

Historical Highlights of Animal Health in Washington State

Prepared as part of WSDA's Centennial Celebration, 2013

1853	<i>Washington Territory organized.</i>
1869	<p>First animal health laws enacted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No livestock affected by contagious or infectious diseases may be brought into the Territory. Penalty for violation: \$50 to \$500 per offense. • No Texas cattle or cattle with Texas fever allowed. Penalty for violation: imprisonment of up to 12 months or fined not less than \$5000, or both. • Any horse, mule or jackass with glanders is to be destroyed.
1889	<i>Washington becomes the 42nd state.</i>
1895	Office of State Veterinarian created , vested in the Professor of Veterinary Science at the agriculture college and experiment station at Pullman. Dr. Sofus B. Nelson, DVM, is selected the college's first such professor and serves as State Veterinarian and a member of the State Board of Health for 17 years.
1913	Department of Agriculture created. State Veterinarian duties transferred to the new Department and assigned to the Division of Dairy and Livestock. Bovine Tuberculosis and Hog Cholera are major diseases of concern.
1914	<p>In the midst of an outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease that originated in Michigan and spread to 22 states, WSDA is alerted by telegram on Nov. 10 that two railcars of cattle en route to Roy, Washington had been exposed to FMD at the rail transfer station near St. Paul, Minnesota. Three days later, on arrival at Spokane, the cows are quarantined in specially constructed pens. Positive diagnosis is made and, by Nov. 21, all cattle are destroyed and all temporary holding pens, litter, etc. burned. Quick action prevents a potential FMD outbreak in Washington.</p> 
1917	State-Federal Tuberculosis eradication begins, with an estimated five percent of the nation's cattle infected. Starting in 1919 and continuing for 20 years, WSDA receives designated funds for indemnity and expenses to eradicate the disease in the state.
1935	 <p>National Poultry Improvement Plan, a cooperative industry, state, and federal program, is formed with Washington poultry producers as charter members. The NPIP's initial effort is to eliminate Pullorum Disease which was rampant and could cause upwards of 80% mortality in baby poultry.</p>
1934	Washington is declared a modified accredited Tuberculosis-free area in May. The first state-federal cooperative efforts begin to address Bovine Brucellosis .
1937	Washington becomes the second state in the country, after Virginia, to move its Brucellosis program from a "cattle reduction" program to a "disease eradication" program. This signals a major shift in herd health management.

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1941	Brucellosis calftooth vaccination program begins, after the development of the Strain 19 vaccine.
1948	WSDA inaugurates mastitis control program in February.
1956	Washington is declared Modified Brucellosis Free in May, the first state west of the Mississippi and the third in the nation to attain this status. This means less than 5 percent of the state's herds and less than 1% of the cattle test positive for the disease.
1958	New poultry diagnostic and research lab opens on May 2 at Puyallup.
1959	Washington pioneers a new screening method to locate Brucellosis-infected herds. Beginning May 1, 1956, blood samples are taken from all female cattle over 30 months of age at slaughter. Backtags applied at the farm or stockyard are used to trace reactors back to the herd of origin. The Market Cattle Testing Program attracts wide attention and is adopted nationally in 1959.
1967	Washington is certified as Brucellosis free by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, one of the first states to achieve this status.
1977	Brucellosis reappears in Whatcom County. It takes until 1988 to regain the state's brucellosis free status.
1978	Hog Cholera officially declared eliminated from Washington State.
1988	Washington State certified free of Tuberculosis, Brucellosis, and Salmonella Pullorum-Typhoid. 
1993	 Washington State declared free of Swine Pseudorabies . The only Pseudorabies-infected swine herd in state history was quarantined and depopulated in the Spokane area in 1991.
2003	Washington State dairy cow is nation's first case of BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy or Mad Cow Disease). Investigation concludes that the cow originated from Canada. 
2004	WSDA begins an aggressive Avian Influenza surveillance and testing program in response to the outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in British Columbia in the spring of 2004. In April, WSDA forms the Reserve Veterinary Corps which consists of veterinarians and veterinary technicians willing to undergo emergency management training and aid in animal health emergencies.
2013	WSDA continues to successfully maintain the state's free status for Avian Influenza, Brucellosis, Salmonella Pullorum Typhoid, Pseudorabies and Tuberculosis and to work to improve animal disease traceability, including creating a new system to track the movement of cattle using brands and ear tags. <i>The Department of Agriculture celebrates its 100th anniversary as a state agency supporting the agricultural community and promoting consumer and environmental protection.</i>