



Protect California's Animal Agriculture

Producer's Role in Foreign Animal Disease Prevention

California's Agriculture

California's agricultural sector is number one in the nation. The health and well-being of California's livestock and California's economy are at risk if a foreign animal disease enters California.

What is at stake?

- Livestock cash receipts exceeded \$12 billion.
- In 2013, California ranked number one in the country for milk and cream generating more than \$7 billion.
- In 2012, California ranked number seven in the country for cattle and calves generating more than \$3 billion.
- California ranks number seven in the country in the production of chickens and eggs, generating more than \$319 billion.
- In 2013, California's land devoted to farming and ranching total 25.5 million acres.

Disease outbreaks could bring California's livestock industry to a halt. States and countries will prohibit or restrict movements of animals and animal products. Millions of dollars can be lost overnight from livestock losses, costs of fighting disease, and restricted trade opportunities.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) closely monitor and regulate the movement of livestock across the borders. Despite these efforts to prevent the introduction of disease risk of introduction is always present. Viruses, bacteria, and pests do not respect borders and are capable of entering on imported animals, travelers clothing, and possessions. Illegal smuggling of animal and animal food products also poses serious risks. To help protect California's livestock, producers should implement best management practices, which include biosecurity, disease prevention, and animal traceability.

On-Farm Biosecurity

Biosecurity refers to the measures taken on the farm to prevent the introduction of new disease agents onto the livestock premises. Entry of exposed or carrier animals, contaminated feedstuffs, and contaminated equipment represents the greatest threats for disease entry. These risks can be limited through implementation of an on-farm biosecurity plan.

On-farm biosecurity rests with the herd owner and management team, including your veterinarian. The objective of herd biosecurity is to try to exclude any disease that is not already present in the herd or limit the spread of diseases within the herd.

Successful herd biosecurity plans include:

- Isolation of new animals,
- Movement of animals, people, and equipment, and
- Cleaning and disinfection protocol.



Practical biosecurity plans should be practice daily and reviewed regularly.

Disease Prevention

Minimizing or preventing disease entry and spread on farms is critical in successful production agriculture. In consultation with your herd veterinarian a herd health plan is critical for the prevention of disease. Key components include:

- Vaccination and treatment protocols,
- Daily monitoring and inspection of livestock daily for clinical signs of illness, and
- Necropsy by herd veterinarian of livestock which die from unknown causes.

Animal Traceability

Individual animal identification is essential for on farm management (i.e. vaccination, treatments, pregnancy status, etc.). Recordkeeping is an integral part of managing livestock and minimizing disease risk. Traceability is the ability to follow an animal from birth through growing, feeding, marketing, and ultimately, to slaughtering operations. Currently, no electronic system exists to encompass all of the above operations. This type of extensive traceability system would greatly enhance animal health official's response during an emergency outbreak.

During a disease outbreak animal health officials rely on documents of all animal movements, including dates introduced into the herd, where they came from, and movements to auction. Current paper based tracing systems are inadequate for prompt disease outbreak response. Individual herd owners can protect their livelihood through animal traceability systems.

Early recognition of emergency animal disease is key to containing an outbreak.

Your Role in Protecting California's Agriculture

The California Department of Food and Agriculture, the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System (CAHFS) and the United States Department of Agriculture are continually preparing and surveying for foreign animal diseases potentially being introduced. District-based teams of veterinarians, livestock inspectors, and animal health technicians are ready and capable of responding to an outbreak. However, these teams depend on **you** to watch for and report potential signs of disease.

As an owner of livestock, **you** are the front-line for disease detection. **You** play a critical role in protecting California's agriculture.

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Potential Signs of Foreign Animal Diseases

This includes:

- Sudden, unexplained production loss,
- Sudden, unexplained death loss in herd or flock,
- Blistering around animal's mouth, nose, teats, or hooves,
- Unusual ticks or maggots, and
- Staggering, following or other nervous system signs.



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