

Washington State



Department of Agriculture

ANIMAL HEALTH NEWS

ANIMAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER SECOND ISSUE 2008

If you have questions or comments about this newsletter or its contents feel free to contact Dr. Paul Kohrs 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.

NEWS FROM OTHER STATES

Unfortunately TB continues to make the news from other states. Minnesota, Michigan, and New Mexico continue to struggle with control of this insidious disease. As of this month, California, as well, will be added to the list of states that have lost or will lose their TB free status. This is the result of two more infected herds being discovered this spring. Several animals associated with these herds have made their way to Washington State before the herds were discovered and serious efforts to trace and test these animals are presently underway. We continue in our attempts to monitor the Canadian imports as well and make sure testing is done on animals that will be entering breeding herds in the state. Rodeo and non-native timed event cattle are now required to have proof of an annual test as well.

Brucellosis has entered the news again as well. We never should have touted our free status in the country because we are seeing some infected herds in states bordering the greater Yellowstone areas. Montana discovered a second herd within twelve months of the first herd detection in May of 2007. This has resulted in the loss of its free status and the subsequent testing of animals coming from Montana. Wyoming has discovered an infected herd and at present is testing dangerous contact herds and trace outs associated with this herd. More information will be coming later on the results of these traces. Since Wyoming had problems in the very recent past and the level of infection in the index herd appears to be quite high, we decided that it would be in the best interest of the industry of the state to require that Wyoming imports be treated as a class A state and be tested accordingly.

Texas has managed to retain free status for both Brucellosis and TB, but has an interesting case of Malignant Catarrhal Fever-wildebeest variety in April. A large ranch in Texas has maintained a herd of Wildebeests for some time and it is unknown what triggered this outbreak. Cattle were in a separate pasture, but may have had fence line contact with the herd of Wildebeests. Cattle from the ranch were sent to five other states from a dispersal sale before the problem was detected. Washington thankfully did not receive any of these cattle.

Canada has also experienced another mad cow case. This has raised in WSDA's mind the validity of the age limitations on the importing of Canadian animals particularly for breeding purposes. This latest cow was a five year old Holstein from British Columbia. Since we do not have control over the USDA's actions, it behooves us as private practitioners and regulatory officials to be especially prudent to maintain the chain of identity on incoming cattle and make sure the Canadian ID is present and recorded on any animal health work done on Canadian animals. Another reminder for you to give clients is that it is illegal to remove any official ID from an animal, Canadian or native. This is a state and federal law, so it would serve the industry well to observe it. Our Unified Database Information System (UDIS) is in its infancy, but it is beginning to get legs under it and become useful for movement information.

Late update: Canada has had another mad cow case. This one was a six year old beef animal from Alberta.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

Barbara Baker has taken on a new challenge as the Program Manager for the state microbiology lab on Cleveland Avenue. She leaves a very successful tenure as the Avian Health Program Manager since November 2006. She will be missed in our division, but her skills and smile are not far away in the lab. Congratulations Barb.

Julie Broome has moved from the Animal ID Program to take on the Avian Health Program coordinator's position. We are pleased that Julie is taking on this challenge.

IN STATE NEWS

Rulemaking is still going on as an ongoing process as per directive from the governor's office. We had hearings in June on Biological Products (WAC 16-42), fine tuning some of the earlier import regulations put into place (WAC 16-54), and also Sheep and Goat Diseases in Washington State (WAC 16-89). The biological products rule saw very minor changes to wording and definitions. The import regulations put into place new requirements for testing for Trichomoniasis in cattle, and some other minor changes that were missed from the earlier review of this rule. The sheep and goat rule saw minor changes as well, with just some clarification on the scrapie rules in regard to identification and some definitions. Keep checking the WSDA website for rule making activities that may affect your business; we welcome public comment on the entire process.

WSDA staff has continued the process of preparing for any sort of animal health response. Several opportunities for training were presented and several of our Reserve Vet Corps private practitioner members joined us in some of these opportunities. We all hope it is training that will never have to be used, but is essential when the threat becomes a reality. Dr. Faux, our Reserve Vet Corps Coordinator, will give more details in her section.

NEWS FROM COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT LEADS

AVIAN HEALTH NEWS - Julie Broome

On January 3, 2008, Washington Administrative Code 16-59 was adopted which states that all birds going to exhibit are to be tested for Salmonella Pullorum-Typhoid (P-T disease). Exhibitors who purchased their birds from either a National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) participant or from a feed store will not be P-T tested for exhibit. Exhibitors who have birds tested at the fair will receive a certificate to avoid duplication. As of the first week in August, WSDA tested 142 birds for P-T and 219 for AI; a total of 132 exhibitors have purchased their birds from NPIP sources or are NPIP participants. No exhibit birds have tested positive for P-T or AI.

In 2008, WSDA has 94 backyard poultry owners who have volunteered to have their flocks tested quarterly for Avian Influenza. All birds tested for avian influenza virus and antibody have been negative. Flock testing has been suspended this quarter because of decreased economic and staffing resources. Testing will possibly resume in October.

During the summer, WSDA will work with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to test licensed game bird farms for AI. WSDA is asking veterinarians to test the game birds for AI when completing the WDFW Annual Inspection.

If you or your clients are interested in participating in Avian Influenza, P-T, or game bird testing please contact Julie Broome by calling the Avian Health Hotline at 1-800-606-3056.

FAD - Dr. Kohrs

The FAD cooperative agreement fared a little better than some other cooperative agreements after the lengthy interval it took to write and rewrite the farm bill. We have offered several training exercises for WSDA staff and Reserve Vet Corps members with this funding. We also were able to send Dr. Pospisil to FADD School on Plum Island in June. Dr. Kinsel is putting the finishing touches on a disease reporting database that allows for easier and more accurate disease reporting of reportable and foreign animal diseases should their diagnosis be confirmed. We continue to monitor the quarantined horses in Normandy Park that are infected with Piroplasmosis.

LIMITED JOHNE'S FUNDS APPROVED - Dr. Kinsel

We have received a new, but limited, appropriation of grant funds to support Johne's disease risk assessments. Johne's certified vets will be reimbursed for risk assessments submitted to WSDA prior to December 15, 2008 (or when funds run out). Practitioner reimbursement will be \$400 for an initial risk assessment and \$200 for a follow-up risk assessment. To qualify for reimbursement, you must contact Kerrie Pfalzgraf at (360) 902-1878 to receive an assessment number prior to submitting each assessment. Funds are available on a first come, first served basis until they run out. There is still no funding available to support Johne's testing. If you have any questions or need to be re-certified (certification lasts 3 years), please contact Dr. Mark Kinsel at (509) 962-1583 or mkinsel@agr.wa.gov.

RESERVE VETERINARY CORPS - Dr. Faux

Following is information from the recruitment letter for RVC that was mailed out in case you did not see a copy.

The Washington State Department of Agriculture's (WSDA) Reserve Veterinary Corps (RVC) program relies on veterinarians and veterinary technicians who are interested in training for and responding to animal health emergencies. Members receive training in a variety of animal related disaster response functions and participation is a vital part of our efforts to prepare for an animal health emergency response.

We are asking you to consider becoming a part of WSDA's Reserve Veterinary Corps. We have planned a variety of training and continuing education opportunities for both veterinarians and veterinary technicians in 2008. Continuing education credits for RVC-program sponsored events will be free to members. This year's training opportunities include foreign animal disease response, hazardous materials awareness for large animal responders, and large animal technical rescue and safety. In addition, we are sending several current RVC members to the week long Foreign Animal Disease – Practitioner course in Riverdale, Maryland. This course is taught in conjunction with the FAD – Diagnostician course at Plum Island and it is our intent to send RVC members to the FAD-P training every year, as funding permits.

If you are interested in becoming a member of WSDA's Reserve Veterinarian Corps program or have questions regarding the program, please contact Jodi Jones at:

WA State Department of Agriculture
Attn: Jodi Jones
PO Box 42560
Olympia, WA 98504-2560.
jjones@agr.wa.gov
(360) 902-1889

We are excited about the future of the RVC program and look forward to your participation.



SCRAPIE - Dr. Ben Smith

At the end of July we have received the 2008 appropriation of limited grant funds to support a Scrapie program. We look forward to progressing further with genotype testing along with educational and outreach opportunities during the remainder of the year. If any of you have questions feel free to call the office at 360-902-1878 or Dr. Ben Smith at 509-350-0081 or email him at bsmith@agr.wa.gov to discuss these issues further.

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