

# Washington State



# Department of Agriculture

## ANIMAL HEALTH NEWS

### ANIMAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER FIRST EDITION 2009

If you have questions or comments about this letter or its contents feel free to contact Dr. Paul Kohrs 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). Since the activities in the agency have been extensive for the first quarter of 2009, the newsletter is late so in the interest of fiscal restraint that we must observe, the two latest quarters will be combined.

First of all, I have a correction that was brought to my attention from last issue. In the West Nile report, it was stated that there were two birds. Obviously that was an error, it should have read 22 birds, and then the distribution of the birds will make sense. As an added footnote, we lost one more horse in late November in Kittitas County from West Nile infection, so that brought our total to 41 horses for the year in Washington State. Washington had 41 cases of the 139 cases for the entire country. This fact points out to me that we have the virus and the vectors here and vaccination and mosquito control measures should be discussed with your equine clients for 2009.

### NEWS FROM OTHER STATES

For the first time since I have resumed writing these newsletters, there has been little news about TB in other states. California and USDA have reached an agreement on the large herd (14,000 head) that was facing depopulation. Other states have not been given all of the details, but the herd will stay intact after follow-up testing and removal of any CFT positive animals and if the test reveals no more infected animals. This is good news as this herd has had 50+ years of genetics development and those animals will not have to be depopulated. It will also save the USDA and taxpayers \$40-50 million.

Minnesota obtained split state status for TB in October. In December, they discovered three cows in a buyout herd that were infected with TB and outside the TB management zone. Washington does not honor split state status, so the split state designation has not affected the status of Minnesota animals imported into the state.

North Dakota had a cow with a TB positive lesion in December and subsequent testing results are not yet available. One infected cow does not affect a states free status, but more than one infected herd in 12 months will cause a down grade of TB status.

New Mexico received split state status as well in March 2009. The same restrictions still apply for feeder cattle from New Mexico as before.

A new rule went into effect on February 9<sup>th</sup> that you are probably aware of by now. This rule requires that accredited veterinarians undergo training and recertification to continue doing Caudal Fold Testing. There will be ample time (April 2010) and opportunity to receive this training with minimal cost to you and your practice. We are in the process of developing the protocol for the Tuberculosis training and/or recertification and the locations for this will be determined at a later date.

The other major incident for other states that has had an effect on Washington was an outbreak of Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) in Kentucky in December. The index case was being tested for routine export of semen to the EU and was found positive. The disease has now been confirmed in six more stallions (three more in Kentucky and three in Indiana). Five hundred and thirty seven mares have been exposed and are in the process of testing and quarantine.

Washington has had up to 13 mares and one stallion quarantined for exposure to CEM. So far, all of the testing has been negative and we have some work left to do with this outbreak. We still have three pregnant mares left to foal and owner reluctance and financial issues slowing the course on several others. Five mares have been tested and released from quarantine. At the recent NIAA (National Institute of Animal Agriculture) meeting there were reports that more exposed horses could be forthcoming from the epidemiological investigation, so it appears we are not done yet. There have been four positive mares in the United States; three from super cooled or frozen semen and one from confirmed natural cover (one other horse possibly having natural cover as well). So the disease can be spread by AI methods although it appears this is a small percent of the positives.

Canada reported their 15<sup>th</sup> case of BSE on November 15<sup>th</sup>. No parts of the animal entered the food chain and it did not affect their status for BSE. Washington State received a grant from the FDA that is being administered through our feed program that will begin testing for prohibited proteins in feeds in this state to further protect our industry. Implementation of the rule that further restricts rendered products has been delayed. It was supposed to take effect on April 27<sup>th</sup>, but the comment period has been extended to June 26, 2009.

### **ANIMAL HEALTH NEWS FROM WASHINGTON**

Certainly the largest event that the department dealt with in the state during the fourth quarter of 2008 was the outbreak of Malignant Catarrhal Fever (MCF) on animals that had attended the Puyallup Fair in September. MCF is commonly carried by sheep who are asymptomatic carriers. The incubation period is long, morbidity is low but clinical cases have extremely high mortality. There were 133 cattle in the FFA and open class barn and a total of 24 cattle were either confirmed or considered probable deaths from the disease. This outbreak was particularly devastating because all of the animals that died were special to their owners as FFA projects or show animals. WSDA is now in the process of compiling information to be published in conjunction with WSU extension to attempt to explain why this outbreak was so severe. Our other obligation was to rule out a Foreign Animal Disease, which we did quickly. We are also using this information to publish an article with recommendations that hopefully will prevent outbreaks like this from happening at other fairs across the country. Dr. Eldridge and Dr. Kohrs have logged many miles and hours giving information and consulting with fair managers on how to mitigate the risk of this disease in a fair setting. We have even had the opportunity on a national stage to get the word out. Dr. Kohrs was invited to speak at the Academy of Veterinary Consultants in April and we have been invited to present at a national fair managers meeting in Seattle on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

One of the lessons that we learned from this outbreak was that our communication with private practitioners who deal with food animals has some gaps that need to be addressed. Included in this newsletter is a survey asking what your preferred method of contact would be which could be by email, telephone or fax. We need a rapid method to contact everyone and would rather not make a phone call to each one of you in the event of an animal health emergency. Our preferred method would be e-mail, but if that is not possible, please indicate on the survey the latest and best method to reach you so we can inform you of disease issues more accurately. We will also be posting information on the website at [www.agr.wa.gov](http://www.agr.wa.gov). Would you also indicate if you would like a regular update on disease activity within the state? We are working on the disease reporting system and eventually want to have the information into the hands of private practitioners that want it.

### **PERSONNEL CHANGES**

Dr Mark Kinsel has left his field position in Ellensburg to devote more time to his computer consulting and records business. He has retained his duties as Johnes Coordinator and will be doing limited consulting for the state on a contract basis. We wish Mark well in his endeavors, he will be missed. Due to the present budget situation we have not been approved to refill Dr. Kinsel's position.

Dr. Lora Davis has left her position as the Avian Health Veterinarian in the division. Dr. Davis expressed a desire early on to do overseas avian work and the opportunity arose for her to do that and we wish her well in her new opportunity. She did a great job of solidifying the avian health program and we will miss her.

We are pleased to report that Dr. Lyndon Badcoe from Fresno, California will be joining the department as her replacement. We feel very fortunate to have a well-qualified replacement to keep the avian program going in the state. Dr. Badcoe will begin on May 1<sup>st</sup> and his wife, Dr. Rocio Crespo, will be managing the WSU Avian Health Laboratory in Puyallup later this summer when Dr. Dhillon retires.

## **NEWS FROM COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS**

### **AVIAN HEALTH – Julie Broome**

During the fourth quarter of 2008, activities in the Avian Health Program were limited. At the beginning of October, WSDA anticipated testing all 94 of our high risk backyard flocks for Avian Influenza. We were only able to test 16 flocks and collected 165 samples before funding was exhausted. In December, wild waterfowl tested positive for H5N1 low-path Avian Influenza in Clark County. Because of this, we tested our backyard flocks in Clark County using funds from our Foreign Animal Disease Cooperative Agreement. We collected 59 samples from six different premises. All of the samples were negative for Avian Influenza.

The first quarter of 2009 saw much of the same limited activity due to funding shortfalls. The department did do a limited response to the Low Path AI incident in B.C. in late January. Fortunately, B.C. animal health officials contained and eliminated this threat quickly before it was able to cross our borders into Whatcom County. We did egg surveillance from 13 flocks and all samples were negative.

If you or your clients would like more information on the Avian Health Program please contact Julie Broome by calling the Avian Health Hotline at 1-800-606-3056.

### **FAD – Dr. Paul Kohrs**

The activities for the FAD cooperative agreement mainly focused on the identification, testing and treatment of mares exposed to CEM. As I mentioned earlier this began in December of 2008 and has continued well into 2009. Due to the absence of Avian Influenza Cooperative Agreement funding we requested and obtained permission to use FAD money to investigate positive AGID testing in fowl. The department has also developed a response plan focused on the role of law enforcement in disease containment response. This plan was written in cooperation with commission merchants and is nearly completed. We are in the process of completing an investigation into goats with oral lesions that turned out to be Orf. And last but not least this funding has allowed us to come very close to having our disease reporting system close to completion.

### **JOHNES – Dr. Mark Kinsel**

The Johnes program has been hit hard by funding cuts and has the potential to collapse in Washington State. We will keep you informed as to the status as we receive information from the USDA. There was not sufficient funding to begin offering testing assistance and risk assessment, so it remains to be seen what will survive with the program.

### **RESERVE VETERINARY CORPS – Dr. Cynthia Faux**

The Reserve Vet Corps continues to be fine tuned and plans are being made for a limited number of trainings and activities in 2009. Budget issues of course are at the root of these limitations. The annual meeting will be held in conjunction with the AVMA meeting in Seattle and other activities are being planned for the year. If you would like to be on the information list please let us know. Jodi Jones is the primary contact here in the agency, but any of the field staff would be able to assist you in getting in the loop. E-mail is [jjones@agr.wa.gov](mailto:jjones@agr.wa.gov) and phone is 360-902-1889. Dr. Faux continues to move forward with this important aspect of emergency planning and preparedness.

### **SCRAPIE – Dr. Ben Smith**

The Scrapie Cooperative Agreement has received funding for this year and has done some genotype testing in the state's flocks, as well as the required inspections both in the fourth quarter of 2008 and continuing into 2009. Dr. Ben Smith will presenting some information at the TSE updates for Scrapie coordinators this month. A renewed emphasis on tagging requirement for the entrance into commerce has been undertaken by WSDA staff to encourage and monitor the compliance issues with sheep entering commerce and goats that have commingled with sheep. The majority of these efforts have focused on sale yard compliance.



**SWINE HEALTH – Dr. Jerry Pospisil**

The Swine Cooperative Agreement funding has allowed us to continue the search for swine producers that process table scraps for consumption by swine, educating them as to the risk of this practice and then licensing them when they have come into compliance. There is a significant risk of introducing the FMD virus into our swine population by feeding uncooked table waste to swine, especially if it is from a foreign cruise ship. A small amount of unused funds went to WSU for the upgrade of some diagnostic equipment at its lab.

**NOTE:** Please be sure to mail in any Certificate of Veterinary Inspections or Small Animal Health Certificates issued by your clinic in a timely manner. We would prefer they be mailed weekly. We need time to process them and forward them on to the state of destination. Also, be sure to include physical addresses for the consignor and the consignee. We are entering this information in a database in order to track the movement of animals.

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ANIMAL SERVICES DIVISION  
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