



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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Animal Health Branch Newsletter

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Avian Influenza in the Western United States

The Pacific Flyway stretches 4,000 miles north-to-south and 1,000 miles east-to-west encompassing many states and varied waterfowl habitats. It hosts migration for thousands of waterfowl in the fall and spring seasons. Ornithologists and birdwatchers look forward to this time for rare sightings and photography opportunities, while poultry owners have feelings of nervousness and apprehension.

This is because waterfowl can be carriers of Avian Influenza with little or no symptoms and can easily land on poultry premises risking the entire flock's health.

Avian Influenza (AI), commonly called bird flu, is a disease found in a wide variety of domesticated and wild birds. Cases are classified as either Low Pathogenicity (LPAI) or High Pathogenicity (HPAI) based on the severity of the illness they cause in poultry. However, influenza viruses can genetically change to more (or less) severe types. Once introduced into an area, infection can spread through bird-to-bird contact or through contact with contaminated people, feed, water, or equipment.

Just within the past month, there have been five (5) AI cases that have been discovered along the Pacific Flyway (*Table 1 on Page 2*).

It is important to note that there is no immediate public health concern, as both of these strains have been found in birds in other parts of the world and have not caused any human infection to date. These AI viruses have NOT been found in commercial poultry anywhere in the United States.



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Avian Influenza in the Western United States (continued)

Let's take proper precautions, before a problem occurs in our area! If you are a bird owner, good biosecurity practices are critical. Keep birds housed away from open water sources that attract wild waterfowl. Be observant and if you notice signs of illness or increased mortality, please call your private veterinarian, Sick Bird Hotline at 866-922-2473, or the CDFA District Office in your area/USDA Numbers below. For more information, visit:

http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/Avian_Influenza.html

Contact Information	
CDFA Redding District	(530) 225-2140
CDFA Modesto District	(209) 491-9350
CDFA Tulare District	(559) 685-3500
CDFA Ontario District	(909) 947-4462
CDFA Sacramento (HQ)	(916) 900-5002
USDA-VS Toll Free	(877) 741-3690

If morbidity or mortality is observed in wild waterfowl, please contact the California Department of Fish and Wildlife at (916) 358-2790

Table 1

Location	Date(s)	Description	AI Serotype
British Columbia, Canada	12/9/14	Increased mortality at a meat turkey farm and chicken broiler breeder farm. Later spread to nine (9) other farms within the same area. Further investigation and depopulation continues.	HPAI H5N2
Washington State	12/17/14	Two separate viral strains of HPAI were identified in Whatcom County, WA. The first was HPAI H5N8 and was diagnosed in a captive Gyrfalcon. The falcons at this premises were fed harvested wild waterfowl. The second was HPAI H5N2 and this was confirmed in a Pintail duck near Lake Wiser, WA.	HPAI H5N8 HPAI H5N2
	12/30/14	A backyard flock in Benton County, WA was reported to the State as experiencing high mortality in approximately 100 turkeys and some chickens. The flock was kept outdoors. Depopulation is complete.	HPAI H5N2
Oregon	12/19/14	HPAI was diagnosed in a small backyard flock in Winston, OR. The flock had approximately 100 birds and consisted of guinea fowl, chicken, geese, and ducks. The birds were free-range and had access to a pond on the property frequented by migratory waterfowl. The virus was isolated from the guinea fowl exhibiting increased mortality. Depopulation is complete.	HPAI H5N8
California	1/5/15	A confirmed positive AI case was found in a wild Gadwall in Butte County, California. The bird was collected as a part of enhanced surveillance by USDA Wildlife Services and is not a surprise finding due to given migratory patterns.	HPAI H5N8*

**Pathogenicity still being determined but the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) report it is consistent with HPAI*

Animal Disease Traceability Updates

Proposed Animal Disease Traceability Regulations

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) will soon be publishing regulations to enhance the ability to trace cattle diseases in California. These regulations will align state traceability rules with those implemented by the United States Department of Agriculture in 2013. Additionally, the proposed rules will include requirements to officially identify all dairy cattle prior to leaving the birth farm. Once published, there will be a comment period for anyone interested in providing comments on the regulations.

Reminder for Veterinarians issuing Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (CVIs)

The federal Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) rule published in March 2013 requires veterinarians to forward a copy of the CVI to the origin state **within 7 days**. Many CVIs are still being received more than 30 days after they were issued. Destination states are sending violation letters if CVIs are not received in the origin state within 7 days. Please be sure to send in the copies to the address below as soon as you issue the CVI.

California Department of Food and Agriculture

Animal Health Branch

1220 N Street

Sacramento, CA 95814



Use of Physical Address on Official Forms

All official forms including Certificates of Veterinary Inspection, tuberculosis, trichomonosis, and brucellosis test charts, brucellosis vaccination certificates should have the physical address and actual location of the animals being examined, tested, or vaccinated. If no physical address is available, a description of the location or GPS coordinates will be accepted. Any forms bearing a PO Box, or other address where the animals are not located will be returned to the signing veterinarian for correction. Thank you for your help and cooperation in ensuring the most accurate information is provided.

Use of 900 prefix Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) eartags

Livestock producers have until March 11, 2015 to use up their supplies of RFID tags with the 900 prefix. In early 2013, the U.S. Department of Agriculture published a rule establishing general regulations for improving the traceability of U.S. livestock moving interstate. Starting March 11, 2015, only RFID tags that start with 840 will be official for interstate movement. Any tag with a 900 prefix will not be accepted for interstate movement of cattle unless that animal was tagged before March 11, 2015.

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Animal Disease Traceability Updates (continued)

Accepted electronic Certificates of Veterinary inspection (CVIs) - (Health Certificates)

Electronic CVIs can be issued by California veterinarians using the following service providers:

- **United States Department of Agriculture, Veterinary Streamline Processing System** (<https://vsapps.aphis.usda.gov/vsps/>) This web-based system was developed in 2000 and is offered free to practitioners.
- **GlobalVetLINK** (www.globalvetlink.com) has been issuing electronic CVIs since 2001. It is also web-based and requires a subscription fee, plus a fee per CVI. This system can also create electronic Coggins test forms.

Although additional service providers are available, they are not currently approved for use by California veterinarians.

Electronic Brand Inspection coming in early 2015

In early 2015, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), Livestock Identification Branch will be launching a new app for the Apple iPad to facilitate collection of brand inspection information in the field. Initially ten (10) brand inspectors will be collecting brand inspection and enforcement information on the iPads. Once the inspector has internet connectivity, the information will be transferred to CDFA's information system in Sacramento. The intent is to eventually move to a full electronic data collection statewide. Implementation of this project will help with data accuracy and provide theft and expired brand alerts.

Ultra High Frequency (UHF) Tag Project

CDFA received funding for a pilot project to test the usability of Ultra High Frequency eartags in cattle. The project will look at the use of the tags for movement through markets and use for interstate movement. One of the main objectives of the project is to evaluate the use of the tags while maintaining the speed of commerce. The tags used in the project will meet the requirements for official identification for the cattle and conform to the Animal Identification Number (AIN) or "840" system in accordance with the federal Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) rule. If you have question regarding this project, contact Rachelle Kennedy (rachelle.kennedy@cdfa.ca.gov)

Brucellosis and Tuberculosis Updates

Two new brucellosis affected herds in Montana

Two brucellosis affected herds in Montana are being investigated; both herds use the Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) seasonally. One is located in Madison County while the other herd grazes in south Park County but is headquartered in Carbon County. The Madison County herd was found as part of a herd test, while the Park County herd tested as a DSA movement test to return home. Montana has detected brucellosis affected cattle herds in five of the previous eight years. Previous cases have been linked to elk exposure.

Bovine Tuberculosis

California's last bovine tuberculosis-affected herd was released from quarantine in July 2014. Fourteen infected cattle were removed during a "test-and-removal" program, and the herd remains under post-quarantine-release testing for five (5) years. This investigation has been completed without any indication of disease-spread to other herds or wildlife. California remains the only state in the nation classified by the USDA as "Modified Accredited Advanced" (MAA) for bovine TB. Releasing the quarantine on the affected herd starts the 24-month countdown to California's application for USDA Bovine TB-Free status in July 2016.

Animal Health Branch Emergency Program

As California's first responder to animal disease outbreaks, the Animal Health Branch (AHB) is responsible for preparing for, responding to and mitigating damaging livestock and poultry disease incursions. The AHB Emergency Program is a critical component to this core mission.

Highly contagious animal disease outbreaks require timely and efficient responses due to potential threats to public health and California's animal agriculture industries. It is imperative that AHB emergency response staff are well trained on critical plans, policies and procedures that guide the various types of responses and have ready access to the forms, templates, software applications, maps and supplies that ensure responders are equipped to perform their tasks effectively. The AHB Emergency Program facilitates planning, training and other emergency preparedness activities to ensure CDFA staff and stakeholders are ready to respond.

This year, a primary focus will be testing and validation of animal disease response plans and CDFA's capabilities to execute these plans. In 2015, AHB will conduct a series of discussion based exercises in the form of Foreign Animal Disease Workshops. Throughout the workshop series, AHB will examine various animal disease response strategies and invite participation from vital stakeholders such as USDA Veterinary Services and private practitioners. These events will be precursors to a future functional or full-scale exercise. Each workshop will take participants through an animal disease scenario(s) to stimulate discussion relating to response actions, resource organization and identification of priorities for emergency planning. AHB Emergency Program exercises are used to identify capability gaps and areas for improvement. Well-designed exercises provide a low-risk environment to test capabilities, familiarize personnel with roles and responsibilities, and foster communication across participating organizations. AHB will kick off this initiative with a first workshop scheduled in January.



Vesicular Stomatitis Update

On January 6, 2015 Vesicular Stomatitis was confirmed in two horses in Santa Cruz County, Arizona. The premises is under quarantine. In 2014, a total of 434 premises were confirmed positive for the New Jersey serotype of the Vesicular Stomatitis Virus in four US States; Arizona (1 premises), Colorado (370 premises), Nebraska (1 premises) and Texas (62 premises). Of the 14,029 susceptible livestock, 586 equine and 60 bovine animals were confirmed positive cases. As of December 29, 2014, fifteen (15) of the positive premises in Colorado remain under quarantine. On October 13, 2014, the last confirmed VS positive premises in Texas was released from quarantine. As of December 22, 2014, all confirmed VS positive premises in Nebraska were released from quarantine; however California VS statement entry requirements remain for 30 days post the last premises quarantine release. No VS cases have been identified in California. For more information visit: http://cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/Entry_Requirements.html



2014 Year in Review

The CDFA Animal Health Branch (AHB) would like to thank private veterinary practitioners for their contributions in protecting, promoting, and advancing animal health within the California livestock and poultry industries. Upon reflecting on the year that has past, we are reminded how vital the private practitioner's role is in protecting California's livestock and poultry from disease incursions through early disease detection and reporting; and while this reporting activity is critical, it is one of many roles that private veterinarians play in coordinating with CDFA on animal health issues.

2014 brought us many challenges, including our continued response to bovine tuberculosis (TB). We completed and released our very last quarantined herd in July. With continued diligence and support from the private veterinary community, the AHB will continue to follow-up on future TB reactors and disease traces within the bovine industry to ensure we keep our livestock healthy and markets open.

Also in 2014, AHB launched an animal disease response to H5N8 Low Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (LPAI). The ramifications of this disease incident were not isolated to the affected producer but extended to all of our poultry producers whose international trade shipments were impacted. The AHB has always believed that private veterinary practitioners are essential resources not only in disease detection, but also in response and recovery from emergency livestock and poultry diseases. No example more clearly highlights this fact than our recent collaborations with private veterinary practitioners servicing California Central Valley poultry producers. CDFA leveraged these practitioner's knowledge and expertise to support the California LPAI Incident Management Team by performing weekly surveillance sampling and laboratory submissions required for their clients. This coordination enabled CDFA AHB to focus our veterinary and technical staff resources on other critical incident activities. This collaboration contributed to a very quick and efficient LPAI response and the ultimate disease eradication that made it possible for the affected producer to recover and get back in business. This is an excellent example of the type of collaboration and cooperation with AHB that is critical to our State's successful prevention, detection, eradication and recovery from damaging livestock and poultry disease incidents.

Looking forward to 2015 and beyond, AHB will continue to forge relationships with the private veterinary community that will allow us to plan for and respond to animal disease incidents together. We appreciate private practitioner participation in California animal health programs, whether issuing Certificates of Veterinary Inspection for animal movement, administering animal vaccinations, or submitting routine surveillance samples. We know that our success in protecting and promoting animal health is supported by the day-to-day work of private veterinarians. Please accept our sincere appreciation. We could not do what we do without your support and assistance.



2014 Staff Photos



Redding District



Ontario District



Modesto District



Tulare District



Sacramento Headquarters

Contact Information



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FOOD & AGRICULTURE

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Dr. Annette Jones
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