



### 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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## Equine Infectious Anemia Disease Investigation In Racing Quarter Horses

By Katie Flynn, BVMS, MRCVS, Equine Program Lead



The Animal Health Branch continues to investigate Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) and Equine Piroplasmiasis (EP) in the California Racing Quarter Horse population. Since June 9, 2014, twenty-six (26) racing Quarter Horses have been confirmed positive for EIA and eleven (11) racing Quarter Horses have been confirmed positive to *Theileria equi*, the causative agent of EP.

Eight (8) of the positive horses were dually infected with EIA and EP. Twenty-four (24) of the EIA positive horses have been euthanized, two (2) EIA positive horses have been moved to a premises for quarantine isolation and two (2) EP positive horses remain isolated and under quarantine. Approximately, 247 exposed horses identified on nineteen (19) premises have tested negative on the initial EIA and EP tests.

To identify any recently exposed horses incubating disease, the exposed horses are retested 45-60 days after the removal of the positive horse to determine final disease status. Eleven (11) of the nineteen (19) premises have been released from quarantine based on negative retest results. To date, eight (8) premises and a total 106 horses remain under quarantine awaiting retest.



## Last Bovine Tuberculosis Affected Herd in California Released from Quarantine

By Anita Edmondson, BVMS, MPVM, MRCVS Bovine Health Program Lead

The Tulare County dairy herd detected with bovine tuberculosis (TB) in February 2013 has been released from quarantine. Fourteen (14) infected cattle were removed during a “test-and-removal” program, and the herd will remain under post-quarantine-release testing for five (5) years. Whole genomic analysis of the *M. bovis* revealed the source of this infection was a Tulare County TB-affected dairy herd detected in 2002. This investigation has been completed without any indication of disease-spread to other herds or wildlife.

No new affected herds have been detected during the ongoing investigations into the sources of three (3) separate TB-infected cows (two dairy and one beef) detected in California during routine slaughter inspections in 2013. 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 Tulare County TB-affected herd starts the 24-month countdown to California’s application for USDA Bovine TB-Free status in July 2016. If a new herd is found positive for TB, the countdown will stop as the infection is investigated.



## End of Brucellosis Ring Testing

By Anita Edmondson, BVMS, MPVM, MRCVS Bovine Health Program Lead

Dr. Annette Jones, State Veterinarian, announced on August 1, 2014 that California will no longer conduct the Brucellosis Milk Surveillance Program. Bulk milk tank samples have been used to monitor California dairies for brucellosis using the Brucellosis Ring Test (BRT) biannually through July 2014. California achieved Brucellosis free status in 1997 and by 2009 all fifty (50) states were considered “Class Free” for bovine brucellosis. With the national herd prevalence at an all-time low of, the focus of the national surveillance plan has been redirected to the issue of brucellosis in wildlife. Brucellosis is endemic in bison and elk in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) which includes parts of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming, however, these states are considered class free. Brucellosis vaccination requirements for female cattle in California are not altered by this decision.

### Brucellosis Veterinary Contract Renewals

Current contracts with accredited veterinarians to vaccinate cattle against brucellosis in California will expire on December 31, 2014. Renewal forms will be mailed this month to those currently contracted. To be eligible for a contract, veterinarians must have a valid California license and active USDA category II accreditation. If a new contract has been obtained since July 2014, it will not expire until December 2016.



## Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV)

By Anita Edmondson, BVMS, MPVM, MRCVS Bovine Health Program Lead

As of October 8, 2014, a total of three hundred eighty-two (382) VSV-positive premises have been identified in two (2) U.S. states, Colorado (320 premises) and Texas (62 premises). Of the 382 positive premises, 365 have been positive equine premises, fifteen (15) have been positive bovine premises, and two (2) premises have had both cattle and horses positive. A total of 510 equines and twenty-six (26) bovines have been confirmed infected (536 total positive animals) since this outbreak began in May 2014. Positive premises are eligible for quarantine release twenty-one (21) days after lesions have healed in all affected animals. To date, two hundred fifty-one (251) premises in Colorado and sixty (60) premises in Texas have been released from quarantine.

California has completed (8) investigations for VSV since May 2014, with negative results. **All horses, cattle, swine, sheep and goats entering California from a state where VSV has been diagnosed, or visiting an infected state and then returning to California**, except those moving directly to slaughter, must be accompanied by a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) that includes the statement:

*"I have examined all the animals identified on this certificate and found them to be free from signs of Vesicular Stomatitis (VS). During the last thirty (30) days, these animals have not been exposed to VS nor located within a ten (10) mile radius of a premises where VS has been diagnosed."*

For more information please visit [http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal\\_health/VS.html](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal_health/VS.html).

### Cattle Health Advisory Task Force

The Cattle Health Advisory Task Force will meet on Wednesday, October 29, 2014. Agenda items are posted on line at [http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/ahfss\\_meetings.html](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/ahfss_meetings.html). The public is invited to attend and provide their input or comments.

### Important News

New Mexico requires a statement on all Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) accompanying **livestock shipments into New Mexico**: *"The animal(s) on this CVI are not originating from a premises quarantined for VS or with known exposure to VS, and have been examined by me (the veterinarian issuing the CVI) and found free of any signs of VS."* This statement is required as long as there are active VS cases in the US.

### Trichomoniasis Video Update

The Bovine Trichomonosis training video is being re-filmed and re-made with the help of Dr. Bret McNabb from UC Davis.



## Novel Swine Enteric Coronavirus Disease

By Hector Webster, D.M.V., M.S.,  
Small Ruminants, Swine and Wildlife Program Lead

Novel swine enteric coronavirus disease (SECD) is a disease in swine caused by emerging porcine coronaviruses, including porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDv) and porcine delta coronavirus (PDCoV). SECD is characterized by an acute, rapidly spreading viral diarrhea of pigs; no other species are known to be affected and it is not a public health threat. Pigs develop varying degrees of diarrhea and in-appetence depending upon age of the pig infected.

Producers, veterinarians, and diagnostic laboratories are now required to report all cases of new SECD, including PEDV and PDCoV that meet the [case definition](#), to CDFA or USDA animal health officials. An occurrence of these enteric coronaviruses may be the initial detection of disease or a reoccurrence of previously detected disease. If a sample is submitted to a [National Animal Health Laboratory Network](#) for testing and is found to be positive, duplicate reporting by the herd owner, producers, veterinarians and others with knowledge of the disease is not required. Reporting by producers or veterinarians must be directed to [CDFA, Animal Health Offices](#) or to [USDA, APHIS, VS Assistant District Director \(ADD\) representing California](#).

In addition to reporting diseases, operations reporting these viruses must work with a veterinarian; either their herd veterinarian, or USDA or CDFA animal health officials to develop and implement a reasonable herd monitoring and management plan to address the detected virus and prevent its spread.

Two (2) cases of SECD have been reported in California. These operations are currently working with their herd veterinarian to develop and implement a herd monitoring and management plan to address the detected virus and prevent its spread.



## Free Backyard Poultry Necropsy Program

By Felicia De La Torre, Research Scientist I - Avian Coordinator

The California Animal Health and Food Safety (CAHFS) Laboratory System is the backbone of California's warning system that helps to protect the health of California's livestock and poultry. CAHFS serves the people of California by safeguarding the public health with rapid and reliable diagnoses for animal diseases affecting humans. CAHFS operates in partnership with the CDFA, UC Davis, livestock and poultry producers, and California Veterinarians.

### **Veterinarians and Owners of Backyard Poultry are encouraged to submit sick or recently dead birds for necropsy (postmortem) examination**

- **Standard diagnostic work for one (1) or two (2) birds per submission is performed at no charge\* to the owner.**
- The necropsy service is available to California backyard flock owners of fewer than 1,000 birds (chicken, turkeys, waterfowl, and squabs) *Does not include pet birds, game birds, or racing pigeons*
- If submitting a recently dead bird(s), carcass(es) must be kept cold (in a cooler or equivalent).
- Submission form must be included at time of submission. Submission form, guidelines, and shipping instructions can be found at: [http://cahfs.ucdavis.edu/submission\\_forms/index.cfm](http://cahfs.ucdavis.edu/submission_forms/index.cfm)
- This program assists with the State's surveillance program to monitor and detect immediate threats of disease.

*\*If delivered by mail, shipping and handling costs are at the owner's expense.*

#### **For more information contact a local CAHFS laboratory:**

##### **CAHFS - Davis Laboratory**

University of California  
620 W. Health Sciences Dr.  
Davis, CA 95616  
Phone: (530) 752-8700  
[cahfsdavis@cahfs.ucdavis.edu](mailto:cahfsdavis@cahfs.ucdavis.edu)

##### **CAHFS - Tulare Laboratory**

18830 Road 112  
Tulare, CA 93274  
Phone: (559) 688-7543  
[cahfstulare@cahfs.ucdavis.edu](mailto:cahfstulare@cahfs.ucdavis.edu)

##### **CAHFS - San Bernardino Laboratory**

105 W. Central Avenue  
San Bernardino, CA 92408  
Phone: (909) 383-4287  
[cahfssanbernardino@cahfs.ucdavis.edu](mailto:cahfssanbernardino@cahfs.ucdavis.edu)

##### **CAHFS - Turlock Laboratory**

1550 North Soderquist Rd.  
Turlock, CA 95380  
Phone: (209) 634-5837  
[cahfsturlock@cahfs.ucdavis.edu](mailto:cahfsturlock@cahfs.ucdavis.edu)



## Brucella Melitensis In Goats and Sheep

By Hector Webster, D.V.M., M.S.,  
Small Ruminants, Swine and Wildlife Program Lead

*Brucella melitensis* is a bacterial pathogen that causes abortion in goats and sheep and Malta Fever in humans. *B. melitensis* mainly causes abortions, still births and the birth of weak offspring. Animals that abort may retain the placenta. Sheep and goats usually abort only once, but reinvasion of the uterus and shedding of organisms can occur during subsequent pregnancies. Milk yield is significantly reduced in animals that abort, as well as in animals whose udder becomes infected after a normal birth. However, clinical signs of mastitis are uncommon. In some areas of the world, *B melitensis* has become endemic in cattle populations.

Although extremely rare in the United States, *B melitensis* was isolated from a cow in southern Texas in [1999](#) that was associated with an affected goat herd. Previously, *B melitensis* was last detected in southern Texas in the early 1970's in sheep and goats. There is no treatment for infected livestock, and vaccines are not used in the United States. Disease prevention includes, procuring goats or sheep from known sources, avoid intergration or mixing with other flocks and test any new animals before adding to your flock. In addition, dogs should not be used that have been exposed to infected sheep and goats or dogs in countries where this disease is endemic. Avoiding consumption of unpasteurized dairy products, limiting exposure to infected domestic animals in other countries and good hygiene will prevent most human infections.

CDFA personnel are annually testing and reviewing disease surveillance on goat herds and sheep flocks producing Grade A milk and milk to be used in raw milk products using a statistical sampling procedure as described in the FDA Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO). If you suspect brucellosis in your flock/herd, contact your private veterinarian or CDFA immediately. We can assist you in submitting aborted fetuses, placentas and blood samples to the California Animal Health and Food Safety (CAHFS) Laboratory. Diagnostic work for brucellosis is free of charge.

## Photosensitization in Horses

By Kent Fowler, D.V.M., Chief, Animal Health Branch

In July 2014, a number of horses in Southern California were affected with a photosensitization, some with severe lesions. As not all cases were reported, we do not know the total number of horses affected. The incident appears to involve a specific lot of fourth cutting of alfalfa hay. Dr. Birgit Puschner from CAHFS Toxicology lab reported that no primary photosensitizing poisonous plant was identified in the hay samples that were received in the laboratory. According to communication with veterinarians, the affected horses showed no evidence of liver damage.



It is likely that the drought conditions contributed to this anomaly and may have altered the composition of alfalfa hay leading to primary photosensitization. There is no one to blame for this situation. The incident is similar to one Dr. Puschner investigated in 2004 where no toxin was identified. The lesions in horses affected in 2004 were associated with third or fourth cuttings of alfalfa hay which was presumed to be fed shortly after harvest. Based on limited information, it is assumed that hay that is allowed to sit for an extended period of time after harvest loses the potential for causing clinical signs of photosensitization.

In previous outbreaks, skin lesions did heal in the affected horses with veterinary care and removal from sun exposure. Some of the horses with severe lesions benefited from antibiotic treatment for secondary infections. Drs. Puschner and Affolter performed a pilot study 2004 when they fed the suspect alfalfa hay to horses; the resultant photosensitivity occurred in horses approximately two (2) weeks after continuously feeding the hay. Researchers are trying to determine what is in the alfalfa hay that, on rare occasions, can cause primary photosensitization in horses.



## Job Opportunities

**The California Department of Food and Agriculture**, Animal Health Branch (AHB) is the State's organized, professional veterinary medical unit. AHB has two (2) veterinarian positions open in Sacramento.

### **Responsibilities:**

**Veterinarian Specialist (Avian lead)** - Develop, evaluate and optimize statewide avian disease surveillance programs. Maintain knowledge and expertise related to poultry disease, diagnostics, epidemiology, husbandry, industry structure and challenges, and serve as the State resource for poultry issues. Attend and participate in state and national strategic planning meetings to develop and modify avian disease surveillance programs based on current, recurrent, or newly emerging disease threats.

**For more Information:** [http://jobs.spb.ca.gov/wvpos/more\\_info.cfm?recno=571287](http://jobs.spb.ca.gov/wvpos/more_info.cfm?recno=571287)

**Research Scientist Supervisor I (Veterinary Sciences)** - Develop, assess and implement program goals and objectives for emergency management of catastrophic livestock or poultry diseases, including prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Supervise emergency preparedness staff. Develop response strategies that are cohesive with Office of Emergency Services (OES), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

**For more information:** [http://jobs.spb.ca.gov/wvpos/more\\_info.cfm?recno=57127](http://jobs.spb.ca.gov/wvpos/more_info.cfm?recno=57127)

**How to Apply:** Send completed Standard State Application (STD 678) and resume to:

California Department of Food and Agriculture  
Animal Health and Food Safety Services  
Attn: Marvin Singleton  
1220 N Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Telephone: (916) 900-5209

This position will be filled through the State civil service examination process, for more information visit [www.jobs.ca.gov](http://www.jobs.ca.gov)

Valid license to practice as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine issued by a state Board of Examiners in Veterinary Medicine.

**Standard State Application:** <https://jobs.ca.gov/pdf/std678.pdf>



## Staff Biographies

Research Scientist I, **Felicia De La Torre** was born in Oakland and raised in San Jose, California. In 1998, she moved to Modesto, California where she spent most of her years. She received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology with a concentration in Zoology in 2011, and is continuing to pursue her Master of Science in Ecology and Sustainability from CSU Stanislaus. Felicia has always had a love for animals and has gained field experience working with wood ducks, horned lizards, and other wildlife.

Her poultry experience began when she went to work for the California Poultry Federation (CPF) in 2010 as a part-time office technician. Her passion for poultry began to flourish, so she decided to learn more about the industry and accepted an internship with the Animal Health and Food Microbiology Lab at Foster Farms in Livingston, California during the summer and fall of 2010 (while still working for CPF). In 2011, she took on the role as poultry technician for the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) Backyard Flock Program.

Felicia now works as the Avian Coordinator/Research Scientist for the CDFA Animal Health Branch in Sacramento and says she feels “very blessed and fortunate to work in such a great field and with wonderful co-workers”. These days, her projects consist of: coordinating and scheduling egg and NPIP inspections, biologics requests, developing and updating outreach material, and assisting with field work as needed. In her spare time, Felicia loves spending time with her fiancé, Jacob, and her feisty Siamese cat, Lily. She also enjoys running, geocaching, and playing chess.



Management Services Technician, **Marvin Singleton** earned his AS and an AA in Business Administration from Heald College, Sacramento in 2012. Before joining the California Department of Food and Agriculture, Marvin was a Program Manager for Abbott Nutrition in the Fairfield area. Marvin’s CDFA career began in December 2012 as an Office Technician in the Animal Health Branch. In January 2014, he was promoted to a Management Services Technician where he took on the task of procurement, contracts, and personnel liaison for AHB.

Marvin and his wife, Nicole were married in 2004. They have four beautiful children together, Shamice who just turned sixteen in September, Laila who is five and just started kindergarten, and a set of identical twin boys Elijah and Amari who turned three in early September. Marvin

has an active life away from the office. When not spending time with his family, he enjoys bowling. He is a team member in the Ebonite’s winter bowling league and participates in bowling tournaments throughout California.

# Contact Information



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

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Animal Health and Food Safety Services  
Animal Health Branch  
1220 N Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

*Physical Address:*  
2800 Gateway Oaks Drive  
Sacramento, CA 95833

Website: [www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfs/Animal\\_Health/Index.html](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfs/Animal_Health/Index.html)  
Email: [ahbfeedback@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:ahbfeedback@cdfa.ca.gov)

## Animal Health Branch

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Permit Line: (916) 900-5052

## State Veterinarian and Director, Animal Health and Food Safety Services

Dr. Annette Jones  
(916) 900-5000

## District Offices Veterinarian In Charge (VIC)

Redding: Dr. Charles Palmer  
2135 Civic Center Drive, Room 8  
Redding, CA 96001  
(530) 225-2140

Modesto: Dr. Randy Anderson  
3800 Cornucopia Way, Suite F  
Modesto, CA 95358  
(209) 491-9350

Tulare: Dr. Gregory Ledbetter  
18830 Road 112  
Tulare, CA 93274  
(559) 685-3500

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1910 South Archibald Avenue, Suite Y  
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## Other AHFSS Branches

Bureau of Livestock Identification  
Greg Lawley, Chief  
(916) 900-5006

Milk and Dairy Food Safety  
Kristen Dahl, (acting) Chief  
(916) 900-5008

Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety  
Dr. Douglas Hepper, Chief  
(916) 900-5004

## United States Department of Agriculture

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