

Mission Statement

The Animal Health Branch is California's organized, professional veterinary medical unit that protects livestock populations, consumers, and the State's economy from catastrophic animal diseases and other health or agricultural problems.

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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Animal Health Branch Newsletter

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Update on Southern California Virulent Newcastle Disease Incident

By: Elise Chad, DVM, MS and Felicia Pohl, BS

Both CDFA and USDA personnel continue to work in a unified response to combat the virulent Newcastle disease (VND) incursion in Southern California. From mid-November through the first week of January there have been twenty-four (24) new cases of VND. Illegal movement of birds/poultry due to violations of the [CDFA VND Regional Quarantine](#), which **remains in effect**, may have contributed to many of these new positive premises. The enforcement unit continues to follow up on illegal movements, issuing citations and violations. Most of the infected premises are in San Bernardino County, with two in Riverside County and one in Los Angeles County. Backyard flocks as well as retail pet/feed stores are involved.



Based on phylogenetic analysis and epidemiologic studies, we understand how the disease spreads in Southern California. This highly contagious virus is spread across counties when people illegally move exposed birds or equipment. Once the disease is introduced to a new area, previously unaffected poultry exposed to infection act as "virus amplifiers," and shed virus even before showing clinical signs. The environmental viral load at the sites of infected flocks becomes so great that the virus can then easily spread from yard to yard with the help of feral or loose poultry, through infected manure, feathers and even hitching a ride on the hands or feet of bird owners taking it back to their own unfortunate flock.

For poultry owners located within the Regional Quarantine Area (RQA), your birds can spread the disease before they show symptoms, so the only way to stop this outbreak is to not move birds. We are asking ALL poultry owners to follow these simple steps:

- Do not move poultry or poultry equipment within or out of the RQA.
- Do not let anyone who owns birds near your poultry.
- Do not accept or house poultry for other people.

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Update on Southern California Virulent Newcastle Disease Incident (continued)

Report any unusual numbers of sick/dead birds by calling the **Sick Bird Hotline 1-866-922-BIRD (2473)**.

Signs of VND:

There may be considerable variation in the severity of clinical signs. Certain species demonstrate a period of depression, diarrhea, and loss of appetite. Periocular edema, especially of the lower eyelid, is common. Straw-colored oral and/or nasal exudate may be present. Respiratory distress may vary from mild to severe. Clinical signs in turkeys and pet birds are usually mild. Torticollis, paralyzed wings and/or legs may develop later in the disease.

VND Resources for Veterinarians:

https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/pdfs/VND-QA-for-Veterinarians.pdf

https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/pdfs/V_N_D_Veterinarians.pdf

https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/Animal_Health/pdfs/VNDSampleCollection.pdf

Stay informed about the VND Incident: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/go/VND>



USDA Transition to Electronic Official Identification: Update

By: Rebecca Campagna, DVM, MPH

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has retracted its proposed timeline that outlined a transition to exclusive use of electronic ear tags as the official identification of cattle currently covered by federal animal disease traceability (ADT) regulations by January 1, 2023. The USDA will be presenting a new plan for transitioning to electronic identification for public comment in the future.

In the meantime, USDA will continue to provide funding for producers, markets, veterinarians, and others to obtain silver brite tags through our district offices. The distribution of orange brucellosis (bangs) tags remains unchanged; CDFA will continue to provide these tags to contract veterinarians.

We at CDFA continue to encourage industry to use electronic technology (Radio Frequency Identification [RFID] tags) for official identification, Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (CVIs), and vaccination/test records using USDA's Mobile Information Management (MIM) software. Use of electronic technology for animal identification increases the efficiency and accuracy of data used for daily herd management, movement, routine veterinary services, and in the event of disease outbreaks. Please work with your Animal Health Branch (AHB) district office for more information on the use of RFID tags, electronic CVIs, or MIM.

Foreign Animal Disease Investigations: October 1- December 31, 2019

By: Alireza Javidmehr, DVM, MPVM, PhD

A total of two hundred and five (205) Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) investigations have been conducted by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Animal Health Branch (AHB) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services (VS) personnel from October 1 to December 31, 2019, in the state of California (Table 1). The AHB Modesto District has been experiencing a surge of FAD investigations (85% of all statewide FAD investigations) mostly due to a large number of Senecavirus A (SVA) infections among the swine shipped to slaughterhouses in the district. Even though SVA is not a FAD, it must be treated as one due to the similarity of the clinical signs to Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD), a highly contagious FAD that could significantly impact the U.S. livestock industry. Any animal diseases presenting similar signs to FADs must be treated as such until FADs can be ruled out.

Private practitioners, diagnostic laboratories, animal hospitals, and producers must report signs of the emergency conditions outlined in the California "List of Reportable Conditions for Animals and Animal Products" within twenty-four (24) hours by calling the CDFA AHB or the USDA APHIS VS District Office in their area. The AHB district offices' contact information can be found on the last page of this newsletter.

Table 1. Summary of FAD investigations from October 1 to December 31, 2019

AHB Districts	Disease	Species	Sample Type	Number of Investigations	Destination Lab*	NVSL Result
Modesto	Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Senecavirus A (SVA), Swine Vesicular Disease (SVD)	Porcine	Swab	170	NVSL, CAHFS-D	All positive for SVA
	Virulent Newcastle Disease (VND), Avian Influenza (AI)	Avian	Swab	2	NVSL, CAHFS-D	Negative
	Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV)	Equine	Swab, Serum	2	NVSL, CAHFS-D	Negative
	Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHD)	Lagomorph	Liver Tissue	1	NVSL, CAHFS-D	Negative
Ontario	VSV	Equine	Swab, Serum	2	NVSL, CAHFS-D	Negative
	New World Screwworm	Canine	Larvae	1	NVSL	Negative
	FMD, SVA, SVD	Porcine	Swab	1	NVSL, CAHFS-D	Negative
	FMD, SVA, VSV	Multi (Equine, Caprine)	Swab, Blood	1	NVSL, CAHFS-D	Negative
Redding	VSV	Equine	Swab, Serum	3	NVSL, CAHFS-D	Negative
	FMD, SVA, SVD	Porcine	Swab	2	NVSL, CAHFS-D	Negative
Tulare	FMD, SVA, SVD	Porcine	Swab	18	NVSL, CAHFS-D	All positive for SVA
	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), Rabies	Bovine	Brain Tissue	1	NVSL, CAHFS-D	Negative
	VSV	Equine	Swab, Serum	1	NVSL, CAHFS-D	Negative

*NVSL: National Veterinary Services Laboratory, CAHFS: California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory, D: Davis

January 2020 Equine Newsletter Articles

By: Katie Flynn, BVMS, MRCVS

Horse Show Drug Testing Fee Increases:

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Equine Medication Monitoring Program (EMMP) monitors equines in public shows, competitions and sales through random collection of blood or urine for chemical analysis. The intent of the EMMP is to ensure the integrity of public horse shows, competitions and sales through the control of performance and disposition enhancing drugs, and permitting limited therapeutic use of drugs at an equine event.

As of January 1, 2020, the California equine drug testing fee increased from \$5 to \$8 per horse entered into competition or consigned to a public sale. If you have any questions regarding the fee increase, please contact CDFA EMMP at emmp@cdfa.ca.gov or 916-900-5002.

Important Changes to EIA Testing:

USDA APHIS Veterinary Services implemented new requirements for approved laboratories conducting Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) Testing. Changes affecting the submitting veterinarian are:

- Laboratories can only accept samples from federal accredited Category II Accredited Veterinarians. Laboratories are to confirm accreditation status prior to testing the sample.
- By April 15, 2020, veterinarians must use the current federal approved forms or approved systems (i.e. VS Form 10-11 dated Feb 2018 or Global Vetlink form). Contact your local CDFA District Office to obtain current forms.
- All fields in the form must be filled in or indicated as N/A. Laboratories are to reject incomplete forms and not test the sample.
- At the discretion of the laboratory, amended forms can be processed as long as they are received within 30 days of blood draw date, all previous distributed copies are returned to the laboratory, and change of ownership is not one of the items being amended.

To ensure timely testing of the sample make sure test forms are complete, legible, and accurate at time of sample submission to the approved laboratory.

New Equine USDA Accreditation Module Available:

The USDA National Accreditation Program has released module 31 titled "High-Impact Equine Diseases in the United States. The module provides insights into recent regulatory disease incidents including Equine Infectious Anemia, Vesicular Stomatitis, Contagious Equine Metritis, Equine Herpesvirus Myeloencephalopathy and Equine Piroplasmiasis. To access the free online module visit: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/nvap/ct_aast

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January 2020 Equine Newsletter Articles (continued)

Vesicular Stomatitis Outbreak 2019:

The 2019 Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) Virus outbreak began on June 21, 2019, when the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa confirmed the first VSV-positive (Indiana serotype) premises in Kinney County, Texas. New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Utah, and Kansas subsequently broke with cases which were confirmed by NVSL. Since the start of the outbreak, 1,144 VSV-affected premises have been identified. One thousand one hundred twenty-eight (1,128) of these premises have only equine species clinically affected, 15 premises have only affected cattle and one (1) premises has both cattle and horses clinically affected. As of January 1, 2020, all properties have been released from quarantine; however, California still requires a VS statement for Colorado and Wyoming as thirty (30) days have not lapsed since the last affected premises were released.

For the latest California entry requirements related to VS, visit: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/Animal_Health/VS.html.

For the latest situation updates, visit: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/cattle-disease-information/vesicular-stomatitis-info>

Non-Negative Glanders Testing at Import Center:

On November 19, 2019, a 6-year-old Warmblood gelding imported from the Netherlands arrived at the Los Angeles Import Center. Per import testing protocols, a blood sample was collected for Equine Infectious Anemia, Equine Piroplasmiasis, Dourine and Glanders testing. On November 21, the National Veterinary Services Laboratory reported a suspect complement fixation test result for Glanders. A second sample from the gelding was non-negative on complement fixation test. This horse and the 19 other horses in the shipment considered cohorts were held for additional testing. All cohorts tested negative on subsequent testing 15 days later, however, the gelding continued to test non-negative. The cohort horses were released from import quarantine.

Historically, horses with non-negative Glanders test results were either euthanized or exported back to the country of origin. Recognizing the challenges with potential false positives, USDA recently modified import protocols to allow owners the option of additional testing of the horse until it tests negative. Over the last few years, there have been five (5) incidents of non-negative equine Glanders tests for imported horses. These five (5) horses underwent additional testing while in import and subsequently tested negative and were released from import quarantine. The recently imported gelding remains in quarantine and continues to be tested and will be released if and when he tests negative for Glanders.

When considering importing horses, consideration should be given to testing horses prior to export for the diseases tested at import quarantine, namely Equine Infectious Anemia, Equine Piroplasmiasis, Dourine and Glanders. Furthermore, it is recommended samples be tested at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory. For more information on import testing, visit:

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/lab-info-services/sa_diagnostic_tests/ct_diagnostic_tests

January 2020 Equine Newsletter Articles (continued)

NOW Available - Extended Equine Certificate of Veterinary Inspection:

Global Vetlink (GVL) recently released an updated Extended Equine Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (EECVI) system which meets California interstate movement requirements. Effective January 1, 2020, California Department of Food and Agriculture will accept Global Vetlink's EECVI documents for equine interstate movement. Through the GVL software system, veterinarians can create an EECVI online, submit it to their state animal health official electronically and provide owners with online access to retrieve the required travel permits for each interstate movement. For more information visit: <https://www.globalvetlink.com/eecvi/>

CDFA - Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship Update

By: Dennis Wilson, DVM, MPVM, PhD

Recently we released our annual report for the fiscal year 2018-2019. The report provides highlights from collaborative projects as well as our own efforts. The report can be found on our website along with our revised judicious use guidelines for veterinarians and producers: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/AUS/>

We are happy to announce that CDFA-AUS is collaborating with Washington State University, the University of Idaho and the University of California to host "Partnering for Dairy Antimicrobial Stewardship: A conference for Farmers and Veterinarians in the West", happening April 17th, 2020. A veterinarian can earn up to six (6) hours of continuing education units. The main location will be in Portland (Sheraton Portland Airport Hotel, 8235 NE Airport Way, Portland, OR) with three (3) satellite locations in California (Orland, Modesto and Tulare) as well one (1) in Twin Falls ID, and Lynden, WA.

For more information and to register for this free conference go to: <https://vetextension.wsu.edu/dairy-antimicrobial-stewardship/>

Dairy producers that attend will have the opportunity for review and analysis of their farm-based records by Washington State University Faculty. These treatment records will be assessed for their effectiveness to capture, monitor, and evaluate the efficacy of farm-specific antimicrobial use and their adherence to stewardship practices. They will be provided with an evaluation that addresses their strengths and opportunities to improve their systems, as part of the take-home resources from the conference. For additional information about this opportunity, please go to: <https://vetextension.wsu.edu/dairy-antimicrobial-stewardship/>

Milk Antibiotic Residues

By: Anne Quilter, Asst. Branch Chief
for Milk and Dairy Food Safety Branch

This is the time of year we typically see increased numbers of antibiotic residues in milk being reported from processors based on mandatory testing of bulk milk tankers prior to processing. Rain and cold weather can result in an increase in the number of animals requiring treatment and an increased risk of antibiotic residues in milk.

Antibiotic residues are typically a result of record keeping errors. Positive antibiotic residue tests in milk can result in regulatory investigations and the potential for lost revenue. Please remind your producers of the importance of good record keeping and prudent use of antibiotics to assure a wholesome product is being provided and to avoid the difficulties associated with a residue investigation.

Low Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (LPAI)

By: Elise Chad, DVM, Avian Programs

Low Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (LPAI) viruses have natural reservoirs in wild waterfowl (including ducks, geese and swans) and additional species of wild birds (such as gulls, terns and egrets). As millions of birds are currently migrating through California, it is a crucial time to enhance biosecurity measures that prevent both direct and indirect contact between domestic poultry and wild birds.



Wild birds infected with an LPAI virus are often asymptomatic, however, they can effectively shed that virus through oral and nasal secretions and most importantly through their feces. Several studies on various Avian Influenza viruses have found it can persist for weeks or even months in feces or cool, brackish water long past when the wild birds have flown away.

To reduce the spread of diseases from migrating waterfowl:

- Prevent standing water, including grading land as needed.
- Regularly and promptly clean spilled feed to reduce the interest of wild birds.
- Use fencing and solid roofing to keep wild birds (and their feces) away from domestic poultry.

Additional resources: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/Avian_Influenza.html

To report an unusual number of sick/dead poultry: Sick Bird Hotline 1-866-922-BIRD (2473)

To report sick/dead wild birds/waterfowl:

From Mid-October through Mid-April call the CDFW - Wildlife Investigations Lab (916) 358-2790

From Mid-April through Mid-October call the West Nile Virus Hotline 1-877-968-2473

CDFA List of Reportable Conditions for Animals and Animal Products - 2020 Update

By: Alyssa Louie, DVM, MPVM

Every year, CDFA Animal Health Branch reviews and updates a reportable disease list for animals and animal products. Determining diseases of importance and accurate, timely reporting and response are important components of surveillance and disease control. The list closely follows USDA's National List of Reportable Animal Diseases as well as OIE's international list of notifiable animal diseases, but also considers State and industry-specific concerns.

Your role in disease surveillance is critical for protecting California's agriculture. While the list includes specific conditions with time frames for reporting, it is important to remember that any signs suspicious of a foreign animal disease such as unexplained high morbidity or mortality, vesicles, unusual or unexplained illness, CNS signs, should be flags to immediately contact CDFA or USDA animal health officials.

The 2020 update is almost ready – please keep an eye out in the next couple weeks! It will replace the current versions linked on the web at that time.

Poster: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/Animal_Health/pdfs/CA_Reportable_Disease_List_Poster.pdf

Two-pager: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/Animal_Health/pdfs/CA_Reportable_Disease_List_2pg.pdf

January 2020 Cattle Health Updates

Repealed - Brucellosis Vaccination Requirement for Change of Ownership of Beef Female Cattle More than 12 Months of Age:

By: Anita Edmondson, BVMS, MPVM, MRCVS

As of January 1, 2020, the requirement for intact female beef breed cattle over twelve (12) months of age to be brucellosis vaccinated if sold for breeding in California has been removed. California's cattle industry supported this change, given the low risk of brucellosis in the state. The vaccine is still available for producers that want to vaccinate their heifers. Brucellosis infection remains in the Greater Yellowstone Area in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming where the disease regularly spills over from elk into domestic cattle, bison and cervid herds. Vaccination of female cattle to enter California and calfhood vaccination for dairy heifers in California remains in place.



Trichomonosis Approved Veterinarian Renewals:

By: Beth Francia, Sr. Livestock Inspector for Bovine Programs

If you wish to continue to test bulls for trichomonosis in California, please be sure your renewal has been completed and returned to your district office or to the Sacramento HQ office. California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory results will not be available to you after December 31, 2019 unless you are a currently approved veterinarian. If you have any questions or did not receive your renewal packet, please email trich@cdfa.ca.gov or contact your district office.

Type C Botulism Confirmed on a Central Valley Dairy:

By: Randy Anderson, DVM, MPVM

A dairy in Merced County milking approximately 1,000 Holstein cows reported 3 dead and 4 non-ambulatory cows from a single string of mid-lactation cows to their private veterinarian. The non-ambulatory cows had classic signs of botulism including motor paralysis, decreased tongue tone and sluggish corneal reflexes. Their electrolyte levels were normal. Necropsy of the dead cows was unremarkable (common with botulism), however, samples from necropsy submitted to the CAHFS laboratory confirmed the presence of botulinum type C toxin. To date, 12 cows have died or been euthanized in this incident, and the source of the botulism is unknown. Milk from the affected string is being discarded until no additional clinical cases are noted for 48 hours after the last clinical case.





Staff Biographies

Dr. Emily Nietrzeba joined the CDFA AHB Headquarters in August after pursuing a creative path to veterinary medicine. A native of Las Vegas, Nevada, Dr. Nietrzeba moved to Pennsylvania for her BS degree in molecular biology and worked at the University of Pennsylvania in an HIV vaccine research lab. She then pursued her MPH in infectious disease and epidemiology at UC Berkeley, and spent time doing volunteer public health work in Kenya and working as a gastroenterology clinical researcher at UCSF before realizing all of her extracurricular time involved four-legged creatures. She finally combined her love of medicine and animals with completion of her DVM from UC Davis in 2014, with emphasis on equine, camelid, and companion animals, and then worked in mixed animal private practice in Mendocino County for five years before joining the CDFA.



Dr. Nietrzeba has special interest in emergency response, outbreak investigation and infectious disease management, and a passion for the One Health global initiative, and she is excited to bring these interests to the AHB. When not at work, she can be found chasing around a happily rambunctious two-year-old son or one of their rescue menagerie consisting of two dogs (lovable and naughty), four cats (all missing some part of their anatomy), and two horses (including a mischievous Clydesdale cross). She also loves to retreat to nature on horseback and spend time with her favorite llamas and alpacas whenever she can.



Diane Luiz joined the CDFA Animal Health Branch Tulare District as a part-time Ag Tech in June of 2004 and became a Livestock Inspector in October of 2009. Diane has held the position of Sr. Livestock Inspector, Specialist since November of 2017. Prior to joining CDFA, Diane worked as a Veterinary Microbiologist for the California Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory System, Tulare Lab (Currently known as CAHFSS) where she began as the first receptionist for the newly built Veterinary Medicine Teaching and Research Center and then managed the Milk Quality Laboratory.

Diane has been immersed in animal husbandry in one form or the other for her entire life. Growing up in Southern California, she raised and exhibited a myriad of animals in 4-H including dairy cattle, dairy goats and horses. She operated a successful dairy goat breeding enterprise for 25 years and served as a licensed judge officiating at fairs and shows in 28 states. Diane feels fortunate to be able to use her skills and experience working in an industry she is passionate about. Diane lives in Tulare with her dog and 2 cats and enjoys spending time with her family including a daughter who lives in Los Angeles.



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