



StockQuotes Animal Health Newsletter

December 2008

Volume 1, Issue 4

Quarterly Newsletter from the Animal Health Division of the Montana Department of Livestock

Calendar of Events:

- January 12-13: Board of Livestock Meeting; Helena
- January 15: Montana Pork Producers Council in Great Falls
- January 30 - 31: MT VMA 2009 Winter Conference; Bozeman
- Mid-Late January: Public Meetings on Brucellosis Action Plan (stay tuned)
- Feb 17: Deputy Veterinarian Accreditation Training and Trich Certification.

Inside this issue:

- State Vet Update **1**
- Common Health Certificate Bloopers **1**
- Tuberculosis Developments **2**
- Electronic Health Certificates and Forms **2**
- Mt Veterinary Premises Registration **3**
- Scrapie Genetic Testing **4**
- Reportable Disease Update **5**
- Did you Know? **6**

State Veterinarian Update

I hope all of you had a wonderful holiday season and were able to get some much needed rest.

2008 has been a busy year at the Animal Health Division, and I want to officially thank the hardworking staff that put a friendly and highly competent face on the State Veterinarian's office.

It is no surprise that brucellosis took up much time and energy this year. Montana lost its Brucellosis Class Free Status for the first time since gaining this disease free designation in 1985. Much work needed to be done to investigate the most recent case, and plan for regaining Class Free in 2009.

An exhaustive epidemiological investigation that included testing over 1,000 cattle, and sophisticated finger-printing (hoof-printing) analysis linked the infection to wild, free ranging elk that are known to share the landscape with the cattle

Health Certificate Compliance:

The Montana State Veterinarian's office receives monthly notifications from other states' Animal Health offices regarding violations on import health certificates. Typically, these violations are clerical errors that can be easily avoided. To help you avoid these non-compliance letters, and help your clients meet import requirements, we've compiled a list of errors we frequently see.

herd where the disease was diagnosed. The complete preliminary epidemiological report is available on the MDOL web-site at <http://liv.mt.gov/Brucellosis/index.asp>.

We are eligible to apply for our brucellosis Class Free Status in late May 2009; 12 Months after the last reactor was destroyed. In the meantime, Montana must implement an enhanced surveillance plan to prove to USDA that we do not have additional cases of brucellosis. This "Brucellosis Action Plan" has received significant input from the industry and is expected to be approved at the January Board of Livestock meeting (download the Plan at MDOL web site).

The plan calls for risk assessments to be completed by producers in a seven county area and enhanced surveillance. In addition to testing required by Class A status for export, enhanced surveillance will include change of ownership testing,

testing prior to movement to areas outside the designated area, as well as whole herd testing based on assessed risk.

The full implementation of the plan is contingent on the final approval by the Board of Livestock during the January meeting and funding appropriated by the Montana Legislature.



Brucellosis Action Plan denoting seven county area designated for risk assessments and additional surveillance.

- Permit # not written on the CVI (most common mistake).
 - Outdated health certificates.
 - No individual ID listed.
 - No test results or accession numbers listed.
 - Incomplete consignor or consignee information.
 - No temperature readings.
 - Incomplete description of animals.
 - Unsigned health certificates.
 - Washington has a rule that stallions 6 mo of age and older have to be EVA tested.
 - Nebraska requires a trich statement for breeding fe-males as well as bulls.
- Please remember to always call the destination state to confirm import requirements.

By Ms. Barb Ferguson.



Image source: www.genome.gov

“... poor bio-security is facilitating the spread of TB, and there is a discussion at the state, federal and industry levels to reward only those participants who use “best management practices”.



Global VetLink

Tuberculosis Alert:

While Montana has been working on brucellosis, tuberculosis has been making a resurgence in several other states.

California has found 4 different herds with Tuberculosis and is now Modified Accredited Advanced. The strains have been typed as Mexican origin, and interestingly, there are three human cases of TB in California which are the same serotype. TB is a zoonotic pathogen that is destroyed by milk pasteurization.

New Mexico has lost its split state status and now has Modified Accredited Advanced (MAA) status which requires all bovines to be TB tested at least once 30 to 60 days prior to leaving the state unless destined to slaughter.

Minnesota has just received split state status to focus specifically on the known location of disease in the upper northwestern portion of the state which is Modified Accredited (MA) while the rest of the state improves to MAA. Cattle and domestic bison must receive two tests to leave the Modified Accredited areas. Wildlife is a contributing factor in solving

the Minnesota TB problem and is a major factor in Michigan, which has 3 different levels of TB status. The Upper Peninsula of Michigan is TB Free while the Lower Peninsula (southern part of the state) is split between Modified Accredited and Modified Accredited Advanced.

Minnesota has a strongly focused wildlife TB eradication program, but Michigan has an equally economically developed industry in hunting as well as livestock agriculture. Heavily wooded farms and hunting preserves in Michigan have made TB a challenge, and livestock herds continue to become infected.

USDA has been challenged financially by reduced appropriations and significant TB program costs and is ready to assist the industries in re-writing new rules to address the challenges of the 21st century, including endemic disease in wildlife populations which interface with livestock. USDA has held 5 listening sessions across the USA to gain insight on needed changes to the TB program and it will be very interesting to review the summary of

these meetings.

It's worth noting that poor bio-security is facilitating the spread of TB and there is a discussion at the state, federal and industry levels to reward only those participants who use “best management practices”. For example, off-site dairy heifer raising potentially places the dairies at risk as the heifers can come in contact with Mexican origin feeder animals, including roping steers, or other stock of unknown health status while at the development facility. The question is being asked, “Why should risky management practices be rewarded with indemnity?”

Now is the time for us as veterinarians to take part in defining good bio-security measures for different types of livestock operations which include “best management practices”.

By Jeanne Rankin, DVM

Electronic Health Certificates and Forms:

GlobalVetLink (GVL®), a service provider for web-based electronic health certificates accepted by many states, is now offering an electronic health certificate for the 6 Month Horse Passport called the GoPass™. This is a six-month electronic health certificate that may be a substitute for the existing paper-based, 30 day official certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI).

Veterinarians in the state of Montana are approved to issue GoPass certificates for horses entering Washington, Idaho, California, Oregon, and Nevada. The horses can travel to all 5 states, plus Montana, on one GoPass. GVL has been offering online health certificates since 1999, and has facilitated the movement of 110 million animals with the system as of late 2008. Veterinarians in the

state of Montana have been authorized to create electronic OCVI's through GVL since 2005.

Several features of electronic health certificates make them worth considering:

- Real-time, 24/7 animal trace-back
- Digital photos on the certificate

- Real-time EIA lab test submittal and results
- Electronically upload EIDs
- Automatic submission to animal health authorities

USDA has recently begun offering similar features through the

Veterinary Services Process Streamlining (VSPS). This system will offer a single point of access to electronic forms, applications and certification processes required for interstate and international movement of animals and animal

products.

More information on GVL can be found at www.globalvetlink.com and for VSPS at www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/vsps/.



USDA Veterinary Process Streamlining

Montana Voluntary Premises Registration Corner

Over the past year, the Montana Department of Livestock (MDOL) has increased its effort to register premises in compliance with the national animal identification system (NAIS). NAIS is intended to be an information system that can be employed by animal health officials in the case of an animal disease outbreak.

There are three components to NAIS.

1. Premises Registration
2. Animal identification
3. Animal tracing

Premises registration provides a database of the geographic locations where animals are housed. In the instance of a disease outbreak, at risk animals can be identified rapidly based upon their physical proximity to the point of diagnosis. Premises are defined as locations where animals are raised, fed, housed, held, or commingled. Farms and Ranches comprise the majority of premises in Montana. Veterinary clinics, livestock markets, and fairgrounds, comparatively make up a smaller percentage of the total number of premises. However, for the system to be effective, the involvement of both producers and non producers is essential.

The goal of NAIS and the Mon-

tana Voluntary Premises registration program is 48 hour disease traceback capability. A successful program will provide numerous benefits, including:

- Traceability of both exposed and suspect animals
- A book end system allowing both Traceback and Traceforward
- Marketing value
- Official ID for regulatory work
- Country of origin labeling acceptable

While these benefits are primarily directed at the producer, a healthy livestock industry benefits all of us.

MDOL encourages your participation in the MT voluntary Premises Registration Program. By registering your veterinary clinic as a potential point of contact, you are helping to improve our ability to respond to an animal disease outbreak.

Just Updated:

In a new development, USDA has just canceled a memo that mandated the assignment of Premises Identification Numbers (PIN) to operations conducting regulatory activities (including brucellosis vaccination and testing).

Following a letter from R-CALF, to USDA APHIS-Veterinary Services demanding that the agency retract Memorandum No. 575.19 issued on Sept. 22, 2008, APHIS-VS officially canceled that particular memo on Dec. 22, 2008.

Memorandum 575.19 mandated premises registration under the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) for producers engaged in interstate commerce and who participate in any one of the dozen or more federally regulated disease programs.

R-CALF USA told the agency in its Nov. 10, 2008 letter that the memo “constitutes an unlawful, final regulatory action initiated and implemented without public notice or opportunity for comment, as required by the Administrative Procedure Act,” and must be retracted.

Premises Registration in Montana remains voluntary, but is strongly encouraged to protect the industry by facilitating timely notification, and efficient control of disease outbreaks.

“Premises Registration in Montana remains voluntary, but is strongly encouraged to protect the industry by facilitating timely notification, and efficient control of disease outbreaks”.

By Tahnee Szymanski, DVM



Scrapie Genetic Susceptibility Testing

We still have monies to pay for genetic susceptibility testing at the 171 Codon. Using USDA Cooperative Agreement dollars we have currently tested 353 sheep with 55 of them being QQ (susceptible) for the 171 Codon which determines susceptibility for developing Scrapie if exposure occurs. Montana has had no positive cases or trace backs for Scrapie this year and has 40 sheep and one goat flock enrolled in the Scrapie Flock Certification Program. A

Scrapie tag or tattoo for identification is required prior to importation into the state as well as for any movement or sale within the state.

USDA has lengthened this agreement period until March 31, 2009, so please call our office and ask for Barb Ferguson for all the details.

There is a new online service for sheep trip permits on our website <http://liv.mt.gov/> for county to

county movement, trips to the sale barn or out of state. There is a small user fee for the ability to perform this service online.

Come check it out!

By Jeanne Rankin, DVM

“At least 4 stallions originating from FL, MA, TX and OH, but bred in KY have cultured positive for CEM”



Foreign Animal Disease: Contagious Equine Metritis Detected in Kentucky

Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) is a Foreign Animal Disease and has just been found in an Equine breeding facility in Kentucky. CEM is a highly communicable venereal disease of horses that causes mucopurulent discharge from the mare's reproductive tract and infertility. The stallions are asymptomatic. Mares may be asymptomatic and carrier mares can infect stallions. The causative agent is *Taylorella equigenitalis* a microaerophilic, gram-negative coccobacillus. It may or may not be sensitive to streptomycin and most mares recover although some may become carriers. It can be treated in mares with antibiotics and disinfectants

At least 4 stallions originating from FL, MA, TX and OH,

but bred in KY have cultured positive for CEM. USDA and Kentucky officials are tracking down exposed mares and contaminated semen. Indiana has identified an additional 3 positive stallions and is continuing to trace exposed mares.

Montana has received at least one illegal shipment of semen from a known positive stallion. This mare is quarantined and scheduled for three culture collections over a 12 day period (for example days 1, 4, 7). Cultures are taken from the clitoral sinus and fossa as well as cervix and endometrium.

www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Factsheets/pdfs/Contagious_Equine_Metritis.pdf

Equine (and bovine) semen imports into Montana require an import permit, and the collected stallion must have a negative Coggins test (within one year) as well as be tested EVA negative (within 6 months) or be vaccinated for EVA. Each shipment requires a one-time or annual semen import permit (blanket permit that allows semen to be shipped for the calendar year without calling each time for a permit).

Permit information allows us to trace any potentially infected semen anytime there is an outbreak of disease that is spread via breeding, especially EVA and CEM.

By Jeanne Rankin, DVM

Reportable Disease Update

WEST NILE VIRUS: 2008 was a mild year for West Nile Virus in horses as Montana had 7 cases; 5 in Lake county, and 1 each in Jefferson and Madison counties. It was a calmer year for all of the USA with 155 cases as of Dec. 3 2008. Washington State lead the nation with 40, followed by California with 31. In addition to having fewer cases, Montana's share of the national count decreased from last year, when MT reported 36 cases out of a total of 468 nationally (7.7%). More information available here: www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahss/equine/wnv/index.htm

TRICHOMONIASIS: Montana has 36 positive cases to date out of 6086 tests reported. Positive cases included 2 premises with 2 cows each which were diagnosed at pregnancy checking time with purulent material in the uterus via palpation or ultrasound followed by culture. 3 Native American Reservations are represented with the highest number of cases reported in Bighorn County with 15 and Glacier/Pondera Counties with 10 cases. Hill and Yellowstone Counties each had 3 cases, Carbon and Teton Counties each had 2 cases and McCone County had 1 case. Positive animals were sent to slaughter either directly or to a Trich approved feedlot first, with an epidemiological investigation completed for each case.

Please note that use of the official dangle trich tags offered by MDOL are strongly recommended. This season, a test-negative bull was mis-identified as a test-positive and sent to slaughter in error. Trich tags provide for rapid and accurate identification as well as easily identify tested animals. More information on trichomoniasis is available here: <http://liv.mt.gov/liv/ah/diseases/trich/general.asp>.

Also, please be aware of the newly designed Trichomoniasis test form. While previously, a separate form was needed for lab sample submission and for bull test certification, this has been consolidated to one form for ease of use and compliance.

RABIES: Yellowstone County is currently under quarantine for the second time this year due to skunk rabies. This 60 day quarantine requires all dogs, cats and ferrets to have been rabies vaccinated at least 2 weeks prior to leaving the county, and will be lifted in late January. Dawson County also had a positive dog which resulted in not only the county quarantine but the other non-vaccinated dog in the house being quarantined for 180 days. A cat in the same household was euthanized due to lack of vaccinations.

As of December 1st, 399 negative, 14 positive and 21 unsuitable tests were per-

formed on dogs, cats, as well as 8 bats and 2 skunks. The positive cases included 1 dog, 2 skunks and 11 bats, while negative cases included 123 dogs, 118 cats, 12 bovines, 2 horses, an alpaca, a bison and 142 wildlife samples.

Bats tend to have a 10% incidence of rabies based upon submissions, while skunks tend to have a 30% incidence of rabies based upon Montana submissions over the last 10 years.

Please call the lab with submission questions, or public health or the MDOL Animal Health Division for public health questions.

Thank you for continuing to work with our office and public health officials when there has been a potential exposure to rabies or an unprovoked bite.

There will be a 2 hour seminar at MVMA in January by Dr. Kammy Johnson from the MT Public Health jointly with CDC and Dr. Jeanne Rankin from MDOL on Current Rabies Procedures based upon CDC guidelines and Montana laws as well as real case examples of rabies exposure to pets and livestock, and human exposure by non vaccinated pets.

By Jeanne Rankin, DVM

“This year, a trich test-negative bull was mis-identified as a test-positive and sent to slaughter in error. Trich tags provide for rapid and accurate identification as well as easily identify tested animals”



Montana Trichomoniasis Program Tag

“Bats tend to have a 10% incidence of rabies based upon submissions, while skunks tend to have a 30% incidence of rabies based upon Montana submissions in the last 10 years”.

Montana Department of Livestock

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Return Service Requested
Phone: 406-444-2043
Import line: 406-444-2976
Fax: 406-444-1929



We're on the Web:
www.liv.mt.gov

Did You know?

All bovine and equine semen shipments, as well as shipments of animals being imported into Montana must be accompanied by an import permit number provided by the State Veterinarian's Office. The only exception to this requirement are dogs and cats being shipped into the state that are accompanied by their owner.

Import permits ensure that animals meet import eligibility requirements for species, testing, and disease status. Permits also allow for easier traceability and notification in the case of

a disease event.

MDOL issued an average of 17,748 permits per year over the last 4 years. An average of 212,792 cattle, 46,737 horses, and 2,106 dogs/cats obtained entry permits.

If you have questions about the entry requirements into Montana, please call our import permit line at 406-444-2976.

By Ms. Evaleen Starkel

About this Newsletter

This quarterly newsletter is intended to provide information to the Montana veterinary community on regulatory issues.

It has an obvious focus on livestock issues, however we will be making an effort to cover pertinent topics relating to companion and small animals; particularly ones that address public health and zoonotic issues.

Please don't hesitate to contact the state veterinarian's office for suggestions to include in upcoming issues, or just to provide feedback to the office.

**Best wishes for 2009 from the
Animal Health Staff!**