



Sep 2009

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Calendar of Events:

- Dec 10-12: Montana Stock Growers Meeting, Billings
- October 2-4: Farm Bureau Young Ag Leadership Conference, Helena
- Oct 7-14: US Health Association San Diego, CA
- October 10-17: NILE (Northern International Livestock Exposition), Billings
- Late October: MT Deputy Accreditation Training
- Nov 16-17: Board of Livestock Meeting (tentative)

StockQuotes Animal Health Newsletter

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

Volume 2, Issue 3

State Veterinarian Update

Fall greetings to Montana veterinarians and other readers of this newsletter. MDOL had a busy summer with rabies quarantines, brucellosis issues (Class Free – Yea!), and the continuing effort to update our trichomoniasis control program rules.

A few new things for this newsletter. Because MDOL is involved in many things non-brucellosis, I'd like to highlight some of these other topics first. Further in the newsletter, you'll find the standard brucellosis updates.

Also, we'll plan on underlining key messages in the newsletters to allow for easier reading of the most important points. Hope this helps you prioritize your time when digesting more information in your busy schedule.

Lastly, starting with this issue, we'll be including a column submitted by Dr. Tom Linfield, our Area Veterinarian in Charge with USDA APHIS to share any updates from our federal partners.

Rabies

The rabies quarantine for Yellowstone County has finally been lifted.

MDOL quarantines a county for 60 days following a detection of rabies in a terrestrial animal. A county quarantine requires that all pets leaving the county must be rabies vaccinated. Because of the high prevalence of rabies in skunks in the Billings area, Yellowstone County's quarantine was extended several times following positive tests from strangely acting skunks.

I'd be interested in feedback on a couple of rabies related issues. First, recognizing that endemic wildlife infection is often localized to a small part of a county, is it appropriate and beneficial to you that the

quarantine extends to an entire county? Although more difficult to enforce, we have contemplated narrowing future quarantines to city limits or zip code(s) if applicable.

Second, there have been a significant number of human and pet exposures to rabies-positive bats in counties with no reports of the disease in terrestrial animals. It's obvious that rabies is endemic in these areas, and a risk to people and animals exists even though we've had no positive submissions from pets or skunks. Do you feel it appropriate to quarantine an area or county based on positive bat submissions?

Montana had 21 reported positive rabies cases to date (12 skunks, 8 bats and 1 cat). Failure to initiate or maintain current rabies vaccination continues to be an issue. Non-vaccinated pets exposed to rabid bats, skunks or other wildlife need to undergo a 180 day quarantine (or euthanasia) to ensure that transmission to the pet did not occur.

We often get requests for clarification of the 10 day versus 45 day animal quarantine. Non-vaccinated cats and dogs that bite humans need to be watched for 10 days for signs of rabies to determine whether the person needs post-exposure prophylaxis. If a vaccinated pet has been exposed to a known or suspected (wildlife) rabid animal, the pet should be re-vaccinated immediately and placed on a 45 day watch.

Please contact the public health department in cases of human exposure, or contact us for animal exposure and submission information. We are happy to help!

You can find information on current rabies quarantines on our web site: <http://liv.mt.gov/liv/ah/diseases/rabies/general.asp>

By Jeanne Rankin, DVM



Image credit:
<http://www.liv.ac.uk/csd/>

“In response to requests from veterinarians and pet owners for information on Heartworm prevalence, MDOL requested reporting of heartworm cases in the previous newsletter”.

Reportable Disease Update

HEARTWORM

In response to requests from veterinarians and pet owners for information on heartworm prevalence, MDOL requested reporting of heartworm cases in the previous newsletter. We received several reports for a total of 10 animals over the past several months. Although the majority of the cases have a history of interstate, or international travel, two of the dogs did not. Thanks to all who have been calling and reporting diseases this summer. Please continue to report any additional cases of heartworm and any other cases as per Administrative Rules of Montana 32.3.104.

Other diseases recently reported to DOL are PRRS, tularemia, rabies, west nile virus (WNV), canine sarcoptic mange, bovine leukosis, anaplasmosis, bovine viral diarrhea (BVD), and Johne's disease. Johne's, a chronic, debilitating disease that can be economically devastating, was reported in four herds. MDOL has access to several education packets regarding herd health programs and management tools to aid in the prevention and spread of Johne's, however, federal funding for the Johne's prevention program is no longer available. Please call Dr. Rankin for educational packets. <http://www.johnesdisease.org/Nat%20Johne's%20Working%20Group.html>

WEST NILE VIRUS (WNV)

Montana had 10 positive cases of WNV in horses reported this year as compared to seven cases in 2008, and 37 cases in 2007. The highest number of cases was 193 in 2003. All positive horses were unvaccinated this year and consistent with the national average of 33% deaths from unvaccinated horses, three of the ten horses died or were euthanized. Lake County had four equine cases and one human case, Sanders County had three equine cases and one human case, Missoula County had two equine cases and Valley County had one equine case. Garfield County had the third human case and as its northern border is contiguous with Valley County and the Missouri River, it demonstrates epidemi-

ologically, that the virus is present and is passed into susceptible populations.

Mosquito control, prevention and a good vaccination program in areas of highest risk appear to be the best way to manage this disease. We expect to see veterinary cases through the first part of October, depending upon mosquito killing temperatures. Year to date across the nation there have been 84 animal cases of WNV in 16 states.

EASTERN EQUINE ENCEPHALITIS (EEE)

This highly fatal disease was reported in unusually high numbers nationally with 209 cases in 13 states. Florida, Georgia and Mississippi are the hardest hit but cases have been reported all along the eastern seaboard even into Maine. No EEE cases have been reported in Montana and no cases of WEE have been reported in the USA. <http://diseasemaps.usgs.gov/index.html>
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahss/equine/ee/index.htm>

NEUROLOGICAL EQUINE HERPES VIRUS-1

Montana has also had some reports of equine neurological rhinopneumonitis (EHV-1) which is a mutant strain of the more typical respiratory and abortion forms of the virus. Generalized neurological signs, hind limb ataxia and bladder leakage can be some of the earliest signs of EHV1-Neurological form. There is no vaccine labeled to prevent neurological rhino but experts recommend using the anti abortion label vaccine or the modified live vaccine as an aid in decreasing severity of disease. Animals suspected of, or diagnosed with EHV-1 need to be quarantined to prevent transmission. A new brochure is available at this link. <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahss/equine/ehv/index.htm>

SCRAPIE

Montana continues to be scrapie free. Nationally, only 65 cases have been found this year. 36 Montana flocks are enrolled in the voluntary scrapie flock certification program of 1830 enrolled nationally. Montana scrapie testing continues for genetic susceptibility and is funded in part with a Cooperative Agreement from USDA. Testing to date has identified 8 QQ (genetically suscep-

Reportable Disease Update (cont'd)

tible) sheep out of 127 tested. Owners with QQ ram lambs are asked that they be castrated, slaughtered or used as terminal sires, to aid in the reduction of potential cases.

Ewes or adult rams can be tested as well. The live animal test was recently changed from third eyelid biopsy to the more sensitive test using rectal mucosal biopsy. USDA mailed out CDs with the latest Scrapie information to all accredited large animal veterinarians. Please contact USDA if you have not received one. Other information is also available online at: <http://>

www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/scrapie/

The department of Livestock reports OIE diseases monthly to the National Animal Health Reporting System which anyone can access. To look at diseases reported by state, year, month and livestock, poultry or aquatic species, go to.

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ceah/ncahs/nahrs/> or
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahss/>

By Jeanne Rankin, DVM

Montana Voluntary Premises Registration Corner

The National Animal Identification System (NAIS) has reached a critical fork in the road. After five years of implementation, 140 million dollars, and only 30 percent of premises registered nationwide, the program is under scrutiny by producers, industry groups, congress, and the USDA itself.

The initial intent of NAIS was to improve traceability in our livestock to better respond to a disease outbreak in the United States. The opposition to the current program has everyone asking if we need ANY system. However, with countries like South Korea demanding full traceability of countries exporting products into their markets, that question may have been answered for us. At a recent meeting sponsored by the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA), the overwhelming consensus from industry and animal health officials was that traceability is necessary. The question is, in what form?

The NAIS listening sessions are complete and the comment period has ended. The intent of the listening sessions was to address the common concerns of producers. These concerns include cost, confidentiality, privacy, liability, and impact on small producers. The USDA is now charged with compiling all of the feedback received and moving forward with an effective and ac-

ceptable traceability system. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack is supportive of a national system.

The House has eliminated funding to the program for the upcoming fiscal year. The Senate has cut funding by half. USDA officials are optimistic that despite the apparent financial setbacks, funding for the upcoming fiscal year will be available, although at a reduced amount. Look for the USDA to issue an announcement in the next several months regarding the direction of NAIS.

From an animal health perspective, the Montana State Veterinarian's office recognizes the need for traceability for disease purposes. It is with this in mind that we continue to offer handheld PDA's and RFID tag readers for use by accredited veterinarians. Additionally, we still have free RFID tags available for distribution to producers. RFID tags can dramatically speed up animal health and regulatory tasks. Please contact Dr. Tahnee Szymanski at (406) 444-5214 or tszymanski@mt.gov for more information.

By Tahnee Szymanski, DVM



Image credit:
<http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov>

Brucellosis Update

There are several important updates in the world of brucellosis. MDOL is working with other agencies on finding a home for bison from the quarantine facility north of Gardiner. USDA is moving forward with sweeping changes to national brucellosis rules. We're continuing the Brucellosis Action Plan (BAP) that requires enhanced testing and risk mitigation in the seven county area. On September's Board of Livestock agenda is the topic of Mandatory Official Calfhood Vaccination for brucellosis within Montana. And last, but certainly not least, Montana's Brucellosis Class Free status was restored in July.



“Several agency representatives met in early September to evaluate proposals from entities interested in receiving Yellowstone bison from the Bison Quarantine Feasibility Study (BQFS)”.

BISON QUARANTINE FEASIBILITY STUDY

Several agency representatives met in early September to evaluate proposals from entities interested in receiving Yellowstone bison from the Bison Quarantine Feasibility Study (BQFS). Bison taken from the Stevens Creek capture facility north of Yellowstone National Park (YNP) in 2005 and 2006 and their calves are eligible for transfer from the BQFS. These bison (approximately 88 animals), were tested numerous times for brucellosis and remain negative on all tests since calf-hood and after calving. The outcome of this project is to validate the process of obtaining brucellosis negative bison from the YNP brucellosis positive population. This will allow Yellowstone bison genetics to be shared for conservation of the species.

The next step in the BQFS project is to relocate the quarantine bison to another facility to continue surveillance for the next five years. Several promising proposals were submitted, however, at the time of the writing of this newsletter a final decision on the winning proposal hasn't been made.

NATIONAL BRUCELLOSIS RULES UPDATE

MDOL recently held two public meetings on modernization of federal brucellosis rules. These meetings, held in Billings and Bozeman, were attended by USDA officials, ranchers, livestock industry organizations, and the general public. The purpose of the meetings was to share information on the current proposal, and get public input on the

basic concepts.

Ideally, updated rules would have four components. First, they would protect the producer by eliminating forced depopulation. Second, they would protect the state by eliminating class status downgrade. Third, they would protect trading partners by not putting their state status in jeopardy in the unlikely event of importing a brucellosis positive animal from the Greater Yellowstone Area. Fourth, they would be flexible and acknowledge the unique circumstances in production types and marketing options.

The most significant features of the current proposal are consistent with these goals. 1) eliminating brucellosis class status designations, 2) eliminating mandatory depopulation of brucellosis affected herds, 3) identifying an area where brucellosis disease risk exists as a Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) which is targeted for continued risk mitigation and brucellosis testing activities, 4) declaring the nation brucellosis free, including the DSA, 5) moving away from very prescriptive rules to "performance-based" standards that would allow for significant flexibility. USDA will publish the proposal for public comment in the federal register by late September.

BRUCELLOSIS CLASS FREE STATUS; ACTION PLAN CONTINUES

Montana's brucellosis status was downgraded to Class A on September 3, 2008 following the detection of brucellosis in two cattle herds within a 13 month period. The state was again declared Brucellosis Class Free on July 10, 2009. Thank you for your role in this process. Much credit also goes to Montana's cattle producers for complying with the testing requirements, committing to the Brucellosis Action Plan, and to USDA for expediting the process to restore our state status to Brucellosis Free.

The Montana Brucellosis Action Plan (BAP) was implemented to enhance mitigation activities and surveillance in the seven

Brucellosis Update (continued)

County area of Beaverhead, Madison, Gallatin, Park, Carbon, Sweet Grass, and Stillwater Counties (Area 1). The BAP remains in effect until January 10, 2010 (6 months following MT regaining Class Free Status). There are two main points to keep in mind. First, sexually intact cattle over 12 months of age originating from the seven Area 1 counties need to continue to be brucellosis tested prior to sale or movement from Area 1. Second, all cattle operations within the seven county area will need to complete a whole herd brucellosis test prior to December 31, 2009 unless they've completed a risk survey and receive an exemption from MDOL.

MANDATORY OFFICIAL CALFHOOD VACCINATION (OCV)

At the June meeting, the Board of Livestock decided to investigate the possibility of mandatory vaccination of cattle for brucellosis. They requested that language be drafted for discussion at the next board

meeting. The draft language mandates official calfhood vaccination for breeding females, and exempts animals going to approved feedlots.

Arguments to support mandatory OCV of Montana cattle include standardizing the practice with Idaho and Wyoming (both states already have mandatory OCV), increasing the immunity of Montana cattle to the disease, promoting greater consistency of Montana cattle, and improving marketability. Concerns with mandating OCV focus on cost, and availability of veterinarians.

If you have a significant interest in the issue please feel free to share those with MDOL.

(406) 444-2043
ELiska@mt.gov

“The BAP remains in effect until January 10, 2010... All cattle operations within the seven county area will need to complete a whole herd brucellosis test prior to December 31, 2009 unless they've completed a risk survey and receive an exemption from MDOL”

USDA Proposes to Amend Regulations Regarding the National Veterinary Accreditation Program

USDA-APHIS-VS is proposing to enhance the National Veterinary Accreditation Program (NVAP), with November 2, 2009 as the planned date for publishing the amended regulations in the Federal Register. USDA is proposing these changes to support its animal health safeguarding initiatives, to involve accredited veterinarians in integrated surveillance activities and to make the provisions governing the NVAP more uniform and consistent. Additionally, these proposed changes would increase the level of training and skill of accredited veterinarians in the areas of disease prevention and preparedness for animal health emergencies in the United States.

The following are some of the major changes in the proposed regulations:

- Two accreditation Categories will be established in place of the current single Category.
- Category I would authorize veterinarians

ans to perform accredited duties on companion animals only.

- Category II would authorize veterinarians to perform accredited duties on all species to include poultry, equines and livestock.
- All veterinarians seeking initial veterinary accreditation and all currently accredited veterinarians wishing to maintain veterinary accreditation will need to complete a new *Application For Veterinary Accreditation* (VS Form 1-36A) to declare an accreditation category and to elect to participate.
- Continuing education will be required to renew accredited status every three (3) years.

The following is the proposed time-line for the enhanced NVAP:

- November 2, 2009 – planned date for publishing regulations in Federal Register.
- January 4, 2010 – proposed effective date of new regulations.

Accreditation status expires for accredited veterinarians that have not completed a new VS Form 1-36A by July 1, 2010.

Montana Department of Livestock

Animal Health Division
P.O. Box 202001
Helena, MT, 59620-2001
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

USDA Amends Accreditation Requirements (cont'd)

- January 2010 – start of 3-month outreach program to currently accredited veterinarians.
- April 1, 2010 thru July 1, 2010 – Accredited veterinarians need to complete new VS Form 1-36A to continue as AV.
- July 1, 2010 – accreditation status expires for accredited veterinarians that have not completed a new VS Form 1-36A.

A representative from USDA-APHIS-VS-Montana will be attending the 2010 MVMA Winter and Summer meetings to provide

updates and respond to questions regarding these proposed changes.

For additional information, please refer to the following websites:

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/nvap/> and http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/vet_accreditation/proposed_reg.shtml

By Tom Linfield, DVM

Trichomoniasis Rules

New trichomoniasis control program rules are expected to be published for public comment following the September Board of Livestock meeting. These will be available on our web site <http://liv.mt.gov/public/arm.asp>, for your review.

I hope you can take a few minutes to review these proposed regulations, as it is significantly easier to change them at this stage than after they are adopted.

MDOL Contact Information:

Marty Zaluski, DVM
State Veterinarian, Administrator
(406) 444-2043
mzaluski@mt.gov

Jeanne Rankin, DVM
Asst State Veterinarian
(406) 444-1895
jrankin@mt.gov

Tahnee Szymanski, DVM
NAIS and FAD Veterinarian
(406) 444-5214
tszymanski@mt.gov

Eric Liska, DVM
Action Plan Veterinarian
(406) 444-3374
eliska@mt.gov

Margie Kelley
Alternative Livestock
(406) 444-5200
makelley@mt.gov

Import Permit Office
(406) 444-2976