



# StockQuotes: Animal Health Newsletter

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

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## State Veterinarian Notes

My apologies for this issue coming to you later than usual. We've kept occupied with a number of issues including tuberculosis testing, rabies reports, brucellosis findings, and a number of changes to operations. A quick synopsis of some of the issues is below.

**BRUCELLOSIS:** A new herd affected with brucellosis was found through routine surveillance testing. The affected herd is a large herd in Madison County that, fortunately, conducts a high level of testing; the index animal tested negative just last December. A robust surveillance program helps producers rapidly identify the disease which helps narrow the focus of epidemiological investigations, thereby protecting neighbors and trading partners.

Montana Department of Fish Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has proposed a number of administrative rule changes relating to brucellosis for which we offered support (more on brucellosis findings and the FWP rulemaking on page 3).

**RABIES:** Over a 2 week period in August, we received 11 separate reports of rabid bats tested through the diagnostic laboratory. Fortunately, in all these incidents the pets involved were prior vaccinates, and therefore, extended quarantines were avoided. Rabies vaccination is one of the key preventive measures to protect animals and their families from a disease that is universally fatal unless timely intervention is made (see page 4).

**TUBERCULOSIS (TB):** In late September, we tested yet another Montana cattle herd as part of the investigation linked to a South Dakota TB infected cattle herd. Due to numerous movements and comingling, ani-

mals were traced only through an extensive examination of brand release forms, sale records, health certificates, and herd records. We've made significant gains in traceability over the last several years, but the tedious and time consuming analysis required to piece this 'trace' together also shows that we have a long way to go.

**TRACEABILITY:** In the coming months, we hope to make it easier for you to comply with health certificate requirements. Currently Montana veterinarians are responsible for sending a copy of their health certificates to destination states, which creates a burden on clinic staff. We will be making a policy change to make those mailings on your behalf.

The shift to electronic records has eased this transition because some electronic health certificate programs already perform this function. Some livestock markets also use electronic records that streamline working purchased animals out of the market, and in a few cases are also automatically imported into our in-house animal health database. Use of electronic records reduces staff time, virtually eliminates transcription errors, and ultimately provides superior information in case of disease events.

**VETERINARY LABORATORY ACCREDITATION:** We take for granted that when we submit samples for diagnostic analysis, the results are accurate and clinically relevant. However, there are no minimum requirements for laboratories to offer their services to the veterinary community. To fill that gap, some laboratories choose to be accredited by an official body that rigorously reviews the facilities, personnel training, equipment and procedures. The Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (MVDL) just underwent such a review by the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians. Successful accreditation allows you and your clients to maintain confidence in results. More on page 4.

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

**Board of Livestock Meeting:**  
October 24, 2017

**MVMA Meeting:**  
January 26-27, 2018

## WHAT'S NEW:

1. Brucellosis Update (page 3)
2. Laboratory Accreditation (page 4)
3. Seeking Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program Shortage Area Nominations (page 5)

# USDA Updates

**RECENT CHANGES TO BRUCELLOSIS TESTING OPTIONS FOR U.S. BREEDING CATTLE EXPORTED TO CANADA:** The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) implemented recent changes regarding brucellosis testing options for U.S. Breeding Cattle exported to Canada.

Effective for cattle shipments arriving at the Canadian border on September 1, 2017 or after, exported cattle must be tested with the Fluorescence Polarization Assay (FPA) test; the Buffered Acidified Plate Antigen (BAPA) test; or the Competitive ELISA (cELISA) test. The Standard Tube Test (STT) and Standard Plate Test (SPT) will no longer be accepted by CFIA at the border.

BRUCELLOSIS EXPORT TESTING ACCEPTED BY CFIA AT THE BORDER FOR BREEDING CATTLE	
September 1st, 2017 and after	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fluorescence Polarization Assay (FPA)</li> <li>• Buffered Acidified Plate Antigen (BAPA)</li> <li>• Competitive ELISA (cELISA)</li> </ul>

Model Health Certificates for breeding cattle to Canada (IREGS and VEHCS) have been updated to reflect these changes.

As an example, the following is from the model Health Certificate found in "IREGS" for Cattle and Bison (breeding)-Protocol and Health Certificate - August 2017 (<http://preview.tinyurl.com/y7m6vbcn>):

*"Part B: HEALTH INFORMATION*

*The undersigned accredited veterinarian hereby certifies the following:*

*4. The animals have tested negative for brucellosis on(mm/dd/yyyy) using the fluorescence polarization assay (FPA) test, the Buffered Acidified Plate Antigen (BAPA) test, the Competitive ELISA (cELISA) test, the standard tube test (STT) or standard plate test (SPT- with negative reading at a 1:50 dilution.) The testing was performed within 30 days of import. The results and test dates of the bru-*

*cellosis testing are shown in Appendix 2 of this health certificate.*

*\*\*NOTE\*\*:* *The standard tube test (STT) and standard plate test (SPT) will no longer be accepted by CFIA on shipments arriving to the Canadian border on September 1st, 2017 or after."*

Please also note, CFIA defines "Breeding cattle" as members of the Family: Bovidae; Sub-family: bovinæ; Genus: Bos, Species: Bos taurus and Bos indicus and also the Genus: Bison. Animals imported into Canada for show or exhibition are likewise subject to the "breeding cattle" import requirements.

**SHEEP AND GOAT EARTAG GUIDANCE:** In the past, USDA National Scrapie Eradication Program provided free plastic eartags to sheep and goat producers. We are still waiting for a final decision regarding providing plastic tags to producers at no cost for FY2018. At this time, it appears likely that plastic tag ordering will not be reinstated or will be greatly reduced. Plastic tag ordering has been inactivated in the USDA-APHIS Animal Identification Number Management System (AIMS) as of September 30, 2017. No plastic tags can be ordered in FY 2018 until further notice.

Producers and others interested in purchasing plastic tags or plastic tag applicators should contact the tag manufacturer directly - orders for plastic tags and/or plastic tag applicators should be directed to the tag manufacturer's information posted at: <https://goo.gl/Qqva6L>

Alternatively, USDA will continue to provide metal tags to producers at no cost. Call 1-866-USA-TAG (866-873-2824) to be connected to your USDA Veterinary Services Office for no cost metal tags. Metal tag orders will be filled for the anticipated number of tags needed by producers for a one year period.

✎

By Tom Linfield

**VS**  
Veterinary Services



APHIS • USDA

# Brucellosis Updates

**FISH WILDLIFE AND PARKS:** MDOL submitted comments in support of three different proposals from Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP). All three are documents that, in some way, are related to brucellosis in elk.

The first was a proposal for a shoulder season and increase in the antlerless elk quota in the northern portion of Hunt District 311. This area is north of Highway 84 (Norris road) and was included in the most recent Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) expansion in 2014. That expansion was a response to the presence of elk populations with a brucellosis exposure rate over 20%. Over the last couple of years, this area has seen a rapid increase in elk number and density. Current management practices have been ineffective in preventing game damage and separating elk from livestock. The shoulder season has strong landowner and FWP staff support and will hopefully help manage risk associated with elk.

The second set of comments was in support of the proposed "Elk Management in Areas with Brucellosis 2018 Work Plan." The 2018 proposal differs slightly from the 2017 work plan. One change is the addition of provisions for fence modifications intended to help with hazing and elk movement. The 2018 plan also clarifies where and when management actions can be utilized, including areas adjacent to a Designated Surveillance Area (DSA). The plan also acknowledges that high concentrations of elk can contribute to the risk of disease transmission to livestock as well as wildlife.

Most recently, MDOL submitted comments in support of FWP proposed rule changes related to disease. The amendments clarify FWP existing authority over wildlife management. They also, in conjunction with the elk workplan, reflect the importance of preventing disease spread not only to domestic animals but within wildlife populations. If adopted, these amendments will be found in Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 12.3.109, 12.3.110 and 12.3.111.

- The ARM 12.3.109 amendment adds addressing disease transmission as a purpose for management removals through hunting.
- The ARM 12.3.110 amendment adds that hunting can be used to address the risk of disease and defines disease as one that

may directly or indirectly impact wildlife or wildlife management.

- The ARM 12.3.111 amendment would repurpose unused elk licenses for disease management.

**BRUCELLOSIS AFFECTED HERD UPDATE:** Montana currently has three affected herds under quarantine. All three are within Montana's DSA. One herd is in Gallatin County, one in Beaverhead County (found in 2016), and the latest in Madison County.

The most recent herd was detected during a voluntary whole herd test in August 2017. Three animals were discovered and removed through the initial test. The epidemiologic investigation is ongoing. All adjacent herds have been notified and are required to conduct an initial test on adjacent animals as well as perform an assurance test 6 to 12 months later.

Since 2007, all affected herds in Montana have been associated with transmission from elk that occurred in what is now the DSA. Epidemiologic investigations are conducted to confirm the disease was not introduced by domestic livestock, and genetic mapping (genotyping) is one tool in these investigations. In some cases genotyping on bacteria isolated from an affected herd has been an identical match to cultures from wildlife in the area. We also continue to confirm that the disease did not spread from the affected herd to another domestic livestock herd.

The Madison County investigation is unique in that the herd has performed entire herd testing each year as well as frequent testing of herd groups throughout the year. The extensive testing information has allowed us to pinpoint the exposure time to the spring of 2017. It has also allowed us to exclude some neighboring herds as a potential source.

It is important to note that regardless of exclusion as an adjacent herd, most neighbors have chosen to perform herd tests understanding that their livestock could have been exposed to the same infected wildlife.☹

By Eric Liska



**FIGURE 2:** Keeping Elk and Cattle Apart, article from *Montana Outdoors*, Nov/Dec 2011

<http://fwp.mt.gov/mtoutdoors/HTML/articles/2011/elkbrucellosis.htm>

## MVDL Accreditation

As veterinarians, we understand the importance of a maintaining a license to practice, which assures our clients that the work we perform meets certain accepted standards. A laboratory is no different. At the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (MVDL), we choose to maintain accreditation with a national body, the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD). Maintaining accreditation continually challenges us to meet and exceed AAVLD's high standards which ensures that we provide the highest quality testing and reporting to you, our clients.

The accreditation process is rigorous, and not all state labs have the quality management systems or expert personnel needed for successful completion. Thirty-two states (including Montana) maintain veterinary diagnostic laboratories that are fully accredited by the AAVLD. Among other things the AAVLD Accreditation requirements pertain to staff qualifications; laboratory organizational structure; finances and budget; internal document control; the validation, performance and reporting of individual tests; laboratory records; and specimen handling and identification. MVDL recently participated in a very detailed three day accreditation review, during which many of our policies and internal quality control systems were highly praised.

Maintaining AAVLD accreditation allows MVDL to provide our clients with the confidence that our testing results are accurate, reproducible, and timely, and that we have the necessary systems in place to quickly recognize and address any issues that may arise. Being an accredited laboratory is by no means a simple or easy process, but it is well worth the effort; accreditation allows us to work together with AAVLD representatives from other labs across the country to ensure that we continue to meet the highest standards possible in all areas of laboratory operations. Ultimately, that goal is for the benefit of our clients – that we might continue to serve the veterinarians of Montana, the livestock industry, and clients beyond state borders in our mission to provide accurate and timely diagnosis of animal disease. ☐

By Steve Smith

## Rabies Update

In August and September, the Department of Livestock received laboratory confirmation of 11 rabid bats that were found in Gallatin, Granite, Lewis and Clark, Mineral, Missoula, Park and Valley Counties. These cases serve as a good reminder that rabies is present in Montana's wildlife, and it is important to keep pets' rabies vaccinations current.

Although several pets had encounters with rabid bats, all the cats and dogs involved were previously vaccinated against rabies. A current rabies vaccination simplifies the response to ensuring the animal gets a rabies booster and sending them home for 45-day observation periods; owners do not have to make decisions between euthanasia or 120-day quarantine. Horses and other livestock can also benefit from vaccination against rabies. The known encounters between domestic animals and wildlife may only be a small fraction of those that occur; therefore, up to date rabies vaccines are crucial to protect pets from the risks of unobserved encounters.

There is no statewide law requiring rabies vaccination in Montana. Each city or county may have a different local ordinance, and in many places, there is no specific rabies vaccination law. The Department of Livestock does provide a uniform, statewide response for animals that are exposed to potentially rabid wildlife. These rules were updated last year and are detailed in the March 2016 StockQuotes Newsletter (<http://liv.mt.gov/Animal-Health/Newsletters>)

It is important that all bites from wildlife to domestic animals be reported to the state veterinarian's office so that we can determine the appropriate course of action and issue an official quarantine if needed. Reporting of all animal bites is required by the Administrative Rule of Montana 32.3.1201. Worried owners should be reassured that their animal will not be automatically euthanized; we will work with them to address the health and safety of their pet and their family. ☐

By Emily Kaleczyc



**FIGURE 3:** Logo of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians



# Traceability

Two important updates regarding issuing health certificates:

1) If you write small animal health certificates using the VS Form 7001, please be sure and check with the state of destination on their willingness to accept this format. Because the form can be accessed by anyone, a handful of states will no longer be accepting the VS 7001 for small animal movements.

When used for international shipments, the certificate number is generated by USDA at the time of endorsement. For interstate shipments, you are responsible for generating a unique certificate number. Our recommendation for that number is the following format:

State abbreviation-Veterinary License Number-Date-Letter for daily certificate count

If your veterinary license number is 9999 and you issued 3 certificates on January 1, 2017 the certificates numbers would be:

MT-9999-01012017-A  
MT-9999-01012017-B  
MT-9999-01012017-C

## Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program

MDOL has begun the process to identify shortage situations for the 2018 Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program and is looking for input. Nominations are due October 20, 2017. The deadline was moved up so new grads could be aware of shortage nominations when searching for employment and ultimately be able to take advantage of the program immediately. Regional information that we consider when making designations include:

- Livestock numbers
- Number of large animal veterinarians
- Demographics of practicing veterinarians – years in practice, expressed interest in retirement or sale of practice
- Proximity to larger Montana towns/cities
- Incidence of zoonotic disease in area (rabies, brucellosis)

If you are in an area that you would like to have considered, please contact Dr. Tahnee Szymanski at (406) 465-4051 or [tszymanski@mt.gov](mailto:tszymanski@mt.gov).

By Tahnee Szymanski

2) Currently, you, the issuing veterinarian, are responsible for sending copies of completed certificates of veterinary inspection (CVIs) to both our office and to the state of destination within 7 days of issuing the CVI. Starting with your next order of CVI books from our office, MDOL is going to take over distribution of CVIs to the state of destination, therefore you will only be responsible for sending completed CVIS to our office, within 7 days of completion.

MDOL plans to clearly communicate with each veterinarian as you switch over. We want to ensure that states aren't receiving duplicate copies, or worse yet, that states of destination aren't receiving ANY copies. If you have any questions about this process, please feel free to contact our office. Hopefully this change will help streamline paperwork on your end. ☒

By Tahnee Szymanski

## Trichomoniasis Tags

A friendly reminder that we are now into a new color for trich tags. Montana trich tags are on a five-year color rotation that changes on September 1 of each year. As of September 1, 2017 the current color for trich tags is orange! If you still have an inventory of last year's white tags, please set those aside, they will come back in style September 1, 2022.

All bulls must have official identification applied at the time the trich sample is taken. Approved ID includes a Montana trich tag or any official USDA tag (silver metal clip or RFID tag).

Also, so you are aware, MDOL recently completed a mailing reminding producers of the additional trich testing requirements in our trich epizootic areas (Glacier, Pondera, Big Horn, and Yellowstone Counties).☒

By Tahnee Szymanski

**FIGURE 4:** Orange trichomoniasis tag good from September 1, 2017—August 31, 2018.



# Staff Corner



**Samantha Novak** grew up in Elliston, Montana and attended Helena Community College receiving a certificate in medical assisting. Samantha was hired by the Department of Livestock in October 2016 and is now a License Permit Tech. Samantha manages the B-Ovis Certified Free Flock Program and Six-Month Passport Program. She lives in the Helena Valley with her fiancé, raising pigs, horses, dogs and cats. Samantha likes to enjoy her free time with her family moving cows, haying, and helping out when needed.



**Brooke Ruffier** grew up in Butte, Montana. She holds two bachelor degrees: one in equitation training and the other in business management, and she graduated from Rocky Mountain College in Billings in

2013. Brooke joined the department March 2017 as a license and permit technician and manages the exotics, annual equine, and poultry programs. Brooke pals around with her Corgi and enjoys training reining horses .



**Nancy Henderson** is our new Animal Disease Traceability data entry clerk. She started work with the Animal Health Bureau on July 31, 2017. Nancy is retired from the State of Montana after 15 years working with SITSD (Dept. of Administration) and the Dept. of Corrections. Nancy has 2 children and 5 grandchildren, all in California. She also has two dogs and two horses. For fun, she enjoys training/playing with her horses and dogs. ☺

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We're on the Web:  
[www.liv.mt.gov](http://www.liv.mt.gov)



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**Montana Department  
of Livestock**