



Serve Montana's Livestock Producers and livestock related businesses by fostering, growing, promoting and protecting the livestock industry.

DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK

ANNUAL PLAN

FY2026

The Department of Livestock is responsible for controlling and eradicating animal diseases; preventing the transmission of animal diseases to humans; protecting the livestock industry from theft and predatory animals; meat, milk, and egg inspection; and regulating the milk industry relative to producer pricing. The department, which is provided for in 2-15-3101, MCA, consists of the Board of Livestock (BOL) and its appointed Executive Officer, the Board of Milk Control, and the Livestock Loss Board. The department is organized into three divisions: Animal Health & Food Safety, Centralized Services and Brands Enforcement. The Board of Livestock, which is the statutory head of the Department of Livestock, consists of seven members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate to serve six-year terms.

ANIMAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY DIVISION

The Animal Health & Food Safety Division (State Veterinarian Office) works with animal owners and veterinarians to prevent, control, and eradicate animal diseases, including those in bison and alternative livestock animals. The division cooperates with the Departments of Public Health and Human Services and Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the US Department of Agriculture to protect human health from animal diseases transmissible to humans including rabies and brucellosis by monitoring testing and enforcing animal quarantines. The division also regulates the importation of animals into Montana; ensures the production and sale of safe and wholesome products of animal agriculture including meat, poultry, and milk and their products; and enforces the laws of Montana relating to animal health and producing a safe and wholesome food supply. Divisional elements include:


- Animal Health Bureau conducts disease control measures such as monitoring of animal imports, and mandating animal testing and quarantines.
- Meat, Milk & Egg Inspection Bureau ensures a safe and wholesome meat supply for Montana consumers by conducting inspections at facilities that engage in animal slaughter, meat processing, distribution and sale of meat product. The Bureau also inspects eggs for quality and marketability and ensures that milk is produced and processed in a sanitary manner.
- Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory provides diagnostic services for animal disease testing, and milk quality. The laboratory maintains accreditation from the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD).


BRANDS ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

The Brands Enforcement Division provides the livestock industry with professional law enforcement and investigative work in tracking livestock ownership and in the deterrence and/or resolution of related criminal activities. It conducts, collects, documents, audits, and evaluates compliance on brand inspections and permits for Montana livestock. It also maintains the official record of Montana brands and security interest filings of branded livestock, and licenses livestock markets and dealers.

CENTRALIZED SERVICES DIVISION

The Centralized Services Division is responsible for overall department administration, budgeting, accounting, payroll, personnel, legal services, purchasing, information technology, public information, risk management, contract administration, and general services for the department. The Board of Milk Control (BMC) and the Livestock Loss Board (LLB) staff are part of the Centralized Services Division. The LLB provides compensation and prevention funding for predation losses to livestock producers from wolves, grizzlies, and mountain lions. The BMC regulates producer pricing of milk (prices paid to dairy farmers) and helps to maintain a stable market for milk within the state. The Predator Control Program is administered by the BOL and the executive officer.

 <p>Strategic Outcome</p> <p>#1</p>	MANAGE REPORTABLE DISEASE PREVALENCE IN MONTANA	
	<p>Conduct public meetings and educational outreach about Montana's brucellosis program-</p> <p>Conduct disease surveillance-</p> <p>Exercise response to Foreign Animal Disease-</p> <p>Track laboratory testing for federally reportable diseases-</p>	
	<p>Key Measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain at least 95% or above compliance with regulatory testing requirements • Complete at least one major exercise per year engaging multiple staff, state /federal agencies, and stakeholders to test disease response plans and make improvements • Partner with FWP and the Crow Tribe to conduct disease surveillance of wildlife on tribal ground

 <p>Strategic Outcome</p> <p>#2</p>	MAINTAIN INTEGRITY IN LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION, MARKETING, AND MOVEMENT	
	<p>Develop an online system to conduct brand lien renewals-</p> <p>Conduct targeted truck stop and enforcement activity across the state-</p> <p>Provide additional electronic inspections to the livestock industry-</p> <p>Develop improved system to conduct compliance audits within the division-</p>	
	<p>Key Measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow for online secure web service that allows lienholders to manage and renew their brand liens • Conduct at least 6 truck stop activities across the state to check and monitor compliance • Develop pilot program that allows deputy stock inspectors to issue electronic inspections • Conduct an audit of each livestock commission company during the course of the biennium and track all issued inspections books



Strategic Outcome

#3

IMPROVE ONLINE AND DIGITAL SERVICES FOR REAL TIME DATA AND IMPROVE SPEED OF COMMERCE

Increase Animal Health Division's customer support, security, and reporting capabilities-

Develop new Departmental reporting capabilities-

Recognize the importance of economic viability and sustainability of individual livestock operators in Montana-

Key Measures

- Finish upgrading of Animal Health's Division-wide new Core1 application during this biennium
- Expand reporting and traceability functionality with the Enterprise's Snowflake database reporting tools
- Provide financial reimbursements and preventative grants to producers with losses caused by wolves, mountain lions, grizzly or black bears based upon program criteria