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Progress Report on the National Cage and Aviary Bird Improvement Plan

by Richard E. Baer, D.V.M.
A.F.A. Special Advisor
Groveport, Ohio

Work on the National Cage and Aviary Bird Improvement Plan (NCABIP) continues to progress. Several meetings of the Sub-committee devoted to the project have been held this past year.

The Sub-committee is the product of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) — a non-government agricultural advisory body. The Sub-committee was proposed to seek out a means to establish a uniform set of regulations for Cage and Aviary birds for the fifty states and to provide a structure wherein the Cage and Aviary Bird industry, itself, would decide upon and approve what standards it would operate under. The concept of the Sub-committee is the NCABIP.

A few A.F.A. members seem to be confused as to what role A.F.A. has played in this development. A.F.A. takes no direct part.

It has endorsed the CONCEPT of a Plan which would allow aviculturists on a voluntary basis to regulate themselves under government coordination. It has not, to date, endorsed any set of regulations for this purpose — such regulations of implementation have not even been formally written yet.

As I wrote to one member, for anyone to object to an endorsement for the act of a few colonists who opposed the Declaration of Independence!

The Sub-committee is working diligently on a “working draft” of regulations to implement its proposed Plan. It is not precipitate in its undertaking; for almost two years it has been working on the Plan. An Act of Congress is necessary to give the Federal government (USDA) the authority and means to coordinate any plan that may be formulated. (This will be USDA’s only function.)

As A.F.A.’s delegated representative on the Sub-committee, I work for provisions in the Plan that will best suit the aviculturists. Four other A.F.A. members sit on the Sub-committee with me. (A PIJAC delegate represents the commercial pet industry.)

Once the working draft is finalized by the Sub-committee, I will refer it to the A.F.A. Board and to all interested parties for consideration. Suggested changes and/or additions will be presented by me to the Sub-committee for revision. All of this will be completed before the recommended Plan is published in the Federal Register for general public comment. General public comment will then be requested for consideration.

A.F.A. was founded ten years ago to attain the right for aviculture to decide which regulations best serve the interests of its own industry.
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