



# Bovine Trichomonosis

## California Update

Bovine trichomonosis is a venereal disease of cattle caused by the protozoa *Trichomonas foetus*. The organism lives in the skin 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. While cows can clear the infection, bulls remain persistently infected and spread infection during natural service.

### California's Trichomonosis Program

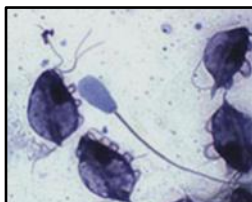
Trichomonosis is a serious economic threat to California's cattle herds. The livestock industry sponsored legislation to develop a trichomonosis control program and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) developed regulations that became effective in 2003. New laws strengthened the program in 2007, and the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test was added in 2011. Additional changes to the program went into effect in 2017, including requiring PCR for certain testing, addressing non-virgin bulls less than 18 months of age, and utilizing "trichomonosis approved eartags".



Between Oct. 1, 2016 - Sept. 30, 2017, 24 affected herds and a total of 99 test positive bulls were detected.

### Standardization Sampling and Testing

Sample quality and testing are critical for diagnosing and controlling trichomonosis. Current laws require biennial training and approval for veterinarians collecting trichomonosis samples, and for laboratories processing samples, as diagnostics can be affected by sample contamination or shipping temperature.



### Requirements for Bulls Entering California

All bulls 18 months of age and over, and non-virgin bulls less than 18 months of age, require a permit, health certificate, official ID, and a negative\* PCR trichomonosis test within 60 days prior to entry. Exemptions from the test include:

- Bulls going directly to slaughter, or to a feedlot for feeding (no grazing or exposure to female cattle) and then to slaughter
- Bulls used only for artificial insemination that meet Certified Semen Services standards
- Bulls used only for exhibition and not commingling with breeding cattle

\*Negative test result on a sample collected after 10 days without contact with sexually mature female cattle.

### Requirements for Bulls Sold in California

Bulls 18 months of age and older, and non-virgin bulls less than 18 months of age, changing ownership in California require a negative\* PCR trichomonosis test within 60 days before the sale. Exemptions include:

- Bulls going directly to slaughter, or to a feedlot for feeding (no grazing or exposure to female cattle) and then to slaughter
- Bulls used only for artificial insemination that meet Certified Semen Services standards
- Bulls used only for exhibition and not commingling with breeding cattle
- Bulls sold to a buyer with a current Bull Slaughter Agreement

Signs are placed at sale yards informing producers that: *"Non-virgin bulls less than 18 months of age and all bulls 18 month of age and over sold for breeding must have a negative trichomonosis test or be consigned as slaughter only."*



### Reporting and Investigating Trichomonosis Cases

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

CDFA personnel investigate trichomonosis cases, notify owners of potentially exposed cattle, and quarantine bulls in affected and exposed herds.

- Infected bulls will be quarantined to their facility and may **only be sold for slaughter**.
- One (or two for some herds) negative real-time PCR test at the owner's expense is required for all herd-mate bulls, and bulls in exposed herds.

For more information, please visit: [www.cdfa.ca.gov/ah](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ah)



### Animal Health and Food Safety Services Animal Health Branch

Headquarters - (916) 900-5002  
Redding District - (530) 225-2140  
Modesto District - (209) 491-9350  
Tulare District - (559) 685-3500  
Ontario District - (909) 947-4462

USDA-APHIS-VS - (916) 854-3950 or (877) 741-3690