



Animal Health Branch News

Volume 05

August 2008

Mission Statement

The Animal Health Branch (AHB) 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.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Bovine Tuberculosis Update August 2008

By Dr. Anita Edmondson

Since January 2008, bovine tuberculosis (TB) has been confirmed in three California dairy herds in Fresno County. This outbreak was first identified in a single animal through routine testing that occurs in all slaughter facilities. The subsequent investigation revealed two more herds, each containing a single infected animal. The three herds are under quarantine and disease control plans have been implemented which include removal, euthanasia and necropsy of test-positive cattle.

Once a herd is classified as affected it remains under quarantine, if not depopulated, until it has completed at least eight negative whole herd tests over a minimum of four years. Two additional negative annual herd tests are required after the quarantine is released.

Source of Infection - The source of TB has not yet been identified. The genotype of the isolate from the first affected herd is most similar to recent isolates from feedlot cattle in the Southwest, many of which originated from Mexico. Preliminary results indicate the infection in the first and second herd are not related. Direct movement of an infected animal from the first herd carried the infection to the third herd.

Testing and Identification in Associated Herds - All herds associated with the affected herds are being caudal fold tested by government veterinarians; about 105 herds and 150,000 TB tests have been performed to date. Herd owners are being provided, free of charge, official individual animal RFID tags for test eligible cattle. Using RFID tags enhances accurate and efficient TB testing and traceability.

California's Classification - It is an
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Consensus Building for Animal Health Policy Development

By Dr. Ellen Mary Wilson

Animal health related issues are complex and require extensive ongoing efforts for the development and implementation of solutions. Although some animal health issues are unique to a local area or state, many have much broader implications and are shared challenges by all animal health officials nationally and internationally. Solutions to these issues require extensive communications, deliberations and collaborations with multiple governmental entities, scientists, animal industry leaders and stakeholders.

More than one hundred years ago, numerous devastating animal diseases were plaguing the nation. Efforts to ensure the interstate shipment of healthy animals and the development of science-based programs for the prevention and eradication of animal diseases impacting the nation brought about the formation of the **United States Animal Health Association (USAHA)**. The overwhelming challenges of bovine babesiosis or Texas fever in 1897 served as the impetus for the founding of USAHA as a needed national forum for scientific information exchange. Consensus was built and the first recorded cooperation between the states on an animal health issue resulted in the

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Tuberculosis Update - Continued

anticipated that within a few weeks the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) will officially downgrade California's bovine TB status from "Accredited Free" to "Modified Accredited Advanced" (MAA) through notice in the Federal Register. The downgrade in status is required by USDA's Code of Federal Regulations following the detection of at least two TB-affected herds within 48-months.

Federal regulations require that for a state to regain its "TB Free" status, a waiting period of two years must occur, with no more positive TB tests, after depopulating the last affected herd. If not all affected herds are depopulated, a two-year waiting period must occur after the quarantine is released on the last affected herd. Depopulation of cattle from one of the affected herds has begun.

Impact on California - With California's downgrade from TB-Free to MAA, veterinarians or producers must check the TB testing requirements of receiving states when moving cattle out of California; state requirements may be more restrictive than federal rules. Current federal rules require intact cattle over six months of age that originate in an MAA state or zone, and are not known to be infected with or exposed to TB, to be officially identified and accompanied by a certificate stating that the animal tested negative to an official TB test conducted within 60 days prior to interstate movement. There are some exceptions, including:

- Cattle from an accredited herd, with a whole herd test within 12 months of the movement.
- Cattle moving directly from an approved market to a federally inspected slaughter facility.
- Breeding beef herds moving for grazing may be permitted to test prior to movement or within 30 days of arrival at destination state. The test will be good for three years, if they have a commuter herd agreement with the two states.

Regionalization Plans - To reduce the burden of interstate testing requirements on industry, CDFA animal disease control experts are working with industry to evaluate a "Split State" designation. This would entail regionalizing part of California so that the remainder of the state could return to a "TB Free" status while intensive disease eradication efforts continue in the affected area. As part of the application, CDFA must develop a management zone and a plan to prevent disease spreading out of that zone. This will include requiring TB testing of cattle that move from the zone into the rest of California. It will take several months to develop this plan, which then must be approved by USDA officials. 🐾

Consensus Building - Continued

Texas Fever Project. Throughout the years, the organization's influence and effectiveness are linked to successful eradication efforts of numerous livestock and poultry diseases. Expansion of the organization's focus included the implementation of meat and poultry product inspection to ensure wholesome food, animal disease impacts on public health, interface of livestock and wildlife and, most recently, security of the nation from threats of agro- and bio-terrorism.

Since inception, the robust membership of official state, federal and international animal and public health agencies, national allied organizations, professional organizations and individuals representing academia, animal owners and animal health professionals; the USAHA continues to serve as the nation's animal health forum. Through the diligent work and deliberations of thirty-three species and subject-oriented, science-based committees, resolutions and recommendations to address animal health related issues are developed.

The membership communication and coordination on issues of animal health and disease control, animal wel-

fare, food safety and public health not only fulfill the organization's mission, but also remain vital components for the foundation of animal health policy development and implementation in this country. 🐾

News In Brief

The potential for transition of the **California Veterinary Biologics Program** to federal oversight by the USDA Center for Veterinary Biologics is under ongoing consideration. California is the only state with USDA authorization through Title 9, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 107.2 for a state veterinary biologics program. Veterinary biologics produced through a state program are only for intrastate distribution and use. The California biologics firms currently producing state-registered products are also USDA licensed establishments. A transition to the federal program would afford these firms the opportunity and sufficient time to advance their California-registered products toward USDA licensure. Currently registered California products would remain available to California producers during the transition process. Transition discussions with USDA, the biologics firms and industry continue. No final decision on the future of the California Veterinary Biologics Program has been made at this time. 🐾

Respiratory disease continues to be the leading cause of **Bighorn Sheep** die-offs. Contact with domestic sheep has been implicated in many, but certainly not all of these die-offs. New research methods are showing many of these die-offs are due to disease complexes rather than a single agent and that the Bighorn's immune response is quite different than domestic sheep. Contact between the two species increases the risk of respiratory disease in Bighorn sheep and it may be prudent to maintain separation of the two species. Quantitative Risk Assessment is one tool that can help identify the best

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News in Brief - Continued

way to protect both Bighorn sheep and the livelihood of sheep producers utilizing Western livestock ranges. 🐾

Since June 16, 2008, **West Nile Virus (WNV)** has been confirmed in three horses. All three horses died or were euthanized. As a reminder, laboratory testing for WNV is free on all clinical suspect cases. For more information visit http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/wnv_info.html. 🐾

Since the **"Enhanced" Trichomonosis Program** went into effect on October 5, 2007, 72 positive herds have been identified in California cattle. California currently has 232 "approved" veterinarians, 69 "approved" labs, and 93 individuals approved for lab diagnosis. Additional information may be found @ http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/Trichomonosis_Info.html. 🐾

The California Animal Health and Food Safety (CAHFS) Laboratory in Davis made a diagnosis of **anthrax** from submitted samples from a beef cow herd in southern Monterey County. The suspected cases were in an area where naturally occurring anthrax has been previously diagnosed several times. The owner of this 67 cow herd reported sudden death of two cows on June 26, 2008 and another two cows dying suddenly on June 30, 2008. A private veterinarian submitted samples from these affected animals to the CAHFS lab. Animal Health Branch veterinarians had oversight on this investigation. The carcasses were disposed of by deep burial. The remaining cows were moved to an unaffected area of the ranch and vaccinated. Public Health and the Monterey County Ag Commissioner were also notified and involved in this disease outbreak. 🐾

Brucellosis persists in elk and bison in and around the Yellowstone National Park. When brucellosis is found in more than one herd of cattle in a brucellosis free state within a two-year

period, or if the herd is not slaughtered, the state is downgraded to Class A status.

WYOMING: In June 2008, Wyoming announced that *Brucella abortus* had been isolated from a cattle herd; testing herds that had contact with the affected herd is ongoing. Wyoming's last brucellosis outbreak occurred in 2003-2004, when three affected herds were detected, causing the state to lose its Free status.

MONTANA: A brucellosis-affected herd was detected in May 2008, 12 months after the last affected herd detected in May 2007. It is expected that USDA will revoke Montana's Brucellosis Class Free status; Montana had been brucellosis free since 1985. 🐾

National TB Report – At least 71 cattle herds have been detected with bovine TB since 2000; 28 between 2005 and now. Minnesota was downgraded to modified accredited status in April 2008 (the third lowest level on the USDA five-tiered cattle TB ranking system) after 11 affected beef herds had been detected since 2005. Michigan has detected 44 affected cattle herds and two cervid herds since 1998. Both Michigan and Minnesota have TB in their free ranging white-tailed deer. In 2007, TB was also detected in herds in New Mexico, Colorado, and Oklahoma. 🐾

Hendra Virus outbreak in Australia: seven horses at a veterinary clinic in Australia have been confirmed positive for Hendra Virus, five of which have died. A veterinarian and technician from the clinic have been infected and remain in serious condition. Fruit bats in Australia act as the paramyxovirus reservoir responsible for the periodic emergence of this zoonotic foreign animal disease. 🐾

In June, **Dr. Andrea Mikolon** completed USDA Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician (FADD) Training, Plum Island, NY. 🐾

Expansion of the **Cattle Fever Tick** preventive quarantine zone in south Texas continues. More than a million acres in six counties are now under quarantine in addition to the half million acres in the permanent fever tick quarantine zone. 🐾

Hailu Kinde, DVM, MPVM has been appointed as the Interim Director of CAHFS effective July 1, 2008. Dr. Kinde, a faculty member of the School of Veterinary Medicine, has been Branch Chief of the CAHFS San Bernardino Branch since August 2006. He is replacing Dr. Alex Ardans who retired at the end of June 2007 after 20 years of outstanding service and leadership that made CAHFS a nationally and internationally respected diagnostic laboratory. We welcome Dr. Kinde and wish him well in his new role. 🐾

Disaster Response Opportunities for Veterinarians & AHTs

By Dr. Sheryl Fuller

Local – Join a volunteer Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). Veterinary professionals train, exercise, and network with other professionals (law enforcement, fire, public health and emergency management), and respond locally.

www.medicalreservecorps.gov

www.medicalreservecorps.gov/state.asp?state=6

Statewide – Volunteer for the California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) Disaster Response Program. You do not have to be a CVMA member.

www.cvma.net/print.asp?ID=1728

Statewide & National – Licensed California veterinarians can register with the California Medical Volunteers Program. The process is web-based and confidential. Registrants submit license and certification information, and can specify preferred locations and length of service. The system then matches needs to preferences, talents,

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Disaster Response - Continued

and skills. It assures volunteer credentials are current for receiving institutions such as animal shelters and public health agencies.

Pre-register: www.medicalvolunteer.ca.gov

Manager: www.emsa.ca.gov

Questions: CalMed@emsa.ca.gov

National – Salaried opportunities exist through the USDA national Animal Health Emergency Response Program (NAHERC).

www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ep/naherc

NaHERC Coordinator: 301-734-4933, Thomas.M.Cunningham@aphis.usda.gov

ALL Response Levels: Free, on-line, pre-requisite training – It is important to be familiar with the Incident Command System (ICS) under which all disaster responders work. The following courses will prepare you: ICS-100, -200, -700 & -800. Your completion certificates will be saved on-line. Make copies for yourself!

<http://training.fema.gov/IS/NIMS.asp>



Staff Biographies



Davina Juarez

is the Office Assistant in the Ontario District Office.

Prior to becoming a permanent CDFA employee, she worked as a seasonal Agricultural Technician in the Avian Health Group for two years participating on the 2003 END Taskforce. With experience gained performing data entry, personnel timekeeping and issuing premises identification numbers, she was given the opportunity to become a permanent employee in the Ontario District. She finds the District front office duties interesting and is learning more about animal health issues and programs.

Davina enjoys spending time with her seven-year-old daughter, being the team mom for her T-Ball team, doing arts & crafts, swimming, and shopping. Davina also likes traveling across the state par-

ticipating in vintage car shows with her husband. In addition to work and family, she is currently pursuing a degree in Business Administration at Chaffey College in Chino, CA.

Ontario District Livestock Inspector **Suzanna Hoar** grew up in Chino, CA. Her family owned a dairy



cow auction yard, so cattle have always been a part of her life. Her work career with livestock includes four years tagging and loading animals at Chino Livestock and four years as a Brand Inspector with the CDFA Livestock Identification Branch. Suzanna became an Animal Health Branch Livestock Inspector in 2006. Over the past four years, Suzanna's 18-year-old son's involvement in the FFA dairy replacement heifer program has also kept her busy with cattle at home. In her "cattle-free" time, Suzanna goes fishing, reads romance and mystery books and enjoys going to lunch with the ladies in the District Office.