



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE

November 2002

Background

In May 2002, bovine tuberculosis was confirmed in a Tulare County dairy herd. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the cattle industry established a task force and are working together to control and eradicate the disease from California.

Current Status

In November, the affected herd was sent to slaughter and the owner is being compensated.

Recently, a complete herd test on another dairy herd in Tulare identified a single reactor animal. While preliminary results were positive, final culture results from a USDA laboratory are pending. As a precaution, the dairy has been quarantined.

Additionally, CDFA/USDA officials are tracing the source of a TB-positive animal found this month at a California slaughterhouse.

To date, 135,435 cattle have been tested for exposure to bovine TB since this investigation began.

Cumulative Since May 13, 2002	
Herds tested	89
Herds retested	1
Number of new herds positive and quarantined	2
Animals tested	135,435
Initial TB skin test responders	2,587
Reactors	132
Suspects	194
Reactors & suspects destroyed	478
Trace outs destroyed	345
Exposed animals destroyed from affected herd	7,015
Average field personnel assigned daily	19

What is California Doing to Eradicate the Disease?

- The affected herd was quarantined by the CDFA in May. The dairy was tested for TB on two-month intervals and test positive animals were removed from the herd. In November, the herd was sent to slaughter and the premises was thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. All cattle sold from or associated with the affected herd over the last five years are being traced and tested.

- Efforts to purchase and slaughter all cattle that left the affected herd are underway.

As a precaution and to protect other states, all dairy breeding animals leaving California that are more than six months of age require a negative TB test within 30 days of movement. At this time, this requirement does not apply to beef cattle.

Potential Impact for California's TB-free Status

California's bovine TB-free status has not changed at this time. There are various status levels that can be assigned to a state under the USDA TB eradication program: accredited free, modified accredited advanced, modified accredited, accreditation preparatory or non-accredited.

For California to maintain its accredited-free TB status, the USDA requires that an affected herd be depopulated and there is no evidence of TB spread. Furthermore, no more herds can be found infected in the following 48 months or the Free status will be lost.

California's status could be changed to Modified Accredited Advanced early next year if it is unable to satisfy these requirements. This would require all California breeding cattle to have official identification and a negative TB test within 60 days of interstate movement OR originate from a TB accredited-free herd (mandatory annual TB testing) OR move directly to slaughter.

The USDA is currently reviewing its regulations used to determine a state's TB status when TB is detected.

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