

# Washington State



# Department of Agriculture

## ANIMAL HEALTH NEWS

### ANIMAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER - FIRST QUARTER 2008

If you have questions or comments about this letter or its contents feel free to contact the Animal Health Program at 360-902-1835 or the permit desk at 360-902-1878. Your input is greatly appreciated. If you have an appropriate item to include in a future newsletter email Dr. Paul Kohrs at [pkohrs@agr.wa.gov](mailto:pkohrs@agr.wa.gov).

### NEWS FROM OTHER STATES

TB continues to make the news in the country. Minnesota has been downgraded to MA (second lowest classification) after a fourth infected herd was found since October. The count of infected deer has also risen to 17. This has made moving cattle from Minnesota quite difficult as you might expect. If you have a client importing cattle from Minnesota (any cattle not just dairy) they will need to provide proof of a whole herd negative test within 12 months **AND** will need to be retested and have a negative TB test within 60 days after entry. Due to requests from industry, WSDA does not recognize any zones. There is some discussion about Minnesota applying for split state status, but Washington will not recognize these zones. It may be prudent to wait until Minnesota has a better handle on the situation before importing cattle from there.

California has been free from TB since 2003, but they found an infected herd in Fresno County in January. The trace out testing has discovered 61 herds with possible exposed cattle and as of this printing there have been no new infected herds discovered. We will wait and see.

On a brighter note, for the first time ever the entire country is considered Brucellosis Free. Texas, the last "A" state, received notice on February 1<sup>st</sup> that its status has been elevated to "Free" pending the 60 day comment period, which is generally just a formality. This is good news for everyone, as there has been a huge amount of expenditure in terms of dollars and manpower to achieve this goal. The Greater Yellowstone Area is still dealing with elk and bison issues with this disease and our feeling at WSDA is that the risk, though low, is still not acceptable to discontinue vaccination in our herds.

In BSE news, Canada had its 13<sup>th</sup> case of the disease in February. This was a six year old dairy cow and no parts entered the food chain according to CFIA. This cow was born after the ban on ruminant feed and also after the age limits placed on incoming cattle from Canada after the border opened on November 19<sup>th</sup> of last year. If you have occasion to work with the importation of cattle, it is against Federal and State law to deliberately remove the Canadian ID or any other official ID. Please make your clients aware of this law and observe it yourself.

There have been some inquiries about core vaccination recommendations for horses that have been circulated on the AAEP website. One of the core recommendations is rabies vaccination in horses. This was brought to our attention recently and the inquiry was made as to the risk of a horse contracting rabies in Washington. We have not had terrestrial rabies in over a decade in Washington State, and no other states at this point require rabies vaccination to enter. This should be a discussion between you and your client as to the risks and benefits of vaccination and each inquiry taken on a case-by-case basis.

While we are on the subject of horses, there has been some very recent research that indicates that the neurologic form of Herpes may be a mutant and be more common than originally thought even in asymptomatic horses. Again the equine community is divided on the effectiveness of vaccination and this should be a case-by-case discussion with your clients on what is best in their particular situation. Also, a joint Fort Dodge Animal Health and AAEP website has been created for equine clients to refer to for information on equine diseases. That website is [www.americashealthyhorse.com/links.htm](http://www.americashealthyhorse.com/links.htm) and may be a useful resource for you and your equine clients.

REMEMBER-Mosquito season is right around the corner. Be sure to discuss and implement West Nile vaccination for your horse clients.

## WASHINGTON ACTIVITIES

The legislative session is completed and it was a quiet year for the department compared to the years when a budget needed to be crafted. Several pieces of legislation were introduced that would have affected the veterinary community, but for a variety of reasons they did not become law. One item that was passed at the eleventh hour was fee for service legislation that would allow WSDA to recoup at least some of the costs of set up and maintain oversight of quarantine facilities. This is particularly important with incoming Canadian cattle as most, if not all of these animals, are not Brucellosis vaccinated. We have also been approached about a quarantine facility for Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM).

Rules activity continues to demand a significant portion of our time. We will be going to hearing later this spring on several rules that affect the animal industries in our state. You can check up on those activities on our website if you are interested.

One major change that has recently been introduced is the suspension of the widespread mature brucellosis vaccination program of out-of-country, primarily Canadian, cattle. This was necessary because of reports of removal of official Canadian tags, questionable branding of incoming cattle, and disconnect that was appearing between the tagging and vaccination process which resulted in the export of these cattle to other states with basically only Washington ID. In short, Washington was rapidly becoming a "dumping ground" for unvaccinated cattle. We will still allow it on cattle that are incoming and will be become part of Washington's resident cattle population, but only then on a case-by-case basis. If you have questions about this new rule please call Dr. Eldridge at (360) 902-1881, Dr. Kohrs at (360) 902-1835 or the permit desk at (360) 902-1878.

Another issue that has been in the spotlight has been the transport and handling of weak or downer cows. The massive beef recall has put the spotlight once again on the cull cow industry. You should have received a recent memo from our office about the handling of down, weak, or injured livestock. Two laws to check that are already in force are RCW 16.52.225 and RCW 16.52.080 that address these activities. There are situations that arise that will challenge your professional integrity, but these are laws that will back your proper disposition and handling of these questionable animals and the overall damage to the cattle industry is not worth the risk. The memo describes what should be your role in these situations and if you have misplaced your copy or don't think you received one, please let the office know and we will send you another copy.

We also have changed the instate requirement for Brucellosis testing. Change-of-ownership testing is no longer required for instate cattle changing hands. This does not relax the requirement for brucellosis vaccination on any cattle entering any breeding herd in Washington State. This was another animal health memo that was sent out, if you have misplaced yours, or don't believe you received one, please call the office for another copy.

## COOPERTIVE AGREEMENT NEWS

### FAD - Dr. Kohrs

The FAD cooperative agreement, as are most of the Federal cooperative agreements, is hung up in the farm bill legislation, so there has not been much activity in this area. We of course are responding to suspicious disease situations and fortunately have not had any "hits". Dr. Faux, our RVC coordinator, was able to attend the FADD training on Plum Island. Dr. Pospisil is planning on a trip to Plum Island later this spring. There will also be training offered in April under the RVC program.

### SCRAPIE – Dr. Smith

We performed a small amount of scrapie genotype work in the first quarter. After reading the pre-award letter closer, we decided to curtail any further work that might not be funded by USDA. Some educational materials have been handed out and Tamme Hirtzel has been working with a new livestock market and helping them get scrapie identification compliant. Hopefully, the farm bill will get signed soon, and we can perform the genotype testing and other activities outlined in our proposal for funds.

### AVIAN HEALTH PROGRAM - Dr. Davis

Over the past year, the Avian Health Program has been working hard to increase the number of National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) participants in the state. At the beginning of 2007, we had nine commercial participants in the NPIP program and 18 non-commercial participants, which include flock owners handling exhibition poultry, waterfowl, and game birds. In addition to conventional NPIP requirements, 12 participants have elected to participate in the NPIP Avian Influenza (AI)-Clean program.

As of April 2008, Washington State has increased the number of state-wide non-commercial NPIP participants to 26 with 46% participating in the AI-Clean program. We hope to have 100% of our NPIP participants on the AI-Clean program by the end of the year.

A short survey was sent out and 96/110 backyard poultry owners participating in the Avian Health Program's Sentinel Flock program, agreed to continue with the testing program for 2008. Targeted recruitment efforts found additional flocks in several counties considered to be high risk for introduction of avian influenza from wild waterfowl. Since January, ten additional flocks have been added to the list. From January through March, 561 swabs for PCR and 338 eggs for antibody testing were collected from these flocks. All samples have tested negative for avian influenza. If you think you may have clients who would be interested in either participating in the Sentinel Flock Program or becoming an NPIP participant, please have them contact Barbara Baker by calling the Avian Health Hotline at 1-800-606-3056.

### JOHNES - Dr. Kinsel

WSDA has a very small amount of Johnes's funding for 2008. We have decided that this money would be best spent validating new PCR tests at WADDL working with Dr. Tim Baszler. We are asking practitioners to submit one serum, one whole blood, one individual cow milk, and one individual cow fecal for each case cow. In addition, a bulk tank sample should be submitted for each dairy that you sample cows from. For further details on the protocol, please call Dr. Mark Kinsel at (509) 727-6523 or email him at [mkinsel@agr.wa.gov](mailto:mkinsel@agr.wa.gov).

You can invite other vets within your practice to participate if you'd like, just be sure they are aware of the protocol and that we have limited the reimbursement to the first 100 samples received (1st come, 1st served). As you submit samples, please fax me a copy of the WADDL form at (509) 271-5177. Thanks a lot for your help.



**SWINE HEALTH - Dr. Pospisil**

WSDA continues to focus on garbage feeding surveys and inspections. The number of inspections accomplished this quarter has been low, with a total of only 9 inspections completed. The reasons for the low numbers are varied and include extreme and inclement weather conditions during January and part of February, illness of one of our staff members, and the concentration of the rest of staff on a dairy herd with a suspected serious disease situation.

With weather and staff health improving, the second quarter should find us into our normal routine of garbage feeding surveillance.

**RESERVE VETERINARY CORPS - Cynthia Faux, DVM, PhD**

The Reserve Veterinary Corps sponsored the Kirkwood Community College AgroTerrorism responder course training this April. Over 60 people participated in the two sessions, one at the WSU-Puyallup campus and the other at the WSU Veterinary College in Pullman. Jodi and Cynthia thank the attendees and those who helped make these events successful.

The RVC program will be sponsoring nine members to attend the Foreign Animal Disease – Practitioner course in Riverdale, Maryland this June. The FAD-P course is taught in conjunction with the FAD-Diagnostician course at Plum Island. We feel fortunate to have such a talented and interested group of veterinarians step forward to participate! New training opportunities on the horizon include a Technical Large Animal Rescue course. Once again, we will make every effort to accommodate RVC members by offering two sessions, one on each end of the state.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of the WSDA Reserve Veterinary Corps program is encouraged to contact either Cynthia Faux at [cfaux@agr.wa.gov](mailto:cfaux@agr.wa.gov) and/or Jodi Jones at [jjones@agr.wa.gov](mailto:jjones@agr.wa.gov).

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