

Report to the Legislature
CDFA
Animal Blood Banks 2025



Animal Blood Banks

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As a result of increased specialization in veterinary medicine, the demand for animal blood products has risen dramatically. A safe and adequate supply of blood and blood component products for transfusion is vital to animal health. Commercial blood banks for animals produce and sell blood and blood component products, increasing the supply available for transfusions. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Animal Blood Banks Program establishes standards of care and practices for veterinary blood banks operating in California. The program ensures that animals used for blood donation are treated humanely and that blood products sold in California are both effective and safe.

Historically, California required commercial blood banks for animals to be closed-colony establishments. On January 1, 2022, Assembly Bill 1282 (Bloom, 2021), the California Pet Blood Bank Modernization Act, went into effect. The intent of the bill was to address the shortage of animal blood available for veterinary transfusion medicine in California and transition the State from closed-colony blood banks to community blood banks.

As a result, since January 1, 2022, importation and sale of canine blood and blood component products from out-of-state sources has only been permitted from community blood banks (Food and Agricultural Code (FAC) § 9252 (b)).

CDFA will discontinue its licensing program for commercial blood banks for animals that produce canine blood and blood component products sourced from captive closed-colony dogs within 18 months of determining that community blood banks sold an annual amount of canine blood in California that equals or exceeds the annual amount closed-colony blood banks sold in four consecutive quarters. This will be announced on the CDFA website at <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/CABB/> (FAC § 9212.5(a)).

Additionally, FAC § 9254 mandates that the department submit an annual copy of canine blood collection data publicly posted on its website (this document) to the following recipients:

- The Chair and Vice Chair of the Assembly Business and Professions Committee,
- The Chair and Vice Chair of the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee,
- The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Assembly and Senate Agriculture Committees, and
- The Veterinary Medical Board.

ANIMAL BLOOD BANK REGULATIONS

In 2024, the Animal Blood Bank program developed regulations to clarify and specify the requirements for operating a commercial blood bank in California. These regulations aim to ensure transparency and provide clear guidance to veterinarians, commercial blood banks, and the public on the discontinuation of the Department's licensing program for closed-colony blood banks.

The regulations also mandate routine inspections of commercial blood banks and any facilities that house animal blood donors for closed-colony blood banks, as well as the timely submission of quarterly reports to the Department. These measures enable the Department to monitor the business practices of animal blood banks more accurately, particularly regarding animal health and welfare. Veterinary hospitals and the public benefit from the assurance that animal blood and blood component products are produced in a safe and humane manner.

By establishing clear requirements and fee structures for entities seeking to sell animal blood products, the regulations are designed to encourage the growth of community blood banks. The increased participation of community blood banks is expected to address the ongoing demand for animal blood products in California.

The proposed regulatory text was submitted to the California Office of Administrative Law in January 2025, marking a significant step in the modernization of the state's animal blood banking system.

OUTREACH

Animal blood banking continues to be a frequent topic in the National and local media. Publications including the LA Times, the New York Times, National Geographic, California Veterinarian magazine, California Business Journal, and CBS News Sacramento published stories about the topic in 2024. Despite this spotlight, many in the veterinary industry remain unaware of the laws governing animal blood banking in California.

In 2024, the Animal Blood Banks program focused on engaging stakeholders and raising awareness about the recent changes in California's animal blood banking laws. Meetings were held with veterinarians, blood bank operators, and advocacy groups to address ongoing issues and ensure compliance with the new framework established under the California Pet Blood Bank Modernization Act. Stakeholder input was essential in shaping the proposed regulations.

To inform the veterinary community, the program attended conferences, distributed educational materials, and collaborated with professional associations. These efforts emphasized the importance of humane practices, animal welfare, and compliance with updated standards.

The program partnered with the California Veterinary Medical Board (CA VMB) to create the "Animal Blood Banking Frequently Asked Questions" document, available at https://www.vmb.ca.gov/forms_pubs/animal_blood_banking_faq.pdf

This resource addresses common questions and provides clear guidance for veterinarians and blood bank operators.

ANIMAL BLOOD PRODUCT REGISTRATIONS

In March 2024, one of California's two closed-colony blood banks ceased operations, marking significant progress toward transitioning to community blood banking. Simultaneously, a new commercial community blood bank began operations, further contributing to the availability of animal blood and blood component products in the state.

All existing community blood banks successfully renewed their product registrations for the fiscal year 2024–2025, ensuring continued availability of high-quality products for veterinary transfusion medicine.

For a comprehensive list of all registered blood and blood component products, visit the CDFA website at <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/CABB/docs/ProductsRegisteredwithCDFA.pdf>.

ANIMAL BLOOD BANKING GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

In accordance with FAC Section 9255, the CDFA Animal Blood Banks program developed the Animal Blood Banking Guidance Resource in 2022 to support veterinarians and blood bank operators with clear and accurate information. Recognizing the rapid evolution of animal blood banking and transfusion medicine, the guidance document was updated multiple times in 2024 to reflect current best practices.

The guidance document establishes standards of care and operational practices for veterinary blood banks, ensuring that animal blood and blood component products are efficacious, safe, and free from contamination or harm. It is designed to assist veterinarians in maintaining compliance with regulations while promoting high standards of animal welfare and product safety.

The most up-to-date version of the Animal Blood Banking Guidance Resource is available on the CDFA website at:

https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/cabb/docs/animal_blood_banking_guidance_resource.pdf.

CANINE BLOOD COLLECTION INFORMATION

CDFA requires animal blood banks selling products in California to submit quarterly reports to CDFA (Business and Professions Code § 4920.6, FAC § 9252 (c), and FAC § 9253 (b)). These reports are used to calculate the total estimated amount of canine blood sold in California by community blood banks and, separately, the total estimated amount of canine blood that closed-colony blood banks sold in the state.

If CDFA finds that community blood banks sold an annual amount of canine blood in California that equals or exceeds the annual amount closed-colony blood banks sold in four consecutive quarters, then the Animal Blood Banks program shall provide notice on the CDFA internet website that discontinues its licensing program for closed-colony blood banks for dogs within 18 months from the date of that notice (FAC § 9212.5).

2024 Canine Blood and Blood Component Quarterly Reports

January 1, 2024 – March 31, 2024

Blood Bank Type	Whole Blood (ml)	Red Blood Cells (ml)	Fresh-Frozen Plasma (ml)	Total (ml)
Closed-Colony Blood Banks	29,750	195,875	150,120	375,745
Community Blood Banks	450	1,889	1,200	3,539

The amount of blood sold by community blood banks did not exceed the amount sold by closed-colony blood banks this quarter.

April 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024

Blood Bank Type	Whole Blood (ml)	Red Blood Cells (ml)	Fresh-Frozen Plasma (ml)	Total (ml)
Closed-Colony Blood Banks	30,625	140,375	128,520	299,520
Community Blood Banks	410	5,159	1,320	6,889

The amount of blood sold by community blood banks did not exceed the amount sold by closed-colony blood banks this quarter.

July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024

Blood Bank Type	Whole Blood (ml)	Red Blood Cells (ml)	Fresh-Frozen Plasma (ml)	Total (ml)
Closed-Colony Blood Banks	20,250	145,375	140,460	306,085
Community Blood Banks	360	12,680	2,400	15,440

The amount of blood sold by community blood banks did not exceed the amount sold by closed-colony blood banks this quarter.

October 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

Blood Bank Type	Whole Blood (ml)	Red Blood Cells (ml)	Fresh-Frozen Plasma (ml)	Total (ml)
Closed-Colony Blood Banks	23,875	147,750	118,020	289,640
Community Blood Banks	1,000	9,392	2,480	12,872

The amount of blood sold by community blood banks did not exceed the amount sold by closed-colony blood banks this quarter.

Total for 2024: January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

Blood Bank Type	Whole Blood (ml)	Red Blood Cells (ml)	Fresh-Frozen Plasma (ml)	Total (ml)
Closed-Colony Blood Banks	104,500	629,375	537,120	1,270,995
Community Blood Banks	2,220	29,120	7,400	38,740

Based on these figures, the CDFA shall continue its licensing program for closed-colony blood banks in 2025. This information was published on the Animal Blood Banks program website.

INSPECTIONS

In 2024, all commercial blood banks and their associated facilities underwent comprehensive inspections conducted by the CDFA Animal Blood Banks program. These inspections aimed to

ensure compliance with regulatory standards, uphold high standards of animal welfare, and verify the safety and efficacy of blood and blood component products.

During the inspections, the program collaborated with facilities to address minor issues and implement improvements where necessary. This proactive approach not only resolved potential concerns but also enhanced overall operational practices and product safety. These efforts reflect the program's commitment to maintaining the highest standards of care in California's animal blood banking industry.

2025 PLANS

In 2025, the CDFA Animal Blood Banks program will continue its commitment to ensuring the safety, efficacy, and humane production of animal blood and blood component products in California. Key initiatives for the year include:

- **Data Collection and Analysis:** The program will maintain the collection, reporting, and analysis of animal blood and blood component sales to monitor trends and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.
- **Comprehensive Inspections:** All blood banks with registered products will undergo thorough inspections to verify compliance with safety and welfare standards.
- **Outreach and Education:** The program will expand outreach efforts to educate veterinarians about changes mandated by Assembly Bill 1282 (2021) and adopted regulations. Outreach will also target out-of-state blood banks to ensure they understand the requirements for selling products in California.
- **Product Registration:** Efforts will focus on registering additional blood and blood component products from community blood banks to meet growing demand.
- **Regulatory Development:** The program will promulgate administrative penalty regulations to enhance enforcement of commercial blood banking.

Through these initiatives, the program aims to strengthen California's animal blood banking system, supporting veterinarians and promoting high standards of animal welfare and product safety.