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For immediate release: April 17, 2013 (13-13)

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Quarantine lifted for Moses Lake dairy in bovine tuberculosis case

OLYMPIA – The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) has lifted the quarantine for a dairy at the center of an investigation into a case of bovine tuberculosis.

Juergens Brothers Dairy in Moses Lake had been under quarantine since Jan. 17, after the WSDA was notified that a cow the dairy sent to a stockyard was suspected of being infected with bovine TB. That cow later was confirmed as infected.

There was no human health concern connected to the case as the meat from the infected cow was isolated until the test results came back and it never entered food channels.

State veterinarian Dr. Leonard Eldridge determined the quarantine could be lifted after two rounds of testing of the dairy's herd uncovered no additional cases of bovine TB.

“Despite the enormous economic impact this quarantine has had on Juergens Brothers Dairy, the owners have cooperated throughout this critical investigation, making it possible to ensure the safety of all the state’s livestock,” Eldridge said. “Our testing confirms that their herd is safe and they can return to normal business operations.”

In the first round of testing, an initial screening identified 11 cows as possibly infected. As a result, samples from those cows were sent for further testing to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Iowa. The lab confirmed last week that all 11 of those cows had tested negative for bovine TB. In a second round of testing, one cow responded to the screening but was confirmed negative at slaughter.

To date, no other cows have been found positive for bovine TB despite testing on more than 2,600 animals around the state. In accordance with U. S. Department of Agriculture protocols, WSDA will return to the Moses Lake dairy next year for a follow-up round of testing.

[Bovine TB](#) is contagious among cattle and can cause severe coughing, fatigue and emaciation. A bovine TB eradication campaign by animal health officials and the livestock industry begun nearly a century ago has all but eliminated the disease from the U.S., except for sporadic occurrences. Washington cattle have been TB-free since 1988 and will maintain that status.

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