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StockQuotes Animal Health Newsletter

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

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State Veterinarian Brucellosis Update

BRUCELLOSIS ACTION PLAN: In the world of brucellosis, much of our time has been spent on finalizing Montana's Brucellosis Action Plan. Under this plan, the counties of Beaverhead, Madison, Gallatin, Park, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, and Carbon have been designated for increased brucellosis surveillance. All cattle and domestic bison producers in this area (Area 1) are encouraged to fill out Risk Surveys to help assess the risk of brucellosis transmission from wildlife.

The risk of transmission, as assessed by these surveys, will help decide the extent of brucellosis testing that may include: whole herd testing, change of ownership testing, and movement testing for animals being transported out of Area 1. Under this plan, traceability through identification of all sold animals over 12 months will also be enhanced.

Two veterinarians to assist producers in completing risk surveys and help conduct brucellosis testing will be hired as part of the plan.

The Brucellosis Action Plan will help Montana regain its Brucellosis Class Free Status expediently, and is critically important to en-

sure marketability of Montana cattle. Implementation is still pending state appropriations through a supplemental bill (House Bill 3).

As of late March, House Bill 3 has been passed by the House and is awaiting the Senate. If things go like we hope and expect, the Brucellosis Action Plan will be implemented on May 1st.

NATIONAL BRUCELLOSIS ELIMINATION ZONE (NBEZ): There are many challenges in brucellosis control. One of the most significant, is that United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) rules for brucellosis were developed decades ago to prevent cattle-to-cattle brucellosis transmission while currently wild ungulates are of greatest concern. Another is that the current rules were based on the use of Strain 19 vaccine which had been replaced by RB51 vaccine in 1996. RB51 is a DIVA vaccine (Differentiating Infected from Vaccinated Animals) and allows more aggressive vaccination with little concern of interfering with diagnostic tests.

Under a new proposal, the National Brucellosis Eliminations Zone (NBEZ), USDA is looking to establish a con-

trol zone spanning parts of the three Greater Yellowstone states of Montana Idaho and Wyoming. The NBEZ has several key features: 1) brucellosis positive operations would be allowed to "test out" of the disease rather than be depopulated, 2) additional cases of the disease would not result in a loss of class status, 3) the United States would be declared a brucellosis free country, 4) the boundary of the control zone would be flexible and allowed to shrink or expand based on risk, and 5) more comprehensive and consistent wildlife management strategies would be implemented.

You are likely to hear more about this proposal as more details become available.

Calendar of Events:

- April 17-18th:
MSU Equine Conference & Trade Show in Bozeman
- April 25th:
61st Legislative Session Adjourns in Helena
- May 12-13th:
MT Board of Livestock Meeting in Helena
- June 10-13th:
MT Stockgrowers Assoc. 125th Anniversary Celebration in Miles City
- June 21-23th:
MTVMA Summer Conference & Trade Show in Billings



Image source: www.ars.usda.gov

“...the most recent stallion diagnosed with CEM was test negative on culture, and was only diagnosed following test breeding of culture negative mares”.

Contagious Equine Metritis

The contagious equine metritis (CEM) investigation is continuing. First diagnosed at a Kentucky breeding farm on Dec 15th, the investigation currently involves 113 stallions and 602 mares in 46 states. A much smaller number of horses has actually been confirmed with the disease including a total of 13 stallions in the states of Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Texas and Wisconsin, and a total of 4 positive mares in the states of Illinois, Wisconsin, and California.

Poor hygiene of the equipment used in collection of

the stallions in Kentucky (artificial mounts, and AV) is thought to have contribute to the spread of the disease at the breeding farm.

A couple of interesting findings from the investigation bear mentioning. First, three of the four positive mares (CA and IL) were infected by artificial insemination, which previously was believed to present a negligible risk of transmission.

Second, the protocol of culturing stallions, followed by test-breeding to negative mares is an expensive, time consuming process. Yet,

the most recent stallion diagnosed with CEM was test negative on culture, and was only diagnosed following test breeding of culture negative mares.

Montana had one mare that received shipped semen and has since been tested negative, and released from quarantine. The source of the outbreak has not yet been identified.

By Animal Health Staff

Reportable Diseases.....

The list of reportable diseases in Montana is sporting a new and hopefully, more user friendly format. MDOL has recently updated the list to reflect the diseases currently listed in Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM).

Reportable diseases in Montana include:

- OIE (World Animal Health Organization) diseases
- Foreign Animal Diseases
- National Animal Health Reporting System (NAHRS) diseases, and
- Other diseases that are of concern on a state or local scale.

Diseases on the Montana's reportable disease list fall into one of three categories:

1. Immediately reportable to State AND Federal Officials and Quarantinable

2. Immediately reportable to only State Officials and Quarantinable

3. Non-quarantinable with thirty day reporting requirements.

The updated version of the reportable disease list will be available on our website in a downloadable and printable form at www.liv.mt.gov.

Disease reporting helps the State of Montana establish a baseline of common diseases, and a allow rapid response to highly contagious foreign animal diseases.

MDOL appreciates the extra time and effort that you put forth in reporting diseases to our department!

By Tahnee Szymanski, DVM

Trich Testing Input Needed!

MDOL is in the process of re-writing the Trichomoniasis Administrative Rule ([32.3.501](#)).

We are considering the standardization of laboratories to perform trichomoniasis testing and eliminating “in-clinic culture testing” as an acceptable official test used prior to sale, lease or loan in MT.

Please contact our office at 406-444-2043 by May 1, 2009 to let us know if you are performing in-clinic trichomoniasis cultures before we make a decision on acceptable official tests.

By Jeanne Rankin, DVM



Image source: www.ars.usda.gov

Rabies Update:

Montana has had a busy spring with rabies cases reported in several counties. As of late March, five counties, Dawson, Stillwater, Yellowstone, Sweet Grass, and Lewis & Clark, are under a 60 day quarantine. The quarantine of some of these counties has been extended beyond the initial quarantine period because of additional cases of terrestrial rabies during the quarantine period. Nine of the ten quarantines involved potential exposures by infected skunks. The Lewis & Clark County case was an infected cat.

The recent rabies activity has brought to light several issues that MDOL is trying to address.

First, there has been a lack of consistent public communication on rabies to the communities affected. We are trying to remedy that by publishing news releases with every new county quarantine. You may view current and past news releases at our web site <http://liv.mt.gov> under newsroom, as well as view current quarantines and historical data in the rabies pages.

The second issue is more challenging and relates to the discrepancy between duration of immunity by the vaccine label, and expiration date of the veterinarian-issued vaccination certificate or county ordinance. This discrepancy has resulted in confusion in many

parts of the state.

These have led to veterinarians administering a three year vaccine and issuing a two year certificate in some counties. Arguments for this practice include:

- Ease of licensing for the client and simplification of record keeping for vaccine boosters
- Perception of providing a cushion of immunity for clients who delay in obtaining boosters for their animals.

Reasons against include:

- Confusion of the public regarding rabies protection of their pets, and subsequent uncertainty over disposition of cases resulting in human exposure.
- Veterinary liability may also be increased for unnecessary euthanasia or costs incurred by clients for animal quarantines placed on protected pets.
- Increased risk of vaccine related sarcomas in cats
- The practice is discouraged in the rabies compendium which states “No laboratory or epidemiologic data exist to support the annual or biennial administration of 3- or 4- year vaccines after the initial series”.

MDOL strongly encourages veterinarians to write certificates that are consistent with the duration of immunity of the product they are using. In counties that mandate more frequent rabies vaccinations, veterinarians may consider using a vaccine with an immunity duration consistent with that county ordinance.

The list of approved rabies vaccination in the Compendium includes vaccines with durations of immunity ranging from 1 to 4 years.

Laws that dictate how we prevent and manage rabies exist at three levels: state, county, and city. State regulations regarding rabies are set forth in the Administrative Rule of Montana (ARM) 32.3.1201.

Under Montana law, counties are quarantined for 60 days when rabies is confirmed in a terrestrial animal such as a dog, cat, skunk or fox. All unvaccinated dogs, cats and ferrets in quarantined counties must be vaccinated a minimum of two weeks prior to any travel outside the quarantined county.

The ARM can be viewed at www.mtrules.org.

“veterinary liability may also be increased for unnecessary euthanasia or costs incurred by clients for animal quarantines placed on protected pets. The risk of vaccine related sarcomas in cats should also be considered”



“MDOL strongly encourages veterinarians to write rabies certificates that are consistent with the duration of immunity of the product they are using.”



"It is the responsibility of the shipper (consignor), as well as the receiver (consignee) to obtain the correct semen import permits".

Annual Equine Semen Permits vs. single-use semen permits:

Veterinarians shipping semen into Montana more than once per breeding season may consider an Annual Semen permit. The requirements for an annual permit can be found on our web site under forms. This form, a copy of current EIA (Coggins) test, Equine Viral Arteritis (EVA) baseline test and vaccination/booster history are required prior to permit approval.

If a producer is going to ship semen into Montana

only once, or only sporadically, or just does not want to EVA vaccinate his/her stallion, a single-use semen permit is recommended. Single-use semen permits can be obtained by calling our permit line at 406-444-2976 during regular business hours, Monday through Friday.

Requirements are: Certificate of Veterinary Inspection, a copy of current EIA (Coggins) test results form, and a copy of negative Equine Viral Arteritis

(EVA) test within past 30 days prior to entry.

It is the responsibility of the shipper (consignor), as well as the receiver (consignee) to obtain the correct semen import permits.

There are no Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) testing requirements for equine semen at this time.

By Ms. Margie Kelley



Image credit: www.irishviews.com

"..designed to help producers determine whether different water sources have sufficient quality to protect livestock health".

Water Quality Tool

The Montana Department of Livestock receives occasional inquiries into water quality standards for livestock from producers have had water quality testing performed but are not sure how to interpret the results.

The Land Resources and Environmental Sciences department at Montana State University working with Colorado State University is currently developing an online resource that can be utilized by veterinarians, extension services, and producers. Currently, Colorado State

University has a drinking water interpretation tool at http://wsprod.colostate.edu/cwis435/regional_index1.cfm. A spreadsheet has been created with standards for water used for livestock. The information is currently being added to the existing website as a new aspect of the tool and will be available to the public in the near future. The purpose of this tool is to provide a simple interface for livestock producers to get help interpreting lab results. The information is designed to help producers determine

whether different water sources have sufficient quality to protect livestock health.

For a copy of the spreadsheet, please contact our office at 406-444-2043.

By Tahnee Szymanski, DVM

Alternative Livestock Animal Identification Pilot Project:

Letters regarding participation in an Animal Identification Pilot Project were recently mailed to Alternative Livestock Designated Veterinarians.

The basis of the pilot project is implementation of wireless

identification technology for ID capture.

Each participating Alternative Livestock Producer would need to register their premises before USDA RFID button (840) tags could be issued. The RFID tags would replace

the silver USDA tags now in use, but not the official yellow Montana dangle ear tags. Please contact Ms. Margie Kelley if you are interested in participating.

By Ms. Margie Kelley



Montana Voluntary Premises Registration Corner

The National Animal Identification System (NAIS) continues to hold its place in the media spotlight. A newly released veterinary services memo, a proposed rule change to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), and proposed NAIS legislation in many states has helped to seal NAIS's place in front page news.

The Veterinary Services Memo 575.19 dated December 22, 2008 served to replace the previously version dated September 22, 2008. The updated version identified the two current versions of a premise identification number (PIN) defined in the CFR and explained how these two number can be allocated and assigned by either federal or state authorities. The proposed rule change will require that only the seven-character alphanumeric code format currently used in NAIS will be recognized as a PIN. The proposed rule change also will serve to standardize animal identification numbers (AINs). The new format would only recognize numbers beginning

with the 840 prefix as official for AINs. The rule would not affect other animal identification numbering systems currently authorized including Brucellosis vaccination tags and silver USDA tags.

On the local stage, House Bill 592 has recently been tabled in the Senate Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Committee. The bill was titled: An Act Establishing Certain Restrictions on State Participation in a National Animal Verification System; Establishing a Voluntary Source Verification Program; and Providing an Immediate Effective Date. The bill was intended to prevent mandatory enforcement of NAIS in the state of Montana, consistent with current USDA policy. The bill did not prevent participation in NAIS, nor did it stop the department's current work on NAIS education and outreach.

Most interestingly, the bill prevented state animal health officials from requiring mandatory identification (independent of premises registration) for any reason. Therefore identification for animals that were tested

negative, tested suspect or even tested positive for any disease would be identified voluntarily only.

This provision would likely have classified Montana as the only Scrapie Inconsistent State in the nation as defined by Federal Law. This would have resulted in significantly more identification requirements for sheep producers moving sheep interstate, and likely contributed to the bill's lack of support.

If you have any questions or for copies of any of the documents listed please contact, Dr. Tahnee Szymanski at (406) 444-5214 or tszymanski@mt.gov. I will be glad to provide any assistance. For those of you who attended the MVMA Winter Conference I hope that you received a copy of our NAIS outreach material, including information specific to the veterinarian's role in NAIS. If you did not receive one and would like a copy, please let me know. I would be glad to provide one.

By Tahnee Szymanski, DVM

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Montana Department of Livestock

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

Did You know

THAT AFTER 22 YEARS, South Dakota State Veterinarian, Dr. Sam Holland, retired March 6th with Dr. Oedekoven appointed as Acting State Veterinarian? And after 19 years with the Utah's Department of Agriculture and Food, State Veterinarian Dr. Earl Rogers has retired.

The Wyoming Livestock Board recently moved and has a new address and phone number?

You can obtain a current list of the State Veterinarians and their contact information through our website at www.liv.mt.gov or you may call (406) 444-2043 to request a copy be mailed to you.

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.

THAT WE ARE LOOKING for more animal photographs for the newsletter. If you'd let us use a photo of your or your clients' animals (with permission of course) in a future newsletter we'll insert it in the newsletter as appropriate (with proper attribution).

Photos of cattle, horses, pets and other animals would be appreciated. Please send these to Ms. Evaleen Starkel at estarkel@mt.gov.