



StockQuotes Animal Health Newsletter

Mar 2010

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

Volume 3, Issue 1

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Calendar of Events:

- **Deputy Veterinarian Training:**
Mon Jun 21st, 2010
Mon Oct 4th, 2010
- **Board of Livestock:**
March 15 - 16, 2010
May 17 & 18, 2010
July 26 & 27, 2010
- **MVMA Summer Conference & Trade Show:**
June 27 - 29, 2010
- **Deadline for Selection of Federal Accreditation Category to Maintain Accreditation:**
August 2, 2010

State Veterinarian Update

As always, brucellosis has been keeping us busy. Recent activities include establishing a Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) for brucellosis, and public meetings on a proposal for statewide official calfhood vaccination (OCV). Additionally, we recently updated the Administrative Rules (ARM) governing the trichomoniasis program, and wrote the Deputy Veterinarian program into ARM. The Deputy Veterinarian program has been in place for decades, but only as MDOL policy.

There have also been dramatic changes in the federal traceability program. This will likely be the last time you see "National Animal Identification System" (NAIS) in any of our communications. While MDOL remains committed to traceability, the NAIS one-size-fits-all program has been abandoned, and the future traceability program will allow the state to take leadership.

Also in this issue, I'm happy to update you on the Veterinary Loan Repayment Program and outline the calendar ahead in addressing the veterinary shortage in the state of Montana.

Finally, you'll notice a new section in the newsletter. Dr. Bill Layton, director of the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, will have a standing section to update the veterinary community on submission of samples, diagnostic testing, fees, and other developing issues relating the laboratory.

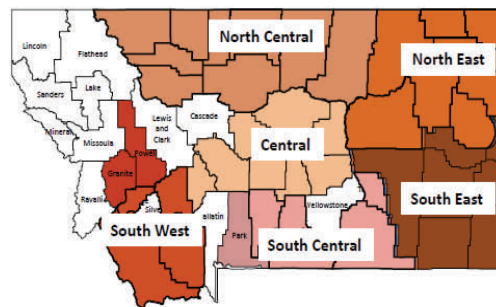
As always, please keep in touch. Call or write with any questions or feedback. mzaluski@mt.gov (406) 444-2043. ☪

Marty

Veterinary Loan Repayment Program

It has been well recognized for several years that the United States faces a significant veterinary shortage in the food animal service, public health, epidemiology and food safety areas.

Through the Veterinary Loan Repayment Program (VLRP), states are able to boost recruitment and retention of veterinarians in the above-mentioned disciplines by creating a financial incentive of loan repayment (up to \$25K per year for 4 years) for veterinarians who locate and practice in underserved areas. Based on our livestock populations and size of the state, Montana was able to nominate up to six areas as underserved. These nominations were discussed and reviewed by a small work group including Dr. Marc Mattix (recently retired pathologist from MDOL), MSU Extension personnel, and MVMA and submitted by the state animal health official in early March. The underserved areas of Montana were chosen based on numerous factors including livestock populations, public health infrastructure, international border, number and age of currently practicing veterinarians, and proximity to tribal areas which are systematically underrepresented in the animal health and public health infrastructure and capacity. The map below shows the areas that were included in the nominations (white counties were not nominated).



This program is specifically designed for recruitment, however, MDOL has received several inquiries whether it also can be

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Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Update

Over the last decade, the focus of the MVDL has expanded significantly because of disease outbreaks both within and outside Montana. Some of disease outbreaks in the last decade that affected the laboratory's daily activities are: Foot and Mouth Disease in the UK; naturally occurring and terrorist anthrax outbreaks; the introduction of West Nile Virus into the US; BSE discovery in Washington State; avian influenza outbreaks in birds and man; and although not a disease outbreak, the required testing of bulls for *Tritrichomonas foetus* in Montana and other western states. Each of these challenges has necessitated MVDL to adapt and adjust to serve the veterinary community and the State of Montana.

Another obvious example is the detection of brucellosis in two Montana cattle herds. Since Montana lost its Brucellosis Free status almost two years ago, MVDL tested over 270,000 domestic and wild animal samples for brucellosis, and I am proud to report that test results were available the same day the sample was received. As a point of reference, prior to the 2007 and 2008 herd detections, average annual testing load was 30,000. The serology and receiving/front office sections of the laboratory performed beyond my expectations and deserve well earned recognition for their efforts.

In future newsletter articles, I will use this space to inform you of current changes relating to the laboratory. For instance, new serologic test forms (SV-2A and 2B) have been sent to accredited veterinarians. These forms differ from the previous laboratory forms in several ways, but most importantly, space is provided for the required veterinarian's signature. The signature line allows for these new forms to be used in place of the Federal Brucellosis Form if additional tests are requested. Also, you will notice a new mandatory field that requests a "reason for test" on the new form. This field is important for MVDL staff as well as the Animal Health office.

I am always interested in feedback so that we can provide the services you need. ☺

By A.W. Layton DVM, Director



Dr. Brent Thompson being trained by MVDL's Jean Block on the FP brucellosis test.



Several hundred serum samples submitted to MVDL for brucellosis testing.

Health Certificate Compliance

The Montana State Veterinarian's office receives approximately 2,000 large and small animal health certificates per month from both in state and out of state veterinarians. The import staff processes each certificate individually as well as other legal documents that are sent to the office throughout the year.

When importing states receive health certificates that fail to include the required information, they are returned to MDOL as unacceptable. Here are some suggestions to help fill out these forms fully and correctly before mailing them into our office or on to other states.

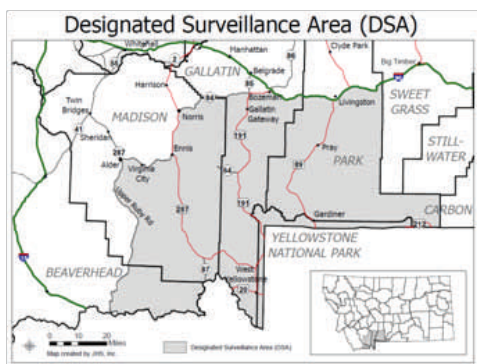
- Call the state of destination for requirements before doing an exam.
- Health certificates must be filled out completely and legibly.
- The veterinarian must sign the health and clearly print their name and license number; even on voided health certificates so we can file them appropriately.
- Fill out consignor and consignee information completely with names, phone numbers and addresses. A phone number is required for any address which is not physical, such as a P.O. Box.
- Individually identify each animal as required by the state of destination.
- Make sure all testing and vaccinations are completed within the necessary timeframe prior to requesting an import number.
- Write the import permit number on your health certificate before sending it in.
- Mail your health certificates to MDOL and the state of destination office in a timely manner so they don't become outdated.

Thanks to all of the hard working vets out there who continue to do an amazing job of taking care of the animals in our state. ☺

By Ms. Barb Ferguson

Brucellosis Updates

At the January meeting, the Montana Board of Livestock approved Official Order 10-01-D establishing a Designated Surveillance Area (DSA). The DSA follows the expired Brucellosis Action Plan (BAP) and continues brucellosis related activities in a smaller area of southwestern Montana. Main components of the official order include: 1) entire herd and pre-sale testing of livestock in the DSA; 2) mandatory vaccination of eligible cattle in the entirety of the four counties of Beaverhead, Madison, Gallatin, and Park Counties (counties in which the DSA is located); and 3) continued testing requirements for producers in a seven county area who did not conduct a whole herd brucellosis test or fill out a risk survey during the BAP.



In addition to the development of the DSA, MDOL recently completed a series of seven meetings throughout the state to gauge producer interest in a statewide calfhood brucellosis vaccination program. Unlike the vaccination requirement in the four DSA counties described above, this proposal only addresses breeding cattle. If implemented, Montana would gain consistency with the vaccination policies of the other Greater Yellowstone Area states of Wyoming and Idaho. The states of California, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington also have a statewide vaccination requirement.

The livestock producers attending the meetings clearly felt that all Montana breeding cattle should be vaccinated for brucellosis. The response to a statewide program mandating this practice was more mixed, but was generally supportive if commerce of slaughter channel animals was

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New Trichomoniasis Rule in Place

Below is a summary of the main components of the new Trichomoniasis rule that was published in February.

- All non-virgin bulls must be Trichomoniasis (trich) negative within 90 days before being imported, sold, loaned, leased or otherwise acquired in Montana (previously 30 days).
- The official Trichomoniasis test is either a single, individual PCR (DNA) test or three negative, weekly cultures and bulls must have at least two weeks of sexual rest prior to testing.
- Test eligible bulls which are exempted from import test because they are destined for exhibition or sporting purposes that breach a fence and commingle with other cattle shall be tested for Trich at the owner's expense.
- Virgin bulls are described to be bulls less than 12 months of age, or 12-24 months of age if accompanied with a signed virgin affidavit by the owner listing individual identification of the animal. This affidavit goes with each bull into commerce. A brand inspection will not be performed without it.
- Non-virgin bulls going for breeding onto a common pasture from multiple sources must be test negative. For common grazing requirements, this test maybe used for the following breeding season as long as it is within 10 months and there has been no commingling with females.
- All bulls must have the Montana Trich Tag placed at the time of the first test or be otherwise officially identified (i.e. metal clip tag) and accompanied by a readable ranch tag.
- Only tests performed by a Montana Trichomoniasis Certified Veterinarian are considered official in Montana and must be performed in approved laboratories to be official for import, sale, loan, lease or other acquisition. All negative tests must be reported to the department on a weekly basis.
- Any positive culture test maybe confirmed by PCR. A positive PCR test may have a second PCR on the same collection to confirm infection. Positive tests must be reported immediately to the

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Zaluski answering questions at a meeting on Statewide OCV at Public Auction Yards in Billings.

Source: Billings Gazette



A well-attended meeting on statewide OCV; Headwaters Livestock Auction in Three Forks.

Source: Eric Liska Photography

BIG CHANGES in Traceability

As you may have heard, the USDA recently abandoned the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) and proposed a new framework for animal disease traceability.

In response to feedback received during the USDA listening sessions, traceability programs will be the responsibility of the States. The emphasis of the traceability program will be animals moving interstate with the state taking sole responsibility of tracing within state boundaries. The species with the greatest emphasis will be on cattle.

USDA will continue to provide funding and information systems, as well as facilitate the development of standards and guidelines.

Ultimately, it is now the charge of the state of Montana and the MDOL to establish a system that will allow traceability of animals leaving the state as well as those that remain within Montana. How we accomplish these goals has been left wide open by the USDA.

Now that the states are able to customize their approach to achieve traceability goals, Montana is able to utilize our existing programs and systems to our benefit. This includes:

- Brands
- USDA Bangs tags
- USDA Silver Metal Tags
- RFID 840 tags

In the coming months, MDOL will work to identify the strengths and challenges of our current program. Specifically, we will be evaluating situations in which untraceable animals leave Montana. As we evaluate current systems, one thing that becomes apparent is the critical role of the accredited veterinarian and producer. Reporting official disease work and tag placement is and will likely continue to be an essential component of the current level of traceability that exists in Montana.

Possibilities for further development of our state's animal disease traceability system include:

- Continuing to register premises under a state-based system;
- Allocating USDA silver metal tags directly to producers;
- Improving reporting of veterinary allocated and administered official tags.

MDOL will be seeking feedback from both accredited veterinarians and producers in the months to come in order to ensure that Montana has an effective traceability system in place.☞

By Tahnee Szymanski, DVM

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Veterinary Loan Repayment Program

applied to retain currently practicing veterinarians as well. Ultimately the goal of this program is to increase the number of practicing veterinarians and while prospective veterinarians are likely to receive priority, existing veterinarians will also be considered if they make a strong case for financial hardship that may prevent them from continuing to serve their community.

Applications from veterinarians will be accepted by the federal program administrators sometime after April 30 with a decision being made by September 30. Process and details of the program are still being refined. Please check the USDA web site for the most up-to-date information here: <http://tinyurl.com/yzu9yua>. ☞

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Brucellosis Updates

not impeded. I'd love to hear your opinion on the issue. Please submit your comments in writing by mail or at ocv_comments@mt.gov. ☞



Cattle holding pens at a Montana livestock market



Dr. Bruce Sorensen reading a tag at Headwaters Livestock Auction in Three Forks.

Leptospirosis Serovars in Montana

We have received numerous calls from veterinarians inquiring about the incidence of Leptospirosis, and we wanted to share the data that we have comparing serovars found in Montana dogs and cattle for 2009.

Recognizing which serovars are vaccine induced and which are from field-strain exposure is always difficult. Understanding which serovars are present in these populations can help the clinician determine the importance of finding Leptospirosis blood titers. Clinical signs and paired sera are very important in any diagnosis.

Cattle vaccines typically include: *Leptospira Canicola-Grippotyphosa-Hardjo-Icterohaemorrhagiae-Pomona-Bacterin*: Pfizer states that *hardjo* is the number one infection in cattle. In Montana those se-

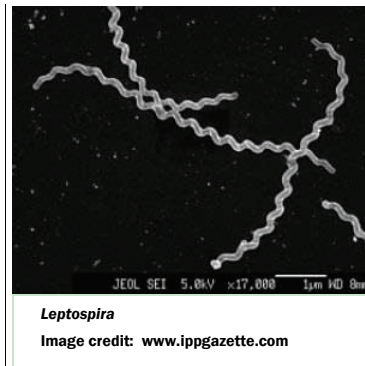
rovars are certainly the most prevalent, but we are also seeing non-vaccination titers of *autumnalis, bratislava, and tarras.*

Canine vaccination serovars include: *Leptospira canicola, L. grippotyphosa, L. icterohaemorrhagiae, and L. pomona.*

In Montana we are seeing *hardjo* and *autumnalis* that are not in the canine vaccines.

In 2009, our laboratory had 21 sero-positive cases reported in canines. 13 of those were *L. ictero*, 3 were *L. hardjo*, 2 each for *L. grippo* and *L. autumnalis* and 1 was *L. bratislava*. Counties reporting seropositives were Beaverhead, Cascade, Gallatin, Flathead, Madison, Missoula and Silver Bow. ✕

By Jeanne Rankin, DVM



USDA Corner:

Nation-wide Contagious Equine Metritis Testing Plan

USDA-APHIS (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service), Veterinary Services program recently announced a plan to test 3,000 stallions for *Taylorella equigenitalis*, the bacterium that causes contagious equine metritis (CEM). The testing began in February and will focus on breeding stallions throughout the United States. This nation-wide testing effort will not include horses involved in the current CEM outbreak which are undergoing a more extensive testing regimen.

The test results from this effort will be used to increase national and international confidence that the prevalence of *T. equigenitalis* in the United States is very low, if it is present at all. APHIS is confident that the survey results will help efforts to return the U.S. to its former CEM-free status. This designation will reduce or remove the CEM testing requirements for exported horses and semen.

Enrollment of eligible stallions will be voluntary. APHIS will pay for laboratory diagnostic testing costs and for shipment of samples to an approved CEM laboratory, but will not pay for sample collection costs. Samples must be collected by accredited

equine practitioners. No quarantine restrictions will be imposed while test results are pending. Unless the stallion is found to be positive, no post-sampling treatment or other action is required. Any stallion found positive for *T. equigenitalis* as part of this voluntary testing effort will be quarantined, then treated and re-tested at APHIS' expense (including practitioner fees) until determined to be negative.

For additional details regarding this CEM surveillance in stallions and answers to frequently asked questions please see the publications titled "USDA To Test Additional Stallions to Detect Contagious Equine Metritis" and "Questions and Answers: Testing of Additional Stallions for Contagious Equine Metritis" - these can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/>.

If you or your clients are interested in participating in this program, or if you have additional questions, please contact Dr. Linfield (406) 449-2220 or Dr. Zaluski (406) 444-2043. ✕

By Thomas F.T. Linfield, DVM



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

New Trichomoniasis Rules in Place

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department.

- Bulls exposed to a positive bull or from a positive herd must have three negative weekly tests in order to be released from quarantine back into the Montana breeding herd. However, they may go directly to slaughter channels without testing.
- Positive herds must have an annual re-test.
- Penalties can be imposed for violations of testing requirements.
- Description of quarantine and disposition of positive herds to allow producers to eliminate the disease and return to normal production as quickly as possible.
 - * Females pregnant more than 120 days or open females separated from bull over 120 days can move without restriction.
 - * Virgin heifers that have had no ex-

posure to any bull may be moved without restriction; but must have an owner affidavit affirming virginity.

- * Present year calves are not restricted.
- * Positive animals must be identified as previously described and will be branded with a "V" on the right tail head if going to a Montana licensed Trich feedlot.
- * Any animal may be sent to slaughter or to a licensed Trichomoniasis feedlot with notification to the department.

Owner cooperation is critical to help identify herds that may have been in contact with the positive herd to determine the location and extent of the exposure.

MDOL is working with MSU Extension to develop educational materials and promote producer awareness of the disease and publish testing information on our website www.liv.mt.gov ☒

By Jeanne Rankin, DVM

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
Traceability and FAD Veterinarian
(406) 444-5214
tszymanski@mt.gov

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

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

Import Permit Office
(406) 444-2976