NEWSLETTER

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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Message From the Chief

By: Mandy Murray, DVM, MPVM, PhD, AHB Branch Chief

Happy Autumn!

As we head out of summer and into fall, the Animal Health Branch (AHB) staff continues to be busy. Much of the AHB staff time has been dedicated to the continued response to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in dairy cattle, preparing for and recently responding to HPAI in poultry, and preparedness efforts and surveillance for a potential incursion of New World Screwworm. Field staff continue interacting with our industry partners, producers, and veterinarians, responding to the routine and the unusual. The Animal Health Branch is still undergoing growth and has career opportunities for those who may be interested in joining our team. I am proud of the AHB staff for their resiliency, innovation, and flexibility to adapt as we all work tirelessly to fulfill our mission to protect California's animal agriculture.

Come join our team – information about vacancies on page 12.

IN THIS ISSUE:

H5N1 Bird Flu Update in California

By: Jessica Light, DVM, MA, Assistant Branch Chief

California Animal Health Branch continues to address bovine influenza type a (H5N1) in its dairy community. As of November 19, 2025, California has 11 dairy herds under Quarantine for H5N1, with four of those being dairies that have met re-Quarantine criteria. The cumulative total of positive dairy herds throughout this incident is 776 of California's 1,000 dairies. Through CDFA's ongoing milk surveillance program, 800-1,100 milk samples are tested every week for H5N1 with the goal of complete milking herd representative samples on all dairies in the State at least once a month. Every milkshed in the state is currently being tested for H5N1 in large part through cooperation and collaboration between CDFA and the milk creameries and laboratories. Northern California dairies continue to remain free from H5N1, and our commercial milk supply continues to be safe.

CDFA District Modifications

By: Jessica Light, DVM, MA, Assistant Branch Chief

CDFA has decided to make some modifications to Redding and Modesto Districts. Effective September 15, 2025, we have expanded the Redding district southward to include the bay area counties of Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, San Mateo, San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa, Sonoma and Marin. Please take note of this change as it is demarcated on the state map.

History Of Screwworm Fly Sterilization

By: Linda Harrison, DVM, Redding District

Have you ever wondered when and how they figured out that sterilizing male screwworm flies would be an effective eradication procedure for larval infestations? Let's explore this fascinating feat of human ingenuity! The sterile insect technique basically involves sterilizing large numbers of preferably aggressive males, which are then strategically released to compete with fertile males to mate with female insects. Female screwworm flies only mate once so if they are bred by a sterile male, they produce no offspring. Because they can't replicate, the sterile insects also can't take over or become established in the environment where they are released. Three renowned bug scientists, Dr. Emory Cushing, Dr. Edward Knipling, and Dr. Raymond Bushland are credited with the identification, creation, and development of techniques to eliminate this pest. It all started in 1933 when Dr Cushing discovered that the screwworm fly was not the same species as the blowfly which feeds on dead animals. Even at that time, the impact to the livestock industry was devastating, leading to focused investigations on understanding and eradicating this destructive pest.

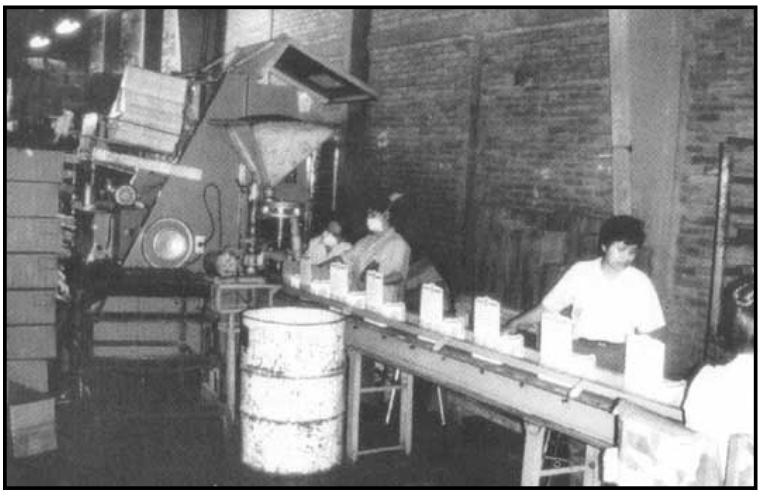
Screwworms aren't a new result of a crazy insect mutation but have been around since ancient times, usually located in the area southward to Argentina because of favorable environmental and host factors. Locals dealt with the infestations with traditional herbal remedies, but these became ineffective when European settlers arrived in large numbers. The concept that an invasive

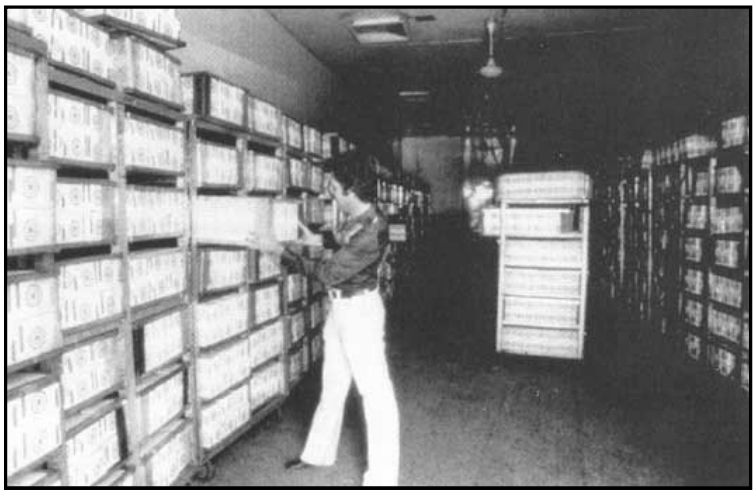
Continued on page 3

insect species could be controlled and eradicated started in the late 1930s by an American entomologist, Dr. Edward Knipling who was studying the screwworm impact on livestock in the US. Initially it was thought that livestock producers could check their animals at least twice daily for any wound or infection, but this was an impractical solution since it would be too labor extensive especially for large and dispersed herds. Chemical means were considered but deemed too dangerous, too expensive to apply, and carried the potential to develop resistance.

While working for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Texas, Dr. Knipling deduced that if a method could be developed to rear, sterilize, and release large number of flies, the insect population would be significantly reduced. In 1936, Dr. Bushland had already paved the way for producing/rearing large numbers of insects on a diet of ground meat, beef blood, water and the best ingredient: formalin. Working with Dr. Knipling's understanding of how screwworm flies mate and his theory of releasing sterile males, the foundation was laid for a solution to the problem. However, their efforts were interrupted by World War II when the researchers were assigned to a Florida research station to study controlling insects that threatened US miliary personnel. Amazingly and unknown to Knipling, Herman Muller at the University of Texas already used a dentist's X-ray machine to induce mutation in the genes and chromosomes of the annoying fruit fly. He discovered that when X-rays are applied at a high dose, the chromosomes break, and the broken pieces randomly stick together. During the replication of the cell, the fragments create anomalies that are incompatible with life such that the treated males cannot contribute to the production of viable offspring. After the war in 1950, Dr. Knipling was shown the work by Dr. Muller on the effective sterilization of fruit flies which led to the successful sterilization of large numbers of screwworm flies. Further research found that males are more sensitive to radiation than females which were 2.5 times more resistant, and pupae five and six days old withstood the sterilizing radiation doses as well as mature adults. Since the pupae were easier to handle, they became the life stage for treatment and investigation.

It's one thing to have procedures work in the lab, but real life can be a completely different situation. A field test opportunity arose in 1954 when a 176 square mile Dutch Island off the coast of Venezuela needed help with a screwworm outbreak devastating local dairy herds. Flies were reared and released in Florida by aircraft. The tricky part was figuring out how many flies needed to be released. Initially they only let go 78 flies/km2 (1 km2 = .4 miles2) with no effect until the ratio was increased to 150 flies/km2 and containment and eradication was effective in seven weeks. Based on this success, funds were appropriated to initiate a control program through the State of Florida and US Congress in 1957.





Packaging treated pupae and storage for future use. At its peak, this plant employed 300 people and operated 24 hours a day to generate 150 million sterile flies each week. Each week these larvae consume 70 tons of meat and 12,000 gallons of blood.

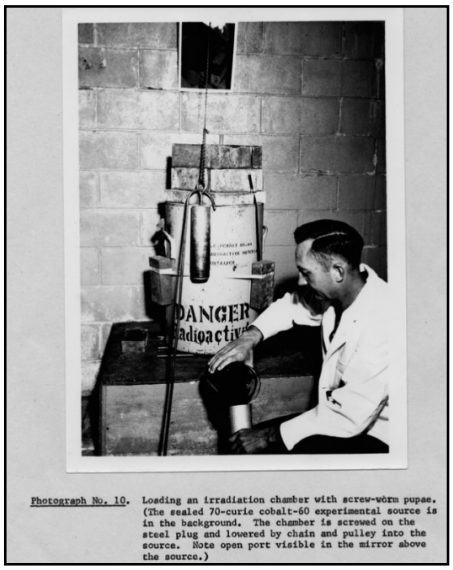
Continued on page 4

Loading sterile male flies for air drop…no parachutes required! A rotating agar arm delivers a predetermined number of flies during the flight release.

Currently, the only screw worm pupae sterilization site in North America is maintained by Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) international services. The facility is located in Panama and is jointly funded and maintained by the USDA and Panama's Ministry of Agriculture Development. This facility can produce over 100 million pupae per week. What do these pupae get to snack on while waiting to be irradiated? Their diet is an appealing combination of freeze dried whole bovine blood, meat protein, dry poultry eggs, honey, molasses, and/or a dry milk substitute minus the formalin.

Current and future investigations to mitigate and eradicate the screwworm include the use of biotechnology to develop a male-only strain using a tetracycline-repressible female lethal gene such that if the females are not exposed to a tetracycline "antidote", they die in the larval/pupal stages. If they need the females for experimentation, they supply them with tetracycline and they survive. This also ensures they are not available to lay the eggs on host species and significantly reduces the cost associated with feeding the larvae. Genetic modifications involving CRISPR/Cas9 protocols lead to knock-in and knock-out DNA changes that lead to survivors with genetic mutations that make them sterile. This system uses targeted interference in the genetic makeup of the insect which avoids random mutations that might not be effective. Other strategies use Transgenic-Sexing Strains (TSS) which produces a female-specific lethal transgene into the genome such that all females die. Additional studies are looking at what factors (chemical, olfactory, or visual) attract these flies to living organisms in the first place instead of dead material. After almost 100 years, we are still trying to figure out this pest!

Present day screw worm pupae sterilization site



Past screw worm pupae sterilization site

Equine West Nile Virus: Still a Risk Present in California

By: Josh Kloeppel, DVM, Equine Program

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne virus first detected in the United States (U.S.) in the New York City area in 1999. The virus is maintained in the wild bird population and is spread between birds by mosquitoes. Birds are considered the natural reservoir for WNV since high levels of virus circulate in their bloodstream. Mosquitos acquire WNV in blood meals from infected birds and pass it on to other birds, animals, and people. Currently in 2025 California has four confirmed cases of WNV. The confirmed cases have included Yolo, Stanislaus, Contra Costa, and Santa Barbara counties. This number of confirmed cases is lower than our normal state average for this time of year, but with the recent detections it suggests that we may see an increase in cases in the coming weeks.

West Nile Virus may cause a wide range of clinical illnesses ranging from mild "flu-like" signs to more advanced neurological symptoms, such as encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). While horses are susceptible to WNV infection, many infected horses do not develop clinical illness and recover uneventfully.

Vaccination and mosquito control minimize the risk of WNV infection in horses. The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) recommends incorporation of a WNV vaccine as an annual core vaccine in equine vaccination protocols. Currently, there are four United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-licensed WNV vaccines available for horses in the United States. Horse owners should consult with their veterinary practitioner to ensure current WNV vaccination status of their horses. With the recent detection of WNV cases in California, it serves as a reminder to horse owners that WNV is still a risk in California, and with highly effective vaccines available it is important to maintain their horses WNV vaccine status with the help of their veterinarian.

States Begin Transition to Electronic Certificates of Veterinary Inspection for Interstate Movement of Animals

By: Lauren Schwertfeger and Kristen Cox, Environmental Scientists, Livestock Movement

A Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) is an official document issued by an accredited veterinarian in preparation for animal movement interstate. Different types of CVIs are available to California veterinarians, including paper (CDFA Form 77-010 – CVI for Livestock and Poultry) and electronic (eCVI) forms supplied by third-party service providers. In order to facilitate enhanced speed and accuracy of traceability in the event of an animal disease outbreak or investigation, both CDFA and USDA highly encourage the use of eCVIs. Enhanced traceability also serves to reassure trade partners of the safety and security of the national food supply in the U.S. With this in mind, the USDA has set enhanced eCVI usage by veterinarians as a national objective.

Most California veterinarians already use eCVIs based on data collected quarterly by CDFA Animal Disease Traceability staff. Currently, 83% of livestock species, including cattle, bison, equine, sheep, goats, swine, and poultry, are exported from California on eCVIs while the remainder (17%) utilize Form 77-010.

However, various states, including, but not limited to, Minnesota, Idaho, and Kansas, are in the process of transitioning to only accepting eCVIs for the interstate movement of animals in the coming months. This means that these states soon will no longer accept paper documents, including Form 77-010, issued by any veterinarian; eCVIs must be issued for the interstate movement of animals into or out of these states.

California veterinarians currently using Form 77-010 should always check the destination state's import requirements prior to shipment and issuance of a CVI to confirm what type of movement documents are still accepted by that state. Many states have begun updating their websites to inform veterinarians when their new rules will go into effect. For example, The Minnesota Board of Animal Health will implement a new CVI requirement effective July 1, 2026, mandating that CVIs for all animals imported into or exported from Minnesota be submitted electronically.

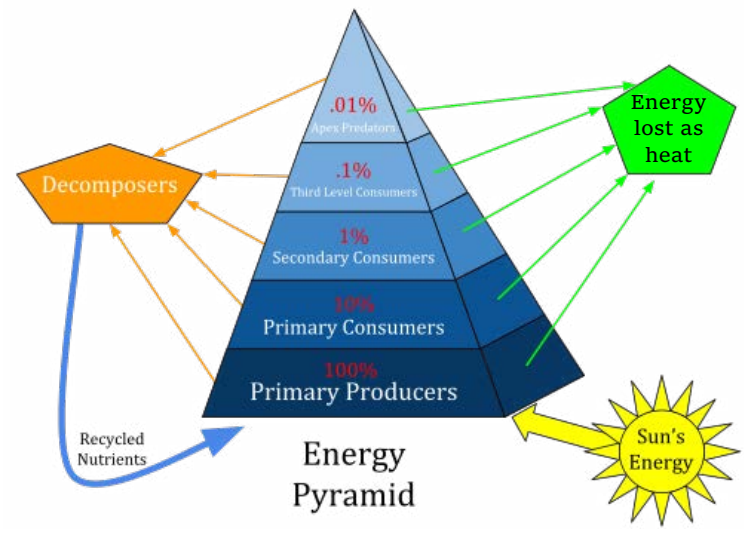
To learn more about eCVIs, their benefits, and options available to California licensed and accredited veterinarians, please visit the CDFA eCVIs webpage.

Wolf Woes

By: Danny Dickason, DVM, MCM, Wildlife Interface and Small Ruminant Programs

Gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) have returned to California, and their presence has not gone unnoticed in the first half of 2025. Historically native to California, gray wolves are believed to have inhabited the Sierra Nevada, southern Cascade, Klamath Mountain, and Coast Ranges in addition to the Modoc Plateau. Thought to have been extirpated from California in the 1920s due to conflicts with humans and their livestock, the last known killing of a wolf in California occurred in 1924. Wolves would remain absent from the Golden State for decades, until a nomadic male gray wolf from Oregon named OR-7 chose California as its new residence in 2011, with an additional two wolves arriving and producing pups in 2015.

Just like all organisms, gray wolves play an important role in their ecosystem and provide needed balance in a healthy prey-predator dynamic. Wolves are what are referred to as apex predators in their ecosystems; animals considered to be at the top of their food chain with no other significant predators of their own, whose effects on the food chain trickle down to all the lower "trophic" levels: other carnivores eating carnivores or herbivores (levels 4 and 3 or tertiary and secondary consumers, respectively), which then affects populations of herbivores eating plants (level 2 or primary consumers), which then affects plant and algae populations (level 1 or producers). There are many studies that have documented the positive effects of wolf reintroduction to areas where they were previously extirpated, including in Yellowstone, where their reintroduction has been associated with wolf presence bringing balance to elk populations and movements and an associated recovery of aspen trees, beavers, and riparian habitats. Such important roles, as well as their near extinction, are part of the reason wolves were listed in the federal endangered Species Act in 1978 and in California's Endangered Species Act in 2014.



Unfortunately, these trickle-down effects of apex predators such as wolves can also have effects on livestock production, and it is these effects that are currently being addressed in the Sierra Valley. California's wolf population has grown to 10 packs – mostly in northeastern California with one pack further south in the Tulare area. As of June 5, 2025, there are 72 wolf predation investigations listed on CDFW's webpage. Working hard to raise healthy livestock and make financial ends meet only to find evidence of wolf predation within your herds is not only a financial blow but also an emotional blow, and it is one all too familiar with California ranchers in the Sierra Valley.

As California's agricultural industry begins to adapt to this recent marked change in their local ecosystems, it is encouraging that there are several groups and many resources dedicated to addressing this conflict. For one, new research efforts from the California Wolf Project (CAWP) bring together scientists, wildlife managers, and conservation communicators working with diverse stakeholders to better understand the social and ecological factors that shape wolf populations and inform management decisions. The CAWP efforts are being pursued alongside the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), who is hard at work developing new information resources, implementing new phases of their recovery plan, investigating potential depredations, financially compensating livestock losses, pursuing new and more aggressive wolf hazing techniques, and even providing a dynamic map of collared wolf locations to help assist producers avoid losses. Lastly, with ongoing discussion and collaboration between producers, CDFW, University of California Cooperative Extension, and CDFA staff, increasing management options appear to be on the horizon. And while a "cure-all" or "solution" is likely a concept that would benefit only select stakeholders, much progress is being made towards finding that ever-elusive balance of interests that so many are actively striving for.

CDC Backyard Flock Survey

By: CAHEN Program

Are you raising a backyard flock? This survey is for you!

Since March 2024, 70 cases of avian influenza A(H5) (H5 bird flu) have occurred in humans in the United States, mostly among workers exposed to infected dairy cows and commercial poultry farms. However, cases have also occurred among people exposed to birds kept in non-commercial, backyard flocks.

CDC is interested in learning more about backyard flock owners and their flocks. The anonymous survey asks about:

- Characteristics of backyard flock owners, their families, and their flocks.
- Knowledge of H5 bird flu and signs and symptoms of H5 bird flu in birds and humans.
- Perceived risk of and concern about H5 bird flu to their backyard flock and themselves/families.
- Attitudes towards reporting sick or dead birds and protective measures like vaccination of their flock.
- Practices they use to protect their flock and themselves from H5 bird flu.

CDC will use the survey results to improve H5 bird flu prevention activities.

Questions can be sent to h5flustudy@cdc.gov .

Link to the survey

New Trich Tags for Bull Testing

By: Beth Francia, Senior Livestock Inspector, Bovine Program

As of September 1, 2025, Trich (*Tritrichomonas foetus*) tags for the new testing year have changed and should be able to be shipped to approved veterinarians and veterinary clinics from MWI warehouses. Current year tags are green for the September 1 – August 31 testing year. Please visit the CDFA Trich web page for more information.

Renewal for Trichomonosis Approved Veterinarians and Laboratories

By: Beth Francia, Senior Livestock Inspector, Bovine Program

Thank you for your continued participation in helping detect and control bovine trichomonosis. Approval for veterinarians to officially sample for bovine trichomonosis with the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Animal Health Branch must be renewed every two years. The new agreement will be mailed to you in the near future. Please update your contact information, sign and return your renewal before your current agreement expires on December 31, 2025. Any testing, reading, or diagnosing of trichomonosis samples must be performed in a trichomonosis-approved laboratory. Initial laboratory approval requires training with the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory and is renewed on a two-year schedule. Laboratory renewal forms will also be distributed this year in a separate mailing. Please send any questions or renewals to: trich@cdfa.ca.gov.

Foreign Animal Disease Investigations June 16, 2025 – September 15, 2025

By: Alireza Javidmehr, DVM, MPVM, PhD,
Emergency Preparedness and Response Section

Monitoring foreign animal diseases (FADs) and their potential impacts on the food supply chain and international trade is crucial for national security. Although these diseases have either been eradicated or have not occurred in the United States, a widespread outbreak could have serious consequences. This includes posing a public health risk if they can be transmitted to humans. Therefore, early detection and immediate action to control and eradicate FADs are essential. California is investing significant resources to protect the livestock industry against FAD outbreaks. You can learn about the critical activities when an FAD is detected in the state by viewing 13 infographics and three short video clips on the CDFA Preparedness and Response webpage.

In the past few years, the New World Screwworm (NWS), once eradicated from the US in 1966, has been spreading north from South America through Central America and Mexico, prompting a robust and aggressive response from US authorities. A permanent sterile fly barrier zone in Panama had held the pest in check for decades, but the barrier was breached in 2023. Recent confirmations of NWS in northern Mexico, less than 70 miles from the U.S. border, have put California's livestock industry on high alert. Following this northward spread, which includes cases in southern Mexico and Central America, California state officials are coordinating with state and federal agencies to prepare for potential infestations. The Animal Health Branch (AHB) is developing response protocols for surveillance, reporting, and management of any potential infestations, and is urging veterinarians and producers to be vigilant for signs of the pest.

On July 26th, 2024, California's first case of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in dairy cows was detected, triggering the activation of the unified incident command system. Since the first detection, the CDFA Animal Health and Food Safety has been responding to the incident in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) veterinary services.

Between June 16 and September 15, 2025, California FAD diagnosticians investigated 84 FAD suspicious cases (Table 1). All of the 75 investigations conducted on swine were to rule out Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in pigs being shipped to slaughterhouses. The lesions observed in these cases were found to be caused by Senecavirus A (SVA). Although SVA is an endemic disease in the US, it triggers an investigation for FAD due to the similarity of lesions to FMD. It is essential to treat any animal diseases presenting similar signs to FADs as if they were FADs until a definitive diagnosis can be made.

All Emergency conditions listed in the California reportable animal disease list must be reported to the local animal health authorities within 24 hours. Contact information for the AHB district offices is listed on the last page of this newsletter and on the reportable disease list.

Table 1. Summary of FAD Investigations from June 16, 2025 to September 15, 2025

AHB Districts	Disease	Species	Sample Type	Number of Investigations	Destination Lab*
Modesto	Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Senecavirus A (SVA)	Porcine	Swab	62	KSVDL
Ontario	New World Screwworm (NWS)	Avian	Specimen Container	2	NVSL
	NWS	Canine	Specimen Container	2	NVSL
	NWS	Feline	Specimen Container	3	NVSL
	NWS	Raccoon	Specimen Container	1	NVSL
Tulare	FMD, SVA	Porcine	Swab	13	KSVDL
	NWS	Bovine	Specimen Container	1	NVSL

*NVSL: National Veterinary Services Laboratory
KSVDL: Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

Multi-Agency Workshop for New World Screwworm

By: Ali Thompson, Senior Emergency Services Coordinator and George Atwell, Emergency Services Coordinator, Emergency Preparedness and Response Section

Sacramento, CA – September 15, 2025

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Animal Health Branch, Emergency Preparedness and Response Section (EPRS) team hosted a multi-agency New World Screwworm (NWS) workshop at its headquarters in Sacramento, bringing together federal and state partners to strengthen California's readiness to respond to a potential NWS outbreak. The workshop provided participants with an opportunity to work through a simulated NWS outbreak and to outline response actions to address the scenario. While California remains free of NWS, the threat from the fly migration northward in Mexico has prompted the Animal Health Branch preparedness efforts to combat any future potential infestations.

The workshop focused on coordinated response planning and communication protocols to protect California's livestock, wildlife, and the public from this devastating foreign animal pest. Representatives from CDFA Animal Health Branch and Plant Health & Pest Prevention Services Division, United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plan Health Inspection Services Veterinary Services, Wildlife Services, and Plant Protection and Quarantine, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Department of Public Health, and California Office of Emergency Services participated in this discussion-based exercise designed to test decision-making, communication protocols, and interagency collaboration.

The goal of the multi-agency tabletop exercise was to capture the collective critical response activities for each agency and to identify key stakeholders and messaging for the development of CDFA's NWS Communications Plan which will define internal multi-agency notification protocols. The exercise was designed and developed by the EPRS Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness Unit personnel using the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program guidelines.

Each agency was able to identify gaps or areas of need to take back to their respective planning efforts ahead of any NWS infestation. Officials emphasized that ongoing training and collaboration are essential to keeping California prepared for emerging animal health threats. CDFA Animal Health Branch will produce a summary that each agency can then use as the foundation for the development of their own internal agency communication protocols.

CDFA AHB would like to thank all of those who participated in this event, and we look forward to collaborating on more exercises in the future.

Euthanasia and Depopulation Training Modesto

By: Jean Cheng, DVM and Nicholas Edelman, DVM, Emergency Preparedness and Response Section

On August 26–27, 2025, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Animal Health Branch (AHB) hosted a National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program (NADPRP)-funded Euthanasia and Depopulation Training, which included a Field Skills Drill Exercise in Modesto, California.

Euthanasia and depopulation are critical practices during emergency situations—such as foreign animal disease outbreaks or natural disasters—to help prevent or mitigate the spread of disease and protect public health. The training and exercise were designed to enhance California's emergency response capabilities in such scenarios.

The training covered a comprehensive range of topics, including animal welfare considerations during depopulation, carcass disposal methods, species-specific euthanasia and depopulation techniques, and captive bolt safety and operation. CDFA collaborated with instructors from the UC Davis Western Institute for Food Safety and Security (WIFSS) and Bunzl to develop and deliver the curriculum.

Continued on page 10

The two-day event was well-attended by personnel from CDFA's Animal Health Branch, Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety (MPES) Branch, Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship (AUS) Branch, and the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services (VS). Additional follow-up training sessions are planned to further strengthen responder knowledge and operational readiness.

Evidence Lacking for the Use of MIADs in the Prevention of Calf Diarrhea: AABP Position Statement Clarifies Opportunity for On-farm Stewardship

By: Katie Murray, MPH, DVM and Marissa Silva, MVB, DACVPM, Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship Branch

The Antimicrobial Use & Stewardship (AUS) Program would like to highlight the American Association of Bovine Practitioners (AABP)'s Position Statement on the use of Medically Important Antimicrobial Drugs (MIADs) for the prevention of calf diarrhea.

"-the AABP does not support the prophylactic use of medically important antimicrobials for prevention of calf diarrhea."

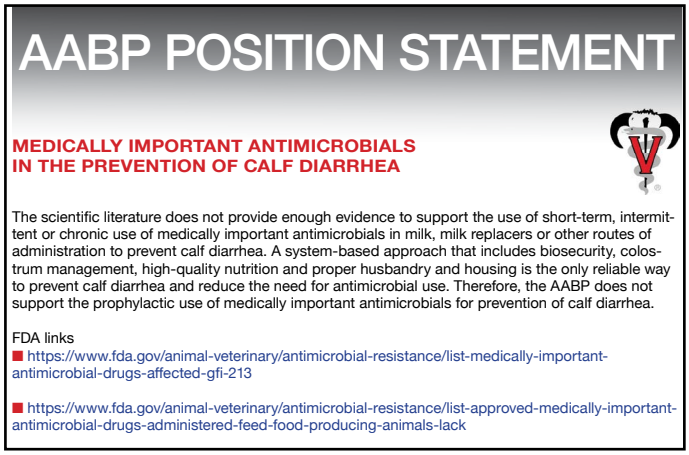
The AABP recognizes that there is not enough scientific evidence to support the prophylactic use of MIADs in "short term, intermittent or chronic use" for the prevention of calf diarrhea. These MIADs are often used in milk and milk replacers, as well as other routes of administration. Examples include oxytetracycline (with or without neomycin) and chlortetracycline.

Instead, the AABP promotes "a system-based approach that includes biosecurity, colostrum management, high quality nutrition and proper husbandry and housing" to optimize calf health and save MIADs for future use.

What can California veterinarians do to help producers establish a "system-based approach" as recommended by AABP? There are several commodity -focused resources available below.

- Calf Care Quality Assurance Program
- University of Wisconsin- Madison- Youngstock Program
- Dairy calf on-farm training modules to reduce diarrheal burden:
  - English Version
  - Spanish Version
- Cow Calf Guidelines (Beef)
  - Prevention of Neonatal Calf Diarrhea in Cow Calf Operations: A Practical Guide for Veterinarians
  - Cow Calf Scours: Strategies for Management
- UC ANR: Newborn Beef Calf Health
  - Best Management Practices in Newborn Beef Calves

In addition, AUS has best management practices for vaccine handling for producers and veterinarians, as well as fly management resources on our website that may help reduce overall disease burden; many of those resources are available in both English and Spanish.



AABP POSITION STATEMENT

MEDICALLY IMPORTANT ANTIMICROBIALS
IN THE PREVENTION OF CALF DIARRHEA

The scientific literature does not provide enough evidence to support the use of short-term, intermittent or chronic use of medically important antimicrobials in milk, milk replacers or other routes of administration to prevent calf diarrhea. A system-based approach that includes biosecurity, colostrum management, high-quality nutrition and proper husbandry and housing is the only reliable way to prevent calf diarrhea and reduce the need for antimicrobial use. Therefore, the AABP does not support the prophylactic use of medically important antimicrobials for prevention of calf diarrhea.

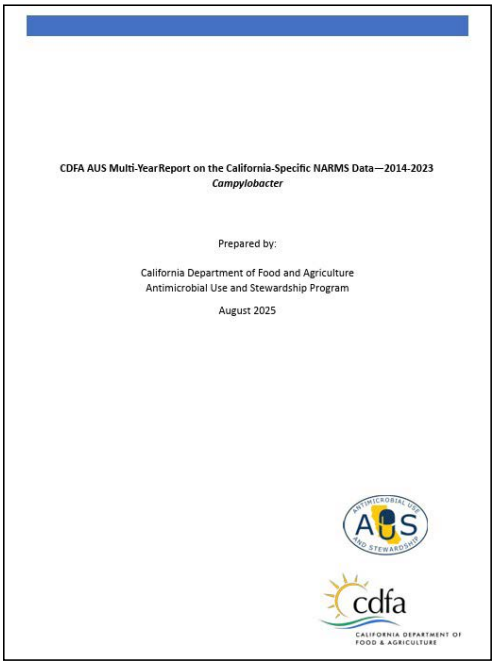
FDA links

- https://www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/antimicrobial-resistance/list-medically-important-antimicrobial-drugs-affected-gfi-213
- https://www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/antimicrobial-resistance/list-approved-medically-important-antimicrobial-drugs-administered-feed-food-producing-animals-lack

Figure 1. Excerpt from the AABP Position Statement

CDFA AUS Releases New Report: CDFA AUS Multi-Year Report on the California-Specific NARMS Data — 2014-2023 *Campylobacter*

By: Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship Branch



The California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship (AUS) program is proud to present its first pathogen-specific report utilizing the United States Department of Food and Agriculture's (USDA) National Antimicrobial resistance Monitoring System (NARMS) database of bacterial isolates obtained from livestock and poultry. Through collaborations with subject matter experts, AUS has curated a report that presents NARMS data specifically for California. This will be the first in a series of pathogen-specific reports to be released in the next year.

This CDFA AUS Multi-Year *Campylobacter* Report provides summary data for USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) NARMS *Campylobacter* cecal isolates collected from 2014 through 2023 from animals slaughtered in California. This report evaluates California-specific antibiotic susceptibility trends in one of the most-reported bacterial causes of foodborne illness.

The source of this data, NARMS, is a national public health surveillance system that tracks changes in the antimicrobial susceptibility of enteric (intestinal) bacteria found in ill people (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or CDC), retail meats (United States Food and Drug Administration, or FDA), and food animals at slaughter (USDA) across the United States. The NARMS program helps promote and protect public health by providing information about emerging bacterial resistance, how resistant infections differ from susceptible infections, and the impact of interventions designed to limit the spread of resistance.

National NARMS data is publicly available on the FDA webpage.

To learn more about NARMS, visit the FDA NARMS webpage.

Changes to Companion Animal Movement

By: Kavishti Kokaram, DVM, DACVPM, Supervising Veterinarian

As of January 1, 2026, companion animal owners will notice a change to California entry requirements in alignment with the recently passed Senate Bill 312 (SB 312). SB 312 attempts to address concerns associated with dogs imported into the state for the purposes of resale or with change of ownership. Existing law requires a person selling, transporting, or importing a dog into this state for the purpose of or following resale or change of ownership to obtain a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) issued within 10 days prior to entry into the state. Currently, owners are required to submit their health certificates to the applicable county health department associated with their destination in California.

SB 312 will change this requirement slightly; requiring that any person bringing a dog into California with the purpose of changing ownership or resale must submit their CVI electronically to CDFA, Animal Health Branch (AHB). These CVIs, however, must still be issued by a licensed and accredited veterinarian within 10 days of entry into the state. Electronic CVIs (eCVIs) issued by accredited veterinarians are already forwarded to both importing and exporting state officials via various eCVI provider portals. AHB will also be facilitating further ease of direct electronic submission of CVIs via the AHB website in the coming months.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN CALIFORNIA'S ANIMAL AGRICULTURE

Come work for CDFA's Animal Health Branch!

WHO WE ARE

The Animal Health Branch is the State's Veterinary Medical Unit that functions to protect public health, animal health, and the economy from catastrophic animal diseases, disasters that impact animals, and other related issues. We consist of ~100 people including veterinarians, research and environmental scientists, livestock inspectors, analysts, and support staff. We are distributed throughout the state with offices in Redding, Sacramento, Modesto, Tulare, and Ontario.

The primary mission of the Branch is to respond to emergency animal diseases that cannot be controlled on an individual animal or herd basis – you will most likely be called upon to respond to an animal health emergency during your career.

POSITION VACANCIES

CALCAREERS.CA.GOV

HTTPS://CALCAREERS.CA.GOV/CALHRPUBLIC/SEARCH/JOBSEARCHRESULTS.ASPX#KW=ANIMAL%20HEALTH%20BRANCH

LIVE LINK TO CURRENT AHB ADVERTISEMENTS WILL UPDATE REGULARY
REFER TO HIRING UNIT CONTACT WITHIN JC ADVERTISEMENT WITH ANY QUESTIONS

BENEFITS

- A competitive starting salary
- More than two weeks of paid vacation time, sick leave, and paid holidays
- A benefits package that includes medical, dental, and vision insurance, a CalPERS pension, opportunities to create retirement savings
- License and continuing education reimbursements, on-the-job training, and paid professional development days

JOIN US!

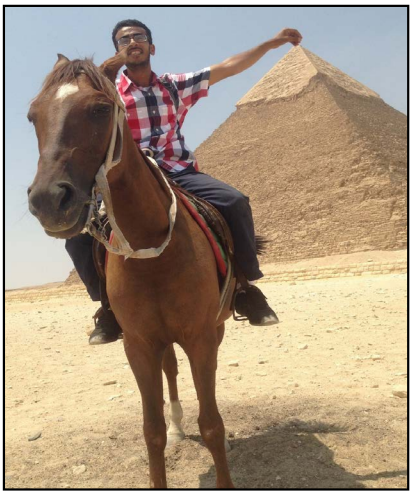
Questions? Please feel free to contact **Dr. Steven Gallego at (530) 351-3299 or steven.gallego@cdfa.ca.gov**.

Animal Health Branch Staff Biographies

Essam Abdelfattah, BVSc., MVSc., PhD
Veterinarian (General), Tulare District

Dr. Abdelfattah joined the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Animal Health Branch (Tulare district) as a Veterinarian (General) in September 2025. His educational background includes a bachelor's degree in veterinary medicine, as well as a PhD and a master's degree in animal behavior and management. He also completed two postdoctoral scholarships at University of California, Davis.

Dr. Abdelfattah has over 10 years of teaching experience with animal science and veterinary students at various universities, including UC Davis, Purdue, and Cal Poly Pomona. His teaching spans a range of animal species, including food animals, equines, and companion animals. His experience includes teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses in food animal production, animal behavior, and animal welfare well as other veterinary subjects. His research work has centered on food animal species, with a focus on animal management, pain mitigation, antimicrobial resistance, and herd health. He led and contributed to multiple applied research projects addressing real-world challenges in food animal production.



Dr. Abdelfattah brings a wealth of knowledge in veterinary medicine, with expertise in herd health management, zoonotic disease prevention, and epidemiological investigations. At CDFA, he collaborates closely with state and federal partners, livestock producers, and veterinary professionals to ensure the health and welfare of animals while safeguarding the food supply chain.

Jessica Lauchland
Environmental Scientist, Modesto District

My name is Jessica Lauchland and I joined CDFA's Animal Health Branch (AHB) as an Agriculture Technician in May of 2019. From 2019-2022 I worked in different sections of the branch as an Office Technician (Emergency Programs) and then a Livestock Inspector (Secure Food Supply). Then finally in July of 2022 I started in the position I currently am in as an Environmental Scientist for the Modesto District.

I was born and raised in Northern California on my great-grandfather's vineyard and walnut operation. I developed a passion for animal agriculture during my years of 4-H and Rodeo, so after I graduated high school I went on to earn my Bachelor's of Animal Science from CSU, Chico in 2018. After earning my degree, I spent time interning in Wyoming at the CSU Fort Collins Beef Improvement Center before deciding to move back to California.

Outside of work I love to spend time with my husband and our son on our family farming operation. We are usually busy with grapes, almonds or one of the many species of animals we keep on our property (alpacas, cattle, horses, goats, sheep, etc.). If we are not at home, you will usually find us hunting, fishing or traveling.

Working for CDFA AHB in my many positions, I have learned so many different facets of animal agriculture and I am excited for my years to come to gain more experience in as much as I can.

Contact Information

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Permit Line: (916) 900-5052

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Website: www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/Index.html

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Veterinarian In Charge (VIC)

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Dr. Steven Gallego
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Modesto
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Modesto, CA 95358
(209) 491-9350

Tulare
Dr. Natalie Ward
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Tulare, CA 93274
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Ontario
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Ontario, CA 91764
(909) 947-5932

Animal Health and Food Safety Services
Dr. Annette Jones, State Veterinarian and Director
(916) 900-5000

Other AHFSS Branches

Bureau of Livestock Identification
John Suther, Chief
(916) 900-5006

Milk and Dairy Food Safety
Dr. Stephen Beam, Chief
(916) 900-5008

Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety
Paula Batarseh, Chief
(916) 900-5004

Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship
Dr. Edie Marshall, Chief
(916) 576-0300

Animal Care
Dr. Elizabeth Cox, Chief
(916) 900-5000

United States Department of Agriculture

Dr. Donald Herriott
District Director, District 3

Dr. Paul Sciglibaglio
Area Veterinarian in Charge, NM/CA/HI/PT
Field Operations – District 3

USDA, APHIS, VS, SPRS
(916) 854-3950
Toll Free: (877) 741-3690

Animal Health Branch Programs

- Animal Disease Traceability (ADT)
- Avian Program
- California Animal Response Emergency Support (CARES)
- California Avian Health Education Network (CAHEN)
- Cattle Program
- Emergency Preparedness Response Section (EPRS)
- Equine Medication Monitoring Program (EMMP)
- Equine Program
- Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) Program
- Secure Food Supply (SFS) Program
- Small Ruminant Program
- Swine Program
- Wildlife Interface Program

Mission Statement
The Animal Health Branch is the State's organized, professional veterinary medical unit that protects livestock populations, consumers, and California's economy from catastrophic animal diseases, disasters that impact animals, and other health or agricultural problems. The Branch addresses diseases and other problems that cannot be successfully controlled on an individual animal or herd basis but require state-wide coordinated resources. Implementing programs that protect California's livestock industries and consumers, ensures the availability, affordability, and wholesomeness of food.