CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Animal Health Branch Newsletter

Volume 13 June 2011

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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Note: In an effort to reduce costs this newsletter will only be sent electronically.

San Bernardino County TB Affected Dairy Herd: Update June 17, 2011

In April 2011, National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) reported that bovine tuberculosis (TB) was cultured from a granuloma lesion collected from a 5 year-old Holstein dairy cow slaughtered at a processing plant in Southern California. California Department of Food and Agriculture personnel traced the cow to its herd of origin - a dry-lot dairy in San Bernardino County, California where the cow was born, raised and never left the facility until she was sent to slaughter. The herd was quarantined and a TB-test of the herd was scheduled.

Almost 7,000 cattle in the herd were TB tested; 109 animals responded to the screening caudal fold skin test (CFT); four (4) were positive to the supplemental Interferon Gamma Test. After indemnification, these four (4) reactors were necropsied at the diagnostic laboratory; three (3) had lymph node lesions compatible with TB. NVSL reported all three (3) polymerase chain reaction test (PCR) positive for *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex and negative for *M. avium* TB complex and *M. avium ss paratuberculosis*; *M. bovis* was cultured from two of these three cows to date; cultures from one (1) cow are pending. The remaining CFT positive/Interferon Gamma negative cows were removed from the herd; one with a TB compatible lesion was found PCR negative for *M. tuberculosis* complex, *M. avium* TB complex and *M. avium ss paratuberculosis*; and culture positive for *M. bovis*.

The *M. bovis* isolates from the three positive cows identified in the herd were the exact same spoligotype and variable number tandem repeat (VNTR) profile as that of the index cow. The spoligotype and VNTR profiles are the same as strains historically associated with cattle of Mexican origin, and do not match the strains isolated from other cattle herds in the U.S.

The epidemiological investigation to determine the source and possible spread of tuberculosis continues. Two dairy herds that traced in heifers to the affected herd were found TB test negative. The affected herd does not purchase bulls or cows; no other trace-in herds have been identified to date that remain in business. No cattle have fence-line contact with the affected herd. To date, one feeding/holding facility, that temporarily held the Index Cow, was depopulated, cleaned and disinfected. Two large dairy herds in California and one dairy herd in Wisconsin that received cattle from the Index Herd have been TB tested with negative results. Bull/steer calves have tested negative for release into feeding channels. Several cull-cow traces are currently under investigation.

Public Health personnel have interviewed a sample of dairy personnel representing all job functions on the affected herd; all were Mexican born and none had symptoms of TB. No other species of

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San Bernardino County TB Affected Dairy Herd: Update June 17, 2011 *(continued)*

animals are kept on the facility; wildlife is limited to feral cats and dogs, coyotes, pigeons, opossums and other small wildlife species. Wildlife surveillance in the area of the index herd is complete with no positive findings on laboratory examination of specimens. The herd continues to operate under quarantine, with herd testing planned.

California Testing Summary	Number of Herds	Number of Animals	Number of CFT Responders	CFT Response Rate	Gamma/CCT Positive	PCR Positive	Culture Positive
Index Herd Testing (including young stock)	1	6,882	109	1.58%	4	3	3
Testing Trace Premises	4	10,147	109	1.07%	0	N/A	0
Total	**5**	**17,029**	**218**	**1.28%**	**4**	**3**	**3**

Eradication of Scrapie in the U.S. Goat Population

Since 2001, the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has coordinated an accelerated National Scrapie Eradication Program to eliminate the disease from U.S. sheep and goats. Efforts to eliminate scrapie in sheep in the United States are succeeding. To ensure complete and successful eradication of this fatal degenerative brain disease, its occurrence in the goat population must also be addressed. Disease transmission routes, progression and genetic underpinnings of scrapie in goats are poorly understood. Low occurrence rates, underreporting and the inconvenience and cost of tissue testing for scrapie make this eradication challenging.

All states implemented efforts in 2003 to eradicate classical scrapie by adopting regulations requiring official identification of sheep and goats and implementing slaughter surveillance. Subsequently, the percentages of black-face sheep and white or mottled-face sheep found scrapie-positive at slaughter decreased by 81 and 66 percent respectively between 2003 and 2009. The estimated national prevalence rate in sheep was 0.05% in 2009. A USDA caprine slaughter prevalence study in 2007-08 showed 0 positive / 3,032 goats sampled. This degree of sampling would have detected scrapie at a prevalence of 0.1%. There have been cases of classical scrapie in goats, however, the study concluded that the prevalence is less than 0.1%. Educational information about scrapie and the prevalence in U.S. sheep and goats is available from the National Scrapie Education Initiative. An informative presentation with two goat scrapie case reports and a review of the National Scrapie Identification Program protocols is available at **www.eradicatescrapie.org**

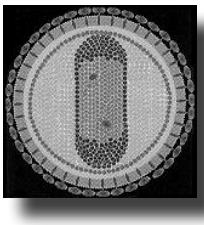
Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program - 2011

The United States Department of Agriculture's **Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program** (VMLRP), authorized by the National Veterinary Medical Services Act (NVMSA), helps qualified veterinarians offset a significant portion of the debt incurred in pursuit of their veterinary medicine degrees in return for their service in certain high-priority veterinary shortage situations. The National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA) repayment is limited to principal and interest on government and commercial loans received by those that completed a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine or equivalent degree at an accredited college of veterinary medicine.

If you commit to at least three years to providing veterinary services in a designated veterinary shortage area, NIFA may repay up to $25,000 of your student loan debt per year. The NIFA accepted eight 2011 nominations of designated high-priority veterinary shortage situations from California. To view California designated shortage situations go to:
http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/animals/in_focus/vmlrp_11/vmlrp_shortage_situation_california.html

The VMLRP application cycle is open from **May 9th to July 8th, 2011**. An applicant may submit an application for only one shortage situation. Information about the program can be found at:
http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/animals/in_focus/an_health_if_vmlrp.html

To determine if you qualify, or to obtain additional information about the application process, go to:
http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/animals/in_focus/an_health_if_vmlrp_applicants.html



Equine Infectious Anemia Positive Horse

Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) was confirmed in a 12 year-old Ventura County polo pony on April 25, 2011 and an epidemiological investigation was initiated. The asymptomatic horse was tested as a prerequisite for an international health certificate to move to Canada. The horse was subsequently euthanized. Testing of forty-three (43) exposed cohort horses on the same premises as the infected horse was performed by CDFA. All exposed cohort horses were test negative and released from quarantine. A 60-day retest of exposed cohort horses to confirm negative status is scheduled.

EIA is a reportable disease in the United States. California regulations provide two EIA-positive equid management options to owners: humane euthanasia or restrictive lifetime quarantine of the individual horse at least 200 yards from other horses.

Since 2008, three (3) EIA-positive cases detected in California were euthanized. Annually, approximately 30,000 California equids are EIA tested. Currently, there are fifteen (15) USDA-approved EIA testing laboratories in California. We remind private practitioners to accurately complete the EIA Laboratory Test (Form VS 10-11) before submission of samples to the laboratory.

For more information, please visit: **http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/eia/**

May 2011 EHV-1 Outbreak Summary

On May 13, 2011, California Animal Health Officials were notified by the The National Cutting Horse Association (NCHA) that fifty-four (54) California horses that competed at the Western National Cutting Horse Championship held in Ogden, Utah on April 30-May 8, 2011 may have been exposed to the neuropathogenic strain of Equine Herpes Virus-1 (EHV-1). Some of these same horses were entered in the Kern County Cutting Horse event in Bakersfield, CA on May 13, 2011. One horse, that competed in Ogden, UT, was euthanized at the Kern County Cutting Horse event after showing severe neurological signs. All horses at the Ogden, UT and Bakersfield, CA events were potentially exposed to the disease.

As of June 15, 2011, California has twenty-two (22) confirmed positive cases of the neuropathogenic strain of EHV-1. To date, the EHV-1 positive horses in this incident either participated in the Ogden, UT or Bakersfield, CA cutting events or were subsequently exposed to these horses on their home premises. There have been no confirmed EHV-1 cases in any other equine discipline in California. The last three confirmed cases in California are in Glenn County with a clinical onset date of June 3, 2011.

For more details on the EHV-1 situation visit:

http://cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal_health/equine_herpes_virus.html

California Confirmed EHV-1 Cases as of June 15, 2011

Confirmed Cases	22
Counties with Confirmed Cases	12
Premises with Positive Horses	14
Horses died/euthanized	2
Positive cases with neurological signs	8
Positive with fever only	13
Positive with only respiratory signs	1

Proposed Bovine Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Regulatory Framework

The USDA APHIS-VS is seeking comments on the Proposed Bovine Tuberculosis and Brucellosis DRAFT Regulatory Framework. The framework has eight parts that form a single rule for both diseases to ensure consistency, yet increase flexibility and reduce the administrative burden for the United States Department of Agriculture. The DRAFT framework, a summary paper and two public meeting presentations are available at:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/tb_bruc/meetings.shtml

Comments may be submitted by email to: **TB.Bruce.Comments@aphis.usda.gov** until July 5, 2011. Regulation writing is yet to begin; once written, it will be published in the Federal Register and an open comment period established.

Exotic Newcastle Disease Outbreak in Mexico

Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) in a commercial broiler operation in the Mexican state of Baja California and on a poultry breeding farm in the Mexican state of Hidalgo were discovered in January 2011. Between the two premises, over 10,000 chickens died and more than 10,000 birds were depopulated in containment efforts. Although END is endemic in Mexico, identification of END in commercial poultry flocks requires the Mexican government to notify the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). An epidemiological investigation is on-going to determine the source of the outbreak.

END, one of the world's most infectious poultry diseases, is a frequently fatal, viral disease that affects all species of birds. Mortality in unvaccinated commercial chickens can approach 100% and in vaccinated chickens may be 10-20%. Transmission occurs by aerosol over a short distance, direct contact with infected birds and fecal material, or indirectly by contact with contaminated people, vehicles and equipment. Some birds have no clinical signs of infection prior to death; others display signs such as sneezing, gasping, nasal discharge, diarrhea, depression, tremors, drooping wings, circling, paralysis, and swelling near the eyes and neck.

The January report of the outbreak in Mexico was of serious concern to the poultry industry in California, which faced END outbreaks in 1971-73 and 2002-03. Both commercial and backyard poultry in the US were affected in the 2002-03 outbreak, which resulted in widespread quarantines and the depopulation of 4 million birds. The government costs to eradicate END, along with the losses incurred by the poultry industry, are estimated at over $300 million.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) remain ever vigilant with surveillance and ongoing outreach. In response to the Mexican report, CDFA contacted commercial producers and encouraged review of the clinical signs of illness and biosecurity measures with employees. Federal customs and border control officials increased attention to poultry being moved across the Mexican-American border. USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service implemented changes in the requirements for passage of poultry meat from countries with END, including Mexico. Outreach with the California Rural Crime Prevention Task Force led to presentation of an END lecture for law enforcement officers who deal with game fowl (i.e. fighting birds) and illegal bird activities. CDFA personnel distributed disease alerts and information to feed stores, 4-H Clubs, livestock auctions and markets where chickens are sold. The California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System (CAHFS) also increased END outreach and surveillance work. Please see **http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/Newcastle_Disease_Info.html** for additional information.

Observe™ Caudal Fold Tuberculin

We are currently distributing **Observe™ Caudal Fold Tuberculin** produced in New Zealand for TB testing of cattle. As a newly purchased product by USDA, the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) is tracking the performance of the product. Labels are distributed with the product for attachment at the time of use to TB Test Charts (VS Form 6-22). Practitioners are to attach the label to the top of the TB Test Chart and return the test chart to the Animal Health Branch District Office. Completed VS 6-22 forms will be forwarded to NVSL.

2012 NAHMS Study - Swine

The National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) will embark on its fifth national study of the pork industry in June 2012 in collaboration with the National Agricultural Statistics Service. Insight and input from pork producers, veterinary practitioners, federal and state governments and academia was sought to help determine the study objectives to address specific needs and information gaps in swine health and related management practices.

Direct comments and questions to NAHMS by email at NAHMS@aphis.usda.gov or direct call to Dr. Eric Bush (970-494-7260) or Dr. Charles Haley (970-494-7216).

Results of previous NAHMS studies of swine operations and other industries are available online at:
http://nahms.aphis.usda.gov

West Nile Virus Update

West Nile Virus (WNV) continues to be the most important cause of mosquito-borne neurologic illness and death among horses and humans. In 2010, WNV was detected in 19 horses from 11 counties. As a result of WNV infection, five horses (26%) died or were euthanized.

As available funding permits, the California Department of Public Health and California Department of Food and Agriculture will provide free WNV serologic diagnostic testing at the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratories for clinically-affected horses. Your participation in this public health program is appreciated.

Commercially available WNV vaccine products have been shown to provide a high level of protection and do not interfere with WNV IgM serologic testing. We encourage veterinarians to recommend WNV vaccination to their clients.

For more information on WNV in California visit:
www.westnile.ca.gov or **http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal_health/wnv_info.html**

Animal Disease Traceability Rule

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) will soon publish a new animal disease traceability rule. The rule will require that certain livestock moving interstate be officially identified and accompanied by an Interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (ICVI) or other documentation. The regulations will specify authorized forms of official identification for each species with identification of cattle as the initial target of the program.

The USDA plan focuses on animals moving interstate – the movements with the greatest national impact for spread of diseases. Under the new proposal, the requirement for individual animal identification will include dairy, rodeo and show cattle of all ages and beef cattle 18 months of age and older. There will also be a phase-in of official identification requirements for cattle less than 18 months of age. The rule will provide some exemptions for movement of a commuter herd with a copy of the commuter herd agreement. When agreed upon by animal health officials in two states, movement of cattle under 18 months of age between the two states may occur with documentation other than an ICVI, such as a brand inspection certificate.

The following devices will be listed in the proposal as official identification for cattle: Animal Identification Number devices – “840 tags”; National Uniform Eartagging System tags - silver and orange metal tags with the state code; Location-Based Number - an official premises identification number with a unique herd management number. If agreed upon by animal health officials in the two states where cattle movement is to take place, other forms of animal identification can be used including brands, tattoos and breed registry certificates.

States will be responsible for implementing a traceability system that will allow the state to achieve national traceability performance standards. State Animal Health Officials will work closely with local producers to implement a workable system. Each state will be required to develop a three-year roadmap to implement the new regulations. If you are have interest in participating in the CDFA Animal Disease Traceability Working Group, contact Victor Velez (**victor.velez@cdfa.ca.gov**).

Did you know?

With 1.8 million dairy cows and 39.5 billion pounds of milk produced in 2009, California is ranked number one in the United States with 21 percent of all milk production.

Staff Biographies

Dr. Alisha Olmstead was raised in Spokane, Washington, where she actively participated in 4-H horse programs. While obtaining a Neuroscience degree at Washington State University, she worked as a veterinary assistant for an equine practitioner. During veterinary school at Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine in St. Kitts, West Indies, she expanded special interests in equine medicine and small ruminant medicine. Following graduation from veterinary school, Dr. Olmstead completed an internship at Willamette Valley Equine Surgical Medical Center in Portland, Oregon and then spent the next three years as an ambulatory associate with the practice. In practice, equine nutrition, internal medicine and podiatry were areas of special interest. Involvement in client education events and the creation of a practice website also kept Dr. Olmstead busy. In her spare time, Alisha enjoys photography, art, camping, running, hiking with her Jack Russell Terrier, "Peetie" and riding her horses "Ben" and "Mack".

A "James Herriot – type" uncle, who practiced veterinary medicine in rural Germany, sowed the seeds for Gaby Maier's decision to go to veterinary school during the summer vacations spent traipsing along with him on farm calls. After high school, she spent a year with a family in Sonoma as an au pair. On return to Germany, she began training as a foreign language correspondent and also worked for Pfizer Pharmaceuticals in Karlsruhe, north of the Black Forest. In 1998, she returned to California for a planned 2 to 3 year sabbatical, squeezed in a Bachelor's degree in Biology, then decided to extend her stay – indefinitely! Research laboratory work at UC San Francisco and Stanford University followed. She received her DVM and MPVM from UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine and joined the AHB Tulare District in August 2010.

Dr. Maier lives in Visalia with her husband, Seanchan. She enjoys hiking, camping and being amazed by the beauty of her new home, California. She enjoys trips to San Francisco for art shows and her favorite Sushi place on Balboa Street.

Animal Health Branch
Contact Information

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE

California Department of Food and Agriculture
Animal Health and Food Safety Services
Animal Health Branch
1220 N Street, A-107
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

Animal Health Branch
Dr. Kent Fowler, Chief
Headquarters: (916) 654-1447
Permit Line: (916) 651-6278

State Veterinarian
and
Director, Animal Health and Food Safety Services
Dr. Annette Whiteford
(916) 654-0881

District Offices
Veterinarians In Charge (VIC)

Redding: Dr. Charles Palmer
2135 Civic Center Drive, Room 8
Redding, CA 96001
(530) 225-2140

Modesto: Dr. Randy Anderson (Acting)
3800 Cornucopia Way, Suite F
Modesto, CA 95358
(209) 491-9350

Tulare: Dr. Clementa Frederiksen
18830 Road 112
Tulare, CA 93274
(559) 685-3500

Ontario: Dr. Predrag Pecic
1910 South Archibald Avenue, Suite Y
Ontario, CA 91761
(909) 947-4462

Additional AHFSS Branches

Bureau of Livestock Identification
Greg Lawley, Chief
(916) 654-0889

Milk and Dairy Food Safety
Dr. Stephen Beam, Chief
(916) 654-0773

Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety
Dr. Douglas Hepper, Chief
(916) 654-0504

Emergency Preparedness and Support Unit (EPSU)
John Rowden, Manager
(916) 651-0399

United States Department of Agriculture
Area Veterinarian In Charge
Dr. Gary Brickler
(916) 854-3950/Toll Free: (877) 741-3690

Animal Health and Food Safety Services is moving the second week in August to a new location, 5 miles from CDFA headquarters. The *physical address* of the new facility will be 2800 Gateway Oaks Drive, Sacramento, CA, 95833. Our *mailing address* of 1220 N Street, Sacramento, CA, 95814 will remain the same. Existing telephone and fax numbers will be forwarded to the new facility for 6 months.