

BOVINE TRICHOMONOSIS

March 2011



Bovine Trichomonosis

Bovine trichomonosis is a venereal disease of cattle caused by the protozoa *Tritrichomonas foetus*. The organism lives in the folds of the penis and internal sheath in bulls, and colonizes the vagina, cervix, uterus and oviducts of cows. It causes **abortion** and **extended calving seasons**. Bulls remain persistently infected and spread infection from cow to cow during natural service; however, cows generally clear infection after two to three heat cycles. Bulls over four years old are the main reservoir of infection in a herd.

California Trichomonosis Program

Trichomonosis is a serious economic threat to California's cattle herds. The California Cattlemen's Association and Western United Dairywomen sponsored legislation to develop a trichomonosis control program. In partnership with the livestock industry, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) developed a program that became effective in September 2003.



Since then, **320 veterinarians have been approved for trichomonosis sampling**, and **65 laboratories (94 individuals)** have been approved for testing. At the request of the cattle industry, the program was strengthened with new laws in October 2007, and with the addition of the real time PCR test in March 2011.

From October 2009 through September 2010, 53 positive samples have been diagnosed at the CAHFS Laboratory, representing approximately 39 positive herds. CDFA officials have notified the owners of two to thirteen exposed herds for each affected herd.

Trichomonosis Laws

Trichomonosis is a **reportable disease**. Veterinarians, laboratories, or owners **must report cases** of trichomonosis to CDFA **within two days of diagnosis**. **Negative trichomonosis tests must be reported to CDFA within 30 days**.

CDFA Animal Health Branch Offices	
Sacramento (HQ)	916-654-1447
Modesto	209-491-9350
Ontario	909-947-4462
Redding	530-225-2140
Tulare	559-685-3500

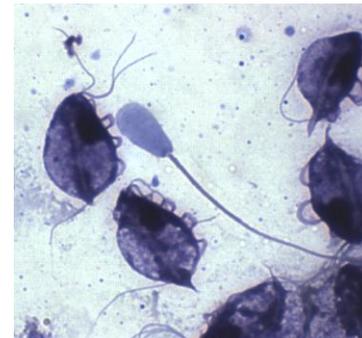
CDFA personnel investigate trichomonosis cases, notify owners of potentially exposed cattle, and quarantine bulls in infected and exposed herds. **Infected bulls will be quarantined to their facility and may ONLY BE SOLD FOR SLAUGHTER**. Additionally, one negative real-time PCR test or three negative culture tests at owner's expense are required for all herdmate bulls, with no less than seven days and no more than 28 days between each test. **Owners of exposed cattle** will be notified by CDFA and are **required to test their bulls once**, at their expense.

Movement Requirements

Bulls 18 months of age and over require a negative trichomonosis test within 60 days before entering California. Exemptions include:

- Bulls going directly to slaughter
- Bulls used for artificial insemination that meet Certified Semen Services standards
- Exhibition bulls not commingling with breeding cattle

Bulls entering California on a **Pasture-to-Pasture** permit require a **negative trichomonosis test within twelve**



months. Copies of test charts must accompany permits. Testing can be done in California, or in the state of origin.

Bulls 18 months of age and older sold at saleyards in California require a negative trichomonosis test within 60 days before

the sale or be consigned to slaughter. **Signs must be posted at saleyards** informing producers that without a current test, bulls can only go to slaughter or to a slaughter-only feedlot.

Standardized Sampling and Testing

Sample quality and testing are critical for diagnosing and controlling trichomonosis. Laws require training and approval for veterinarians collecting trichomonosis samples, and for laboratories processing samples. False positive culture tests can occur, especially in young bulls. Positive cultures can be confirmed by Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR), though confirmation is not required.

For more information

Visit: http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/Trichomonosis_Info.html or e-mail questions trich@cdffa.ca.gov

California Cattlemen's Association can be reached at (916) 444-0845 or <http://www.calcattlemen.org>

California Animal Health & Food Safety Laboratory System http://www.cahfs.ucdavis.edu/submission_forms/trichomonas_for_m.cfm