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Calendar of Events:

Montana Veterinary Medical Association Meeting

June 16-18, Billings
September 8-9, Bozeman

Veterinary Deputy/Accreditation seminar:

Thursday, June 23
Tuesday, September 22

AVMA Convention

July 16-19, St. Louis

StockQuotes Animal Health Newsletter

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

Volume 4, Issue 1

State Veterinarian Update

Spring Greetings! This issue of the newsletter covers numerous developments regarding brucellosis, both in Montana and elsewhere. These include: 1) Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) administrative rules filed on February 11, 2) Economic analysis of DSA regulations, 3) Detection of the disease in Texas as well as Wyoming cattle herds, 4) Recent elk surveillance results from a Fish Wildlife and Parks study, and 5) BIG changes in Adult Vaccination policy. Additionally, Nebraska and Colorado have recently published new identification requirements for cattle from the DSA.

MDOL is considering significant changes to the trichomoniasis program based on industry feedback. These changes may reduce the amount of testing required in non-endemic parts of Montana, provide exemptions for herds grazing in common if they have a baseline negative test and an association health plan, and limit the importation of non-pregnant females to slaughter channels only.

The intent of the proposed changes is to continue surveillance on imports and in higher risk areas while easing the burden on industry where testing has shown little or no trichomoniasis. I look forward to your feedback on the proposed changes when the draft is available.

I am happy to report that the implementation of our new computer system, USAHerds, is proceeding well. While we needed to adjust a number of office procedures including data entry, filing and electronic records, the system allows us much better information management and retrieval. As an example, a quick search of the system showed a total of 25,701 animals on 1,886 permits entered the state of Montana in January and February. Hopefully, if you had the opportunity to request an import permit or other services from our office, you have not noticed a significant delay in processing the request. ☒ mz

Equine Issues

MDOL recently published an administrative rule that eases import requirements on equine semen. This was discussed previously and I won't take space to cover it here aside from reminding everyone that an import permit is still needed prior to shipment of equine semen into Montana. Recent disease events, including Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) and piroplasmiasis, highlighted the importance of permitting live animals and biological products. Please help in improving compliance for equine semen imports.

Also of interest to the equine industry may be a document recently published by UC Davis, Center for Equine Health titled Minimum Standards for Horses. While the sheriff is the humane officer in a county as defined by Montana Code 7-32-2121, private veterinarians are often asked to assist or confirm neglect situations. The UC Davis booklet describes standards of care for horses that may help in determining when a neglect or cruelty situation is taking place. The guide, in addition to a related publication, Equine Sanctuary & Rescue Facility Guidelines, is available online on the UC Davis Center for Equine Health web site. For reference, Montana's cruelty code is 45-8-211.

MDOL has recently been involved in a number of humane issues relating to unwanted horses. Typically, MDOL Brands Enforcement investigators are asked to provide the initial assessment, at which time they recommend dismissal of the complaint, or further assessment by a private veterinarian.

Underlying these recent equine humane issues is the lack of a market for unwanted horses. Regardless of how we feel about horses being used for food, perhaps the most relevant question is whether supporting a humane and well regulated slaughter industry will reduce the suffering and neglect of horses nationwide. The General Accountability Office (GAO) has been tasked with analyzing this issue and is due to publish a report this year. ☒ mz

Brucellosis Updates

DSA Administrative Rule: The new rules on the Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) became effective February 11. These rules replace DSA regulations previously established by official order 10-01-D. Much of the regulations stay the same, but there are a few significant differences: 1) The requirement for an annual whole herd test has been removed. A whole herd test, even though no longer required, is the best way to catch an infection early, and therefore, is one of the best protections for producers. Nevertheless, MDOL dropped this requirement recognizing that the sale/movement test is most critical to prevent the export of diseased animals. 2) Official Calfhood Vaccination (OCV) is no longer required on all females sold from the DSA. Only females retained beyond January 1 of any given year are required to be vaccinated. This change recognizes that calves are typically not handled until fall, and that vaccinating these animals as they are being shipped out of the DSA does little for risk mitigation.

DSA Economic Analysis: MDOL was requested to conduct an analysis of the economic impact of the recently adopted administrative rules. As part of this analysis, MDOL identified a cost bearing class; producers located in the counties of Beaverhead, Gallatin, Madison and Park that do not OCV all sexually intact female cattle and domestic bison retained for breeding. MDOL also identified three benefiting classes including Montana cattle and domestic bison producers statewide, producers associated with the DSA, and veterinarians who perform testing and vaccination associated with the DSA.

The greatest net effect shown by the analysis is that in most of the state, producers do not have to test their animals with an estimated benefit of \$5.5 to 11.5 million annually. If you have an interest in this topic, I strongly recommend that you review the full report which can be found on our website.

Recent brucellosis detections: Texas recently detected a small cattle herd affected with brucellosis. The herd, located in the southern tip of the state, had 6 positive animals out of approximately 20 head and has already been depopulated. Texas' last positive herd was in 2005.

Wyoming also recently detected a brucellosis positive DSA herd near Meeteetse, WY. The index animal tested CARD positive at a

Montana market and subsequently cultured *Brucella abortus* positive. Herd testing revealed four additional reactors. Elk are believed to be the source.

Wyoming operates more than 20 elk feedgrounds in the northwestern area of the state. This is the third Wyoming brucellosis affected herd since the fall of 2010.

Elk study: As you may be aware, Fish Wildlife and Parks commenced a multi-year study of brucellosis in elk at the known boundary of brucellosis in wildlife. Unfortunately, 12 out of 100 elk captured outside of the DSA (near the Ruby mountain range) tested suspect for Brucella. Most producers in the area where these elk were captured already participate in some DSA surveillance. As much as I hate to see these results, they are critical for sound, fact-based decision making regarding Montana's surveillance program. From my chair, I see the three greatest contributors to elk disease, not necessarily in the order of importance as; Yellowstone National Park bison, elk feedgrounds in Wyoming, and elk congregation/distribution issues in the state of Montana. Ultimately, it is not in the best interest of the livestock industry or wildlife health to promote large congregations of elk to assemble during the abortion/calving season.

Adult Vaccination Changes: A recent USDA memo significantly reduces the administrative procedures required for adult vaccination of cattle in the Greater Yellowstone Area. Prior approval from the state veterinarian office, adult vaccination tattoo (RAV1), and a herd brucellosis test is no longer required at the time of adult vaccination. A vaccination form still needs to be completed and sent to the state veterinarian's office. Please keep in mind that the vaccine has been known to cause abortions in pregnant animals.

Import of Non-OCV Females into Montana: At the most recent Board of Livestock meeting, the Board recognized adult vaccinated animals as meeting the requirement of "official vaccination" as described in administrative rule 32.3.212 Additional Requirements for Cattle. Therefore, effective immediately, the import office will issue permits for import of non-OCV cattle and domestic bison if they are brucellosis tested negative, adult vaccinated and tattooed. Please inquire with our office for additional information. ☺ mz



Photo credit: Lindsey Mulcare



Photo credit: Lindsey Mulcare

Electronic Health Certificates—GlobalVetLink

Electronic health certificates have the potential to save time and money for the veterinarian and client. They also dramatically improve traceability of animals moving across state boundaries by providing electronic, easy to read and search documentation for Coggins and health certificates (CVIs).

GlobalVetLink (GVL®), has been offering these services for a number of years and provides industry standard electronic animal health documentation. The system allows an easy-to-set-up and use system for creating Coggins certificates, CVIs, and GoPass® certificates (equine passports).

CVIs and Coggins certificates generated through GVL's online system are approved for use in all 50 states and 3 US territories. The GVL system is internet based, so there is no software to download and can be accessed from any computer with an internet connection. Owner and animal information only needs to be entered once, and may be used over and over again. This database feature, in addition to replacing the hand-drawn markings with digital photos, has contributed to the increased use of electronic certificates nationwide.

GVL CVIs accommodate ten species including avian, bovine, canine, caprine, cervid, equine, feline, ovine, poultry and swine. In addition to Coggins and health certificates, GVL also offers electronic veterinary feed directives and electronic veterinary prescription certificates for swine.

Electronic certificates increase efficiency of veterinary paperwork by making certificates available online, in real-time, to state animal health officials of both the state of origin and destination.

Electronic equine passports are an additional service available through GlobalVetLink. The



GoPass® certificate can be used in the place of a traditional CVI (Montana SV-7HP) for moving horses within the Western Region (please see map). The GoPass is valid for up to 6 months or until the Coggins test expires.

GVL also provides MyVetLink.com which is a secure online site specifically designed for the animal owner. Through MyVetLink, clients can print copies of Coggins, CVIs, and GoPass as well as log GoPass itineraries. Owners with a MyVetLink account have 24/7 access to their certificates, eliminating after-hours phone calls when certificates are lost and needed for travel. Allowing owner account access takes the burden of distributing certificates off the veterinarians, and saves time and money in printing and postage.

Getting started with GlobalVetLink is simple and can be accomplished within a day. Following are the three steps:

- 1) Sign-up: Signing up can be done online at www.globalvetlink.com or by calling GVL at 515-296-0860 to assist in the process.
- 2) Submit Electronic Signatures: GVL provides a form to sign and fax or email back to GlobalVetLink.
- 3) Train: Take advantage of their live training sessions that are included with your free customer support. If a live training session does not fit into your schedule, YouTube videos are available to watch at your convenience.

Once you've signed up with GVL and are creating certificates, you can choose how you'd like to distribute those certificates to your animal owners. The secure, electronic signatures found on GlobalVetLink certificates allow you to email certificates to owners and also make them available through MyVetLink.com.

If you have questions regarding GlobalVetLink's electronic certificate system, visit the website at www.globalvetlink.com or call 515-296-0860.

Next issue, we'll cover Veterinary Services Process Streamlining, a USDA service available to accredited veterinarians that offers some of the features of GVL. ✕

mz (with Kaylen Henry [GVL])



Source: <http://www.vintage-computer.com/applemac.shtml>



Laboratory Corner

Recently, the laboratory received a submission of a wild adult cow elk thought to have aborted near a private haystack in the Greater Yellowstone Area. She was killed in the field by FWP biologists and the obvious concern was whether the animal aborted due to *Brucella* infection. Post mortem findings revealed severe hair loss and thick, crusty skin over the sides of the neck and thorax; emaciation; and uterine involution with metritis. Only *Actinobacillus* sp. and *Pasteurella* sp. were isolated from the uterus. Fortunately, *Brucella* serologic tests were negative.

This case highlights how the maternal condition could affect the ability to carry a fetus to term. The animal had a severe infestation of psoroptes mange affecting the skin over large regions of the body, as well as a chronic infection that was likely associated with some type of cutaneous penetration. These diseases compromised her state of health at a time when she had to adjust to winter temperatures and limited food supply.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this case was the identification of psoroptes mange. Previously, the genus psoroptes was considered to have multiple species of mites which were named for the host affected. Genetic sequencing however, is now classifying all the different species in this genus as *P. ovis*, and for those who are experienced enough to remember, *P. ovis* has historically caused severe production losses in sheep and cattle. Currently, the virulent mite is thought to have been extirpated from the United States or at least has not been identified in domestic livestock for years.

All psoroptes mange infections must be reported to the State Veterinarian/Federal AVIC office in Helena.

Bill Layton, Director, Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

MZ note: This case illustrates strong concern by FWP for brucellosis induced abortions. Also relevant is that the elk was attracted to this property by hay storage that was not fenced at the time of the incident (MDOL is working with the landowner to remedy this). Lastly, I'll point out that rapid specimen submission is very helpful to establishing a diagnosis. ☞

Traceability Update

The need for a functional traceability system in Montana is highlighted by the recent announcement of additional identification requirements for animals originating from the DSA.

From Nebraska: Effective April 1, 2011, all sexually intact cattle and bison imported into Nebraska which originate from the DSA shall be individually identified with official USDA/APHIS approved identification.

From Colorado: Effective September 1, 2011, all sexually intact female cattle, regardless of age, that have previously resided within the Montana DSA are required to be officially individually identified with an official eartag or other eartag approved by the Colorado State Veterinarian.

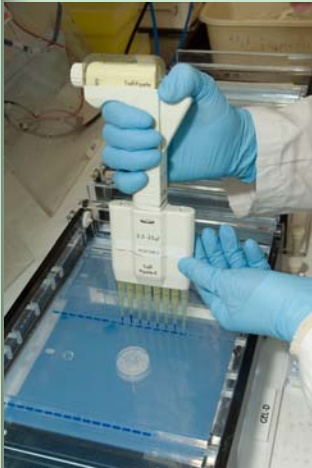
Animals shipped directly to slaughter are included in this requirement because of upcoming decreases in slaughter surveillance and frequent test exemptions for this class of cattle. Official individual identification for Montana animals includes OCV tags, silver metal brite tags, visual 840 bangle tags, or 840 RFID tags. Official identification for feeders does not need to be listed on the certificate of veterinary inspection for import into Colorado and Nebraska.

Regarding tag retention, some have voiced concerns with silver metal brite tags. There is not a universal specification for tags or tag applicators, so using one company's tags in another company's applicator may result in significantly reduced tag retention.

Montana is still anticipating the publication of a federal proposed rule on traceability in the next month or so with final publication occurring in April of 2012 following a public comment period. With an anticipated emphasis on electronic records, MDOL encourages veterinarians to explore options regarding electronic health certificates, test charts and vaccination certificates. Options currently available include VSPS, Global-VetLink and Global Animal Management. If you are interested in learning more, MDOL would be glad to provide additional information and guidance at (406) 444-5214.

An excellent summary article on the status of traceability can be found on Drovers Cattle Network here: <http://goo.gl/1LUd8> . ☞

By Tahnee Szymanski, DVM



Source: USDA-APHIS Anson Eaglin



Source: USDA-APHIS Anson Eaglin

Western States Meeting Summary

The Western States Livestock Health Association represents animal health officials of 19 Western states, including Alaska and Hawaii. The group met March 16-17 in Helena and discussed a variety of topics.

TRICHOMONIASIS: Interesting information on trichomoniasis diagnostics was shared by Tiffany Brigner, Lab Director at the Colorado Department of Agriculture. In brief, the laboratory's data show that pooled PCR (up to five samples) is more sensitive than a single-sample culture and not as sensitive as a single PCR (please see table below). Note that these were routine submissions, and therefore, only one testing protocol was used on any given sample.

Difficulties with current trichomoniasis testing protocol are that we lack a gold standard (what is a true positive?) and variability in sample handling by veterinarians and diagnostic laboratories.

There is a national Trichomoniasis sample pooling study underway that will further compare individual versus pooled samples. We should have preliminary data on the study within a year.

TRICHOMONIASIS TESTING RESULTS SUMMARY	RMRAHL (3/09 to 2/11)
Positives/Pool	14/641
Animals	14/2964
% Positive w/ Pooling	0.5
% Positive w/ Culture	11/6042 = 0.2
% Positive w/ Individual PCR	15/888 = 1.7

IBR ABORTIONS: Beginning in 2002, several veterinary biologics companies obtained a label for vaccinating pregnant cattle with modified live IBR (BHV-1). Dr. Donal O'Toole from the University of Wyoming described three case reports of abortion storms that may be linked to the administration of these vaccines. In each case, the heifers received prior vaccinations according to label instructions but sustained abortion losses between 8 to 25%. While few cases have so far been reported, Dr. O'Toole suggested that the incidence of these abortions may be more widespread. Please contact Dr. O'Toole at the University of Wyoming (DOT@uwyo.edu; 307 766

9976) if you suspect that one of your clients had similar experiences.

AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS: Dr. Brian McCluskey from USDA-APHIS-VS spoke about livestock exports relative to the federal trade deficit. In addition to the inherent value of agriculture and livestock operations, livestock exports have increased significantly over the past five years and have a positive effect (reduce) the federal trade deficit. A summary table is below.

Species	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Cattle	12,033	8,506	20,257	12,527	28,981
Horses	6,597	6,948	8,465	10,242	11,623
Swine	9,195	11,444	14,490	8,364	8,052
Goats	2,497	323	314	1,454	4,592
Sheep	1,507	735	0	210	1,212

IDAHO DSA UPDATE: Dr. Bill Barton, state veterinarian from Idaho, discussed upcoming changes in the surveillance area for brucellosis in that state. While the state of Idaho has relied on whole herd testing for brucellosis every three years, the state is transitioning to require a movement/change of ownership test instead. This change is significant because it would create consistency between the three GYA states for testing requirements of DSA cattle.

NAVAJO NATION: Dr. Scott Bender provided an update on injectable contraceptives and oral rabies vaccine (ORV). Following an outbreak of rabies in Flagstaff, Arizona in skunks, the Navajo Nation started conducting a safety study of ORV's; most recently the Canadian "ONRAB". In Canada, this vaccine has shown positive results in skunks, which is the major terrestrial reservoir of rabies in the western US.

The Navajo Nation has also been investigating the use of GonaCon (TM) as a birth control vaccine for feral dogs. At 3.5 years of a long term study, the vaccine is still showing suppression of cycling for a single administration. This vaccine, currently approved for white tailed deer, may also have application for feral horses and bison. ♂

mz with Scott Bender.



Montana Department of Livestock

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

Staff Corner



Kathleen Van Drunen moved to Montana from North Dakota in 1971. She and her husband have 4 children, 11 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren. Kathleen has previously worked for the school system and at Crawford & Company.

Kathleen came to MDOL two years ago. Her primary duties are issuing animal import permits, tracking supply shipments to veterinarians, and basic administrative assistant work. Kathleen has also been instrumental in data management and quarantines for rabies, Trichomoniasis and other diseases.

In other personnel news, Dr. Jeanne Rankin is leaving MDOL to pursue agricultural emergency preparedness. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

Tuberculin Shipments

All tuberculin orders are shipped from the MDOL Helena office in styrofoam containers that were purchased specifically for this purpose.

The container box is equipped with a pouch/mailling label card that can be removed, turned over, reinserted, and mailed back to our office by US Postal Service. To make the return of these coolers as easy as possible, they are postage pre-paid.

If we do not receive these containers by return mail within eight (8) weeks of the shipping date, we will assume you want to keep the container and your account will be charged a replacement cost of \$12.00.

Thanks for helping us keep costs down for the services we provide.

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