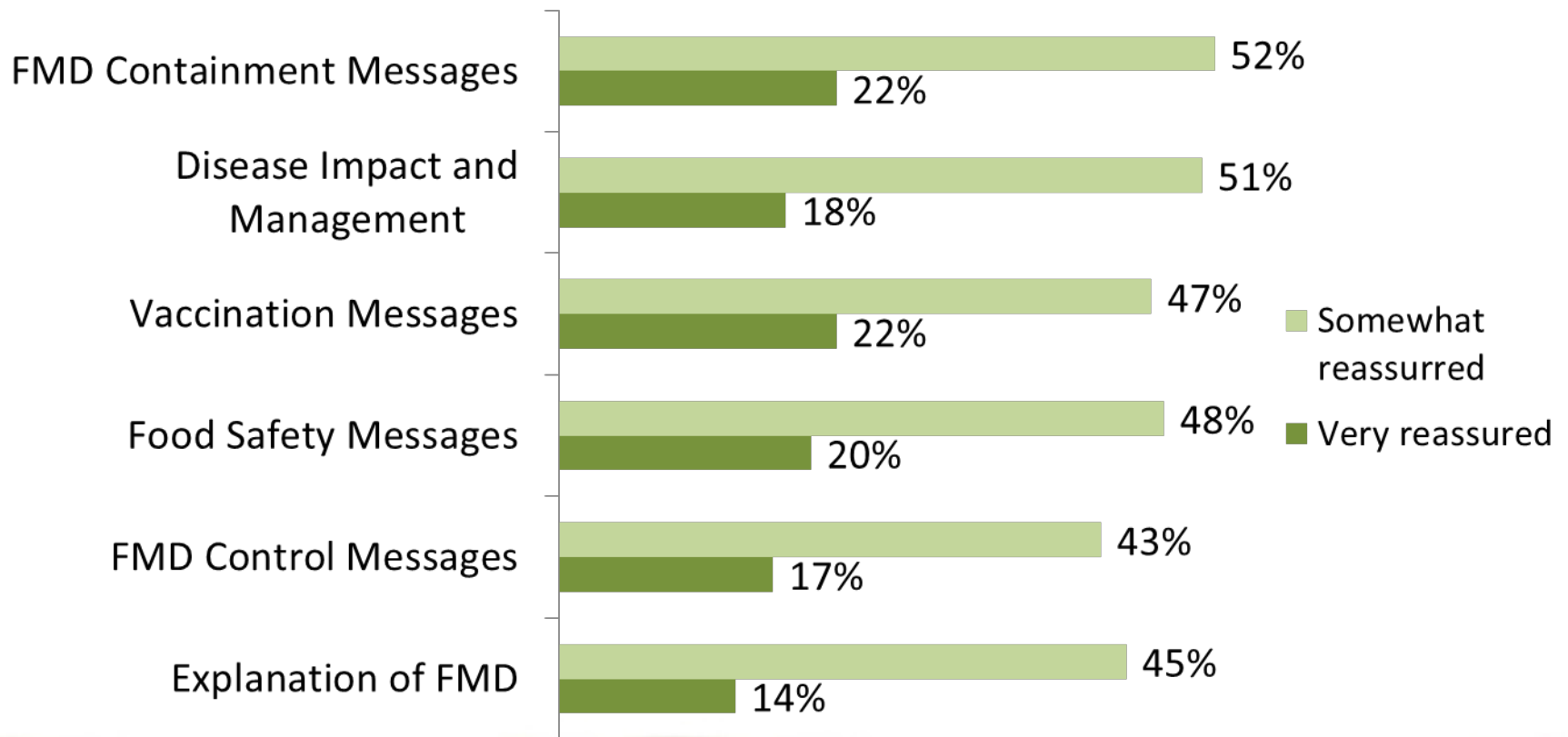
**Six out of ten (61%) indicate they would be likely to stop consuming dairy and meat in the event of an FMD outbreak, only one-fourth (25%) is very likely to do so. More than one-third (36%) are not likely to change their consumption patterns.**

*“Thinking about all the precautions and steps to contain the disease that have been presented to you, if there were an outbreak of FMD in the United States, how likely would you be to stop consuming dairy and meat products?” (n=1,012)*



# Strongest Messages

**Reassurance:** The majority feels reassured by the different categories of messages. The FMD containment messages are the most reassuring.





# Messages: Containment

- Containment messages tested as the most reassuring and most likely to instill confidence
- Key points:
  - Not a public health threat
  - Collaboration between industry and gov't
  - “Even though FMD is not a public health threat, we must contain the disease to protect the economic viability of the beef, pork and dairy industries and our country’s ability to provide consumers worldwide with an affordable and steady supply of milk and meat.”



## What Works

- Relevant and compelling
- Matter-of-fact confirmation of food safety
- Shows collaboration
- Talks at a consumer level
- Believable and provides proof/credible source
- Provides additional resources
- Puts the significance in context by explaining the economic impact

## What Doesn't

- Wordiness or too lengthy
- Outdated resources and information
- Lack of research to support claims
- Raises questions about when and how outbreak will be contained
- Ambiguity around how to find latest updates





# Vaccination Awareness

- Both qualitative and quantitative results suggest consumers do not have top-of-mind awareness of livestock vaccinations
- When probed, 58% say animals are routinely vaccinated for different types of disease; 39% say they don't know if this occurs; only 3% do not think that livestock are routinely vaccinated

*“I don't know if animals are currently being vaccinated. It would be fine with me if they do this, as long as they test the vaccine and make sure that it would not be harmful for humans.”*





# Vaccination Acceptance

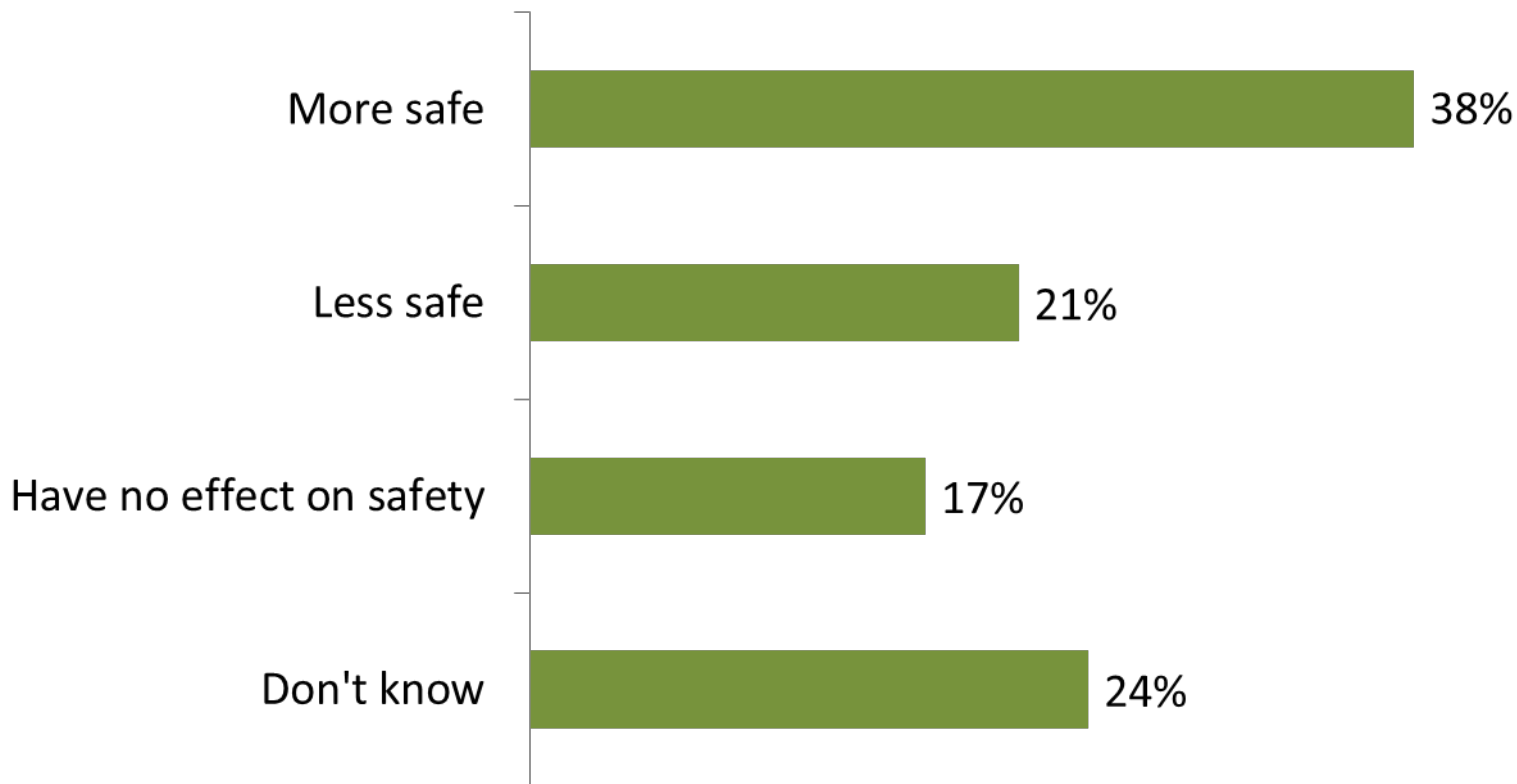
- Consumers believe vaccines are necessary and routine for protecting humans, pets and livestock
- Some expressed concern about the potential for the vaccine to be passed to humans through consumption

*“I would not mind eating meat or milk from vaccinated animals as long as I know it is safe.”*



**A plurality (38%) of consumers who are aware of routine vaccinations feel this procedure makes meat or milk more safe to consume. One-fifth feels it makes products less safe.**

*“Do you think these vaccines make the meat or milk more safe to eat, less safe to eat or have no effect on safety?” (n=587)*



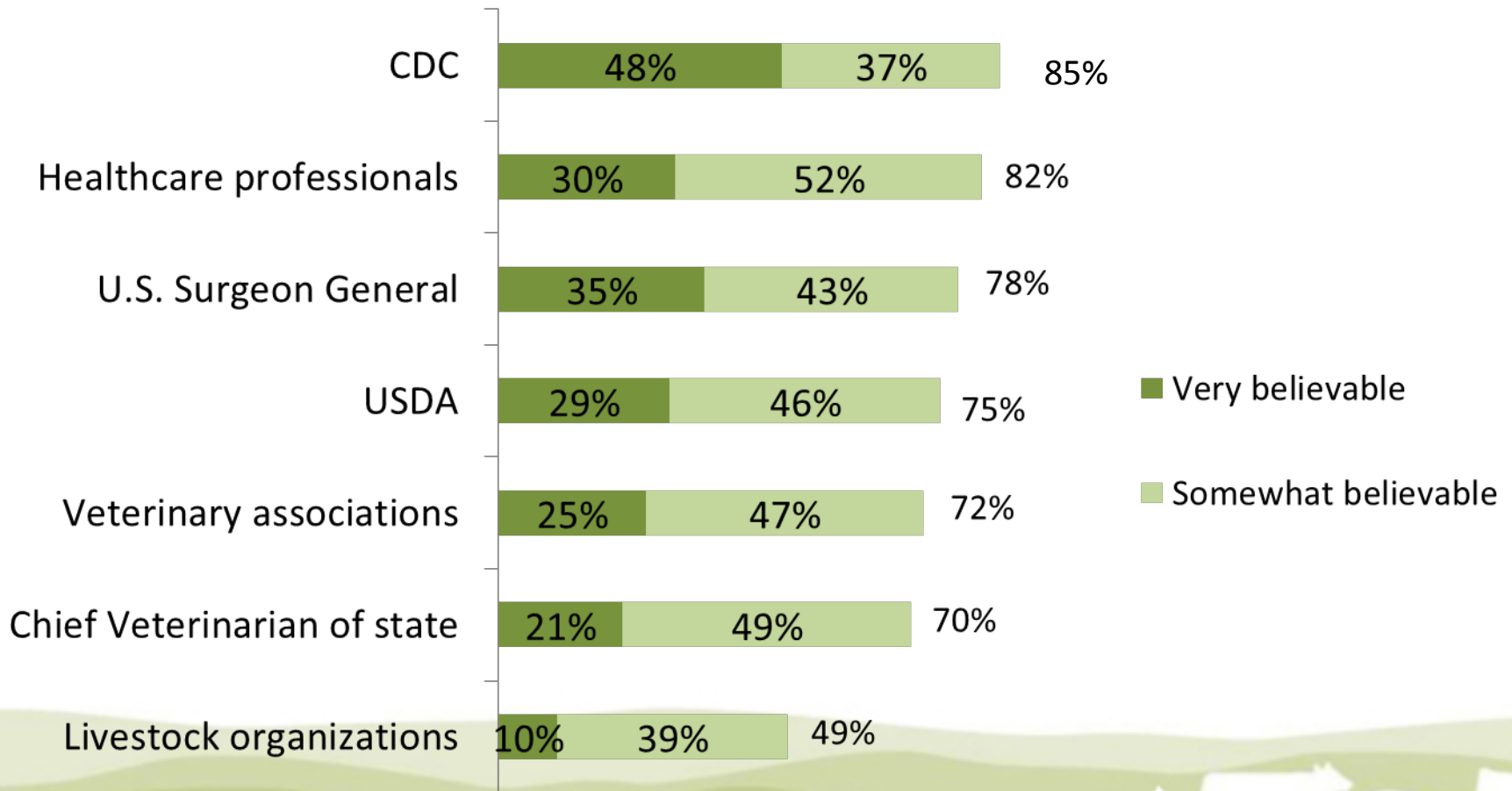


# Vaccination Acceptance in the Context of Outbreak Response

- Consumers are reassured by the messages that were tested
  - Consumers support vaccinations in the event of an FMD outbreak
  - Some consumers would still avoid consuming milk and meat until they knew the outbreak was over

# Credible Sources

Vast majority of consumers consider government agencies credible sources of information. Fewer than half find livestock organizations credible.



# The Bottom Line

- In the event of an FMD outbreak, communications should:
  - Assure consumers of food safety and what is being done to contain the outbreak
  - Reference trusted and credible organizations and sources
  - Provide resources for additional information
  - Integrate a human element



# Government & Industry Cooperation

- Consistent messaging from a variety of experts and organizations is key
- Industry will follow government's lead
- Industry communication channels will amplify government information and consumer-friendly scientific information



# Dairy Industry Social Media Hub

Where **good** comes from  
On Behalf of Those Who Bring Dairy to Your Table

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## DAIRY FARMERS UTILIZE INNOVATION TO ENSURE COW COMFORT

Dairy farmers across the country can all agree: their cows are their biggest priority each day. Learn how many dairy farmers are using innovative efforts to keep cows comfortable.

## RECOMMENDED LINKS

Pride In, Hope for N.E. Dairy Farming (Providence Journal)

Rabobank: Dairymen Face Volatile World Price Cycles (Capital Press)

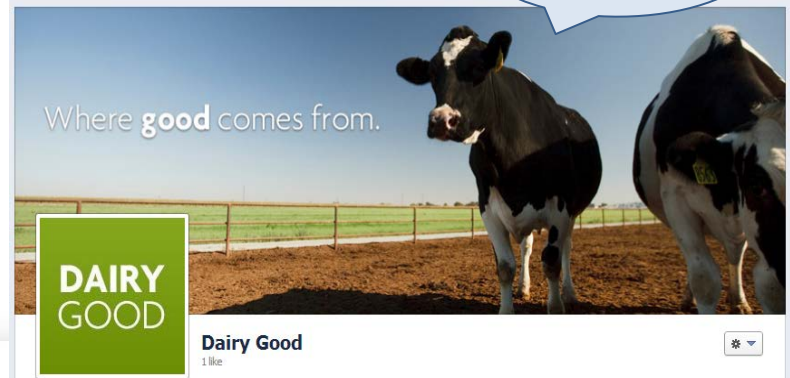
Sustainability: 10 Big and Little Green Ideas (Dairy Foods Magazine)

Archaeologists Find Ancient Evidence Of Cheese-Making (NPR)

Kids Across America Fuel Up to Play 60 (Scholastic)

Minn. Dairy Farmers Squeezed by

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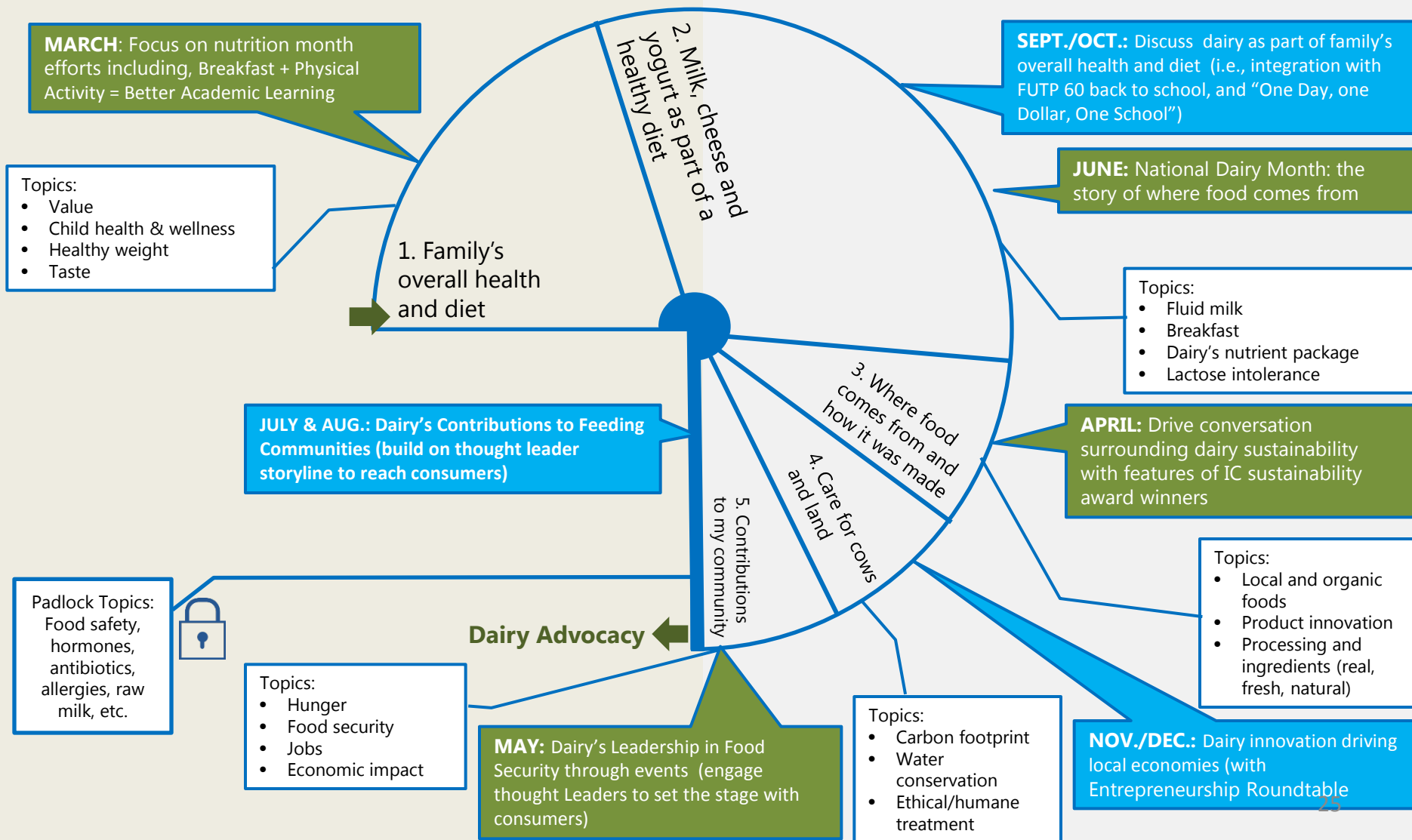




# Dairy Communication Priorities

## Action Consumer's World

## Dairy's Priorities





# Upcoming DMI Tabletops



# Past Dairy Industry Participants





# Past Federal/State Gov't Participants



Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

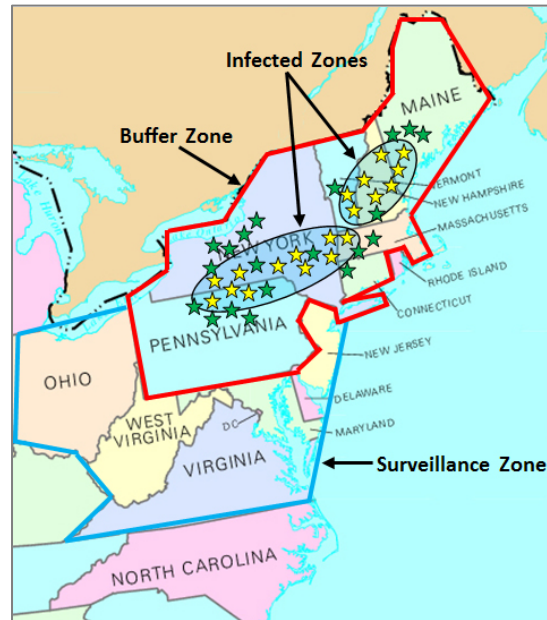


VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES



# Drill Structure

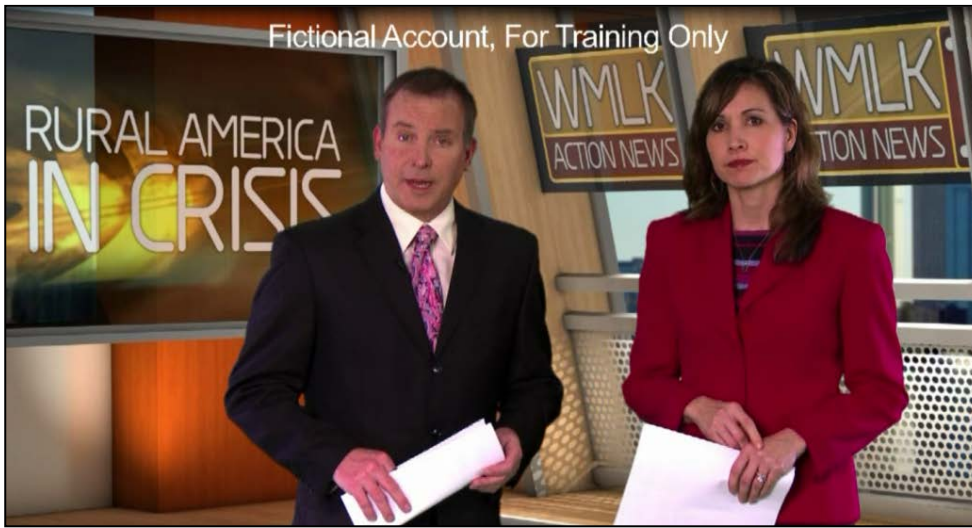
- Drill kick-off the eve of the training, followed by a full-day crisis training focused on consumer confidence
- Fictional crisis occurs in the region of the training
- Training proceeds through response and recovery crisis modes





# Hands-on Experience

- Social crisis simulator requires “real-time” response
- Mock news broadcasts
- Mock blogger and media interviews
- Breakout and skill-building sessions

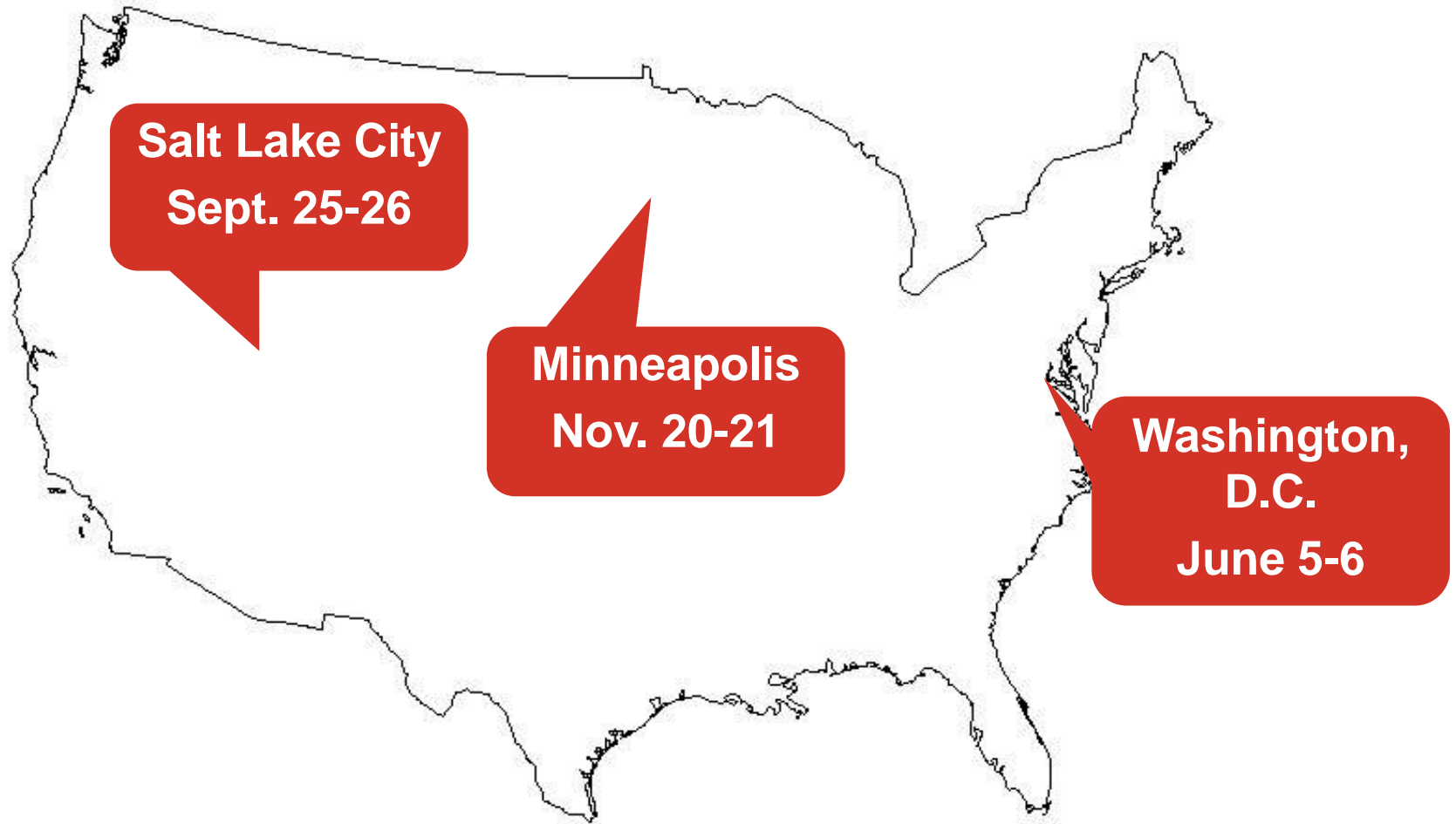




# Continued Engagement

- In a 2013 survey of FMD drill participants:
  - More than 70% said that attending the training made them feel more confident of their organization's ability to respond in a crisis situation
  - More than 70% updated their organization's existing crisis response plan after the training
  - More than 50% met with suppliers, customers, local authorities and/or third-party representatives to discuss their organization's crisis plan after the training

# 2013 Crisis Drills: Food Safety





# Questions?

[FootAndMouthDiseaseInfo.org](http://FootAndMouthDiseaseInfo.org)

