



# 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 in the vagina, cervix, uterus, and oviducts of the cows. It causes abortion and extended calving seasons. Cows generally are clear of infection after two to three heat cycles; however, bulls remain persistently infected and spread infection during natural service. Bulls over four years of age are the main reservoir of infection in a herd.

### 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 a program that became effective in September 2003. New laws strengthened the program in 2007, and the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test was added in 2011. The program is currently being reviewed and changes are expected in 2016.

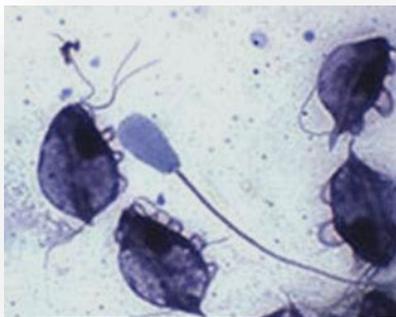
### Standardization Sampling and Testing

Sample quality and testing are critical for diagnosing and controlling trichomonosis. Current 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 PCR, though confirmation is not required.

### 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 trichomonosis tests must be reported to CDFA within 30 days.



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.**

One negative real-time PCR test or three negative culture tests (at owner's expense) are required for all herd-mate bulls with no less than seven days and no more than 28 days between each test.

CDFA personal will notify owners of exposed cattle that they are also required to test their bulls, at their expense.

### Requirements for Bulls Entering California

Bulls 18 months of age and over require a permit, health certificate, official identification, and a negative trichomonosis test done within 60 days prior to movement. Exemptions from the test include:

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



### Requirements for Bulls Sold in California

Bulls 18 months of age and older sold at sale yards in California require a negative trichomonosis test within 60 days before the sale, or be consigned to slaughter (identified with a green backtag), or to a slaughter-only feedlot, or be purchased by a buyer with a current slaughter channel agreement. Signs must be prominently placed at sale yards informing producers that: **"All bulls 18 month of age and over sold for breeding must have a negative trichomonosis test or be consigned as slaughter only."**

#### 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**

For more information, please click the following:

[Animal Health Branch](#)  
[California Department of Food and Agriculture - Trichomonosis](#)  
[Trichomonas foetus Testing Form](#)