

Bovine TB News

MICHIGAN STATE
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EXTENSION

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Michigan Update:

Dairy herd diagnosed again with bTB

A cow was diagnosed with bTB from a Montmorency County herd of dairy and feedlot cattle that had been previously infected in 2001 and 2004. Since 2004 this herd has been on a Test and Remove program. The owner has been required to follow a herd plan developed to prevent spill-over of TB from the surrounding wildlife while on the Test and Remove program, but has had instances of not following the plan requirements. No live animals have been sold to other farms so there has been minimal risk to other herds. Since this herd had never successfully completed the test and removal program and been released from quarantine, USDA has preliminarily indicated that it would not consider it a new herd infection for counting purposes. MDA will be working with USDA and the herd owner to determine how to proceed with the herd in the future.

Source: Michigan Department of Agriculture

*Wildlife Risk*A*Syst meetings*

Over 450 attended eight meetings held by MSU Extension throughout Northern Michigan to learn about the implications of the new MOU with USDA and the need for a Wildlife Risk assessment and risk mitigation action plan. Producers had the opportunity to determine risk levels for their herd through the 19 questions in the Wildlife Risk*A*Syst booklet. Options to reduce risk to the minimum standards for mitigation verification were discussed, along with potential cost-share sources. Producers need to call MDA at 517-241-0236 to schedule a visit by an authorized assessment team. Those in the MAZ who sell breeding stock need to do so by June 20, 2009.

National Update:

Split-state status granted to New Mexico

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved New Mexico for "split-state" status for bTB. Prior to this announcement, the entire state was classified as a Modified Accredited Advanced Zone (MAAZ). With this decision, only Curry and Roosevelt Counties will be designated as a MAAZ with the rest of the state being classified as bTB Accredited Free. Cattle shipped from the MAAZ will have to be tested. As recently as early 2008, the state had split-state status. The status of the entire state was downgraded to MAAZ in September, 2008 after a herd infection in May, 2007 and a second one in 2008, both outside of the then MAAZ.

The action by USDA is an interim ruling effective March 23, 2009 and comments will be received until May 22, 2009. Efforts by the New Mexico Livestock Board, state veterinarian's office, New Mexico's legislators and the New Mexico agricultural community were cited in the announcement of the split-state status.

Source: Feedstuffs

New herd suspected with bTB in California

A new dairy herd in San Bernardino Co, tested as part of the current investigation, contained a cow with a lesion compatible with TB. This herd is quarantined and cattle movements are being investigated while the results are pending.

CDFA animal disease control experts are working with the USDA to evaluate regionalizing the affected counties, so that the remainder of California can return to an Accredited Free status. This would allow unaffected areas to conduct business as usual, while intensive disease eradication efforts could continue in the affected area of California. Breeding cattle would need official identification and a TB test to move from the lower status region to the higher status region of California.

Source: California Department of Food and Agriculture

International Update:

England decides to vaccinate badgers for bTB while Wales decides to kill badgers

News headlines in the United Kingdom say that bTB is "out of control" in the UK. A total of 39,247 cattle were culled in Great Britain in 2008, compared with 27,570 in 2007, according to provisional figures. The number of cattle herds affected by the disease shot up by 19 percent. In response, Defra Secretary Hilary Benn announced that a bTB vaccine will be deployed 'in the field' with badgers for the first time next year. Badgers are to be trapped in cages and vaccinated against bTB in an attempt to halt the spread of the disease in cattle. The campaign will begin next year in six of the worst-affected areas. Farmers are likely to be involved in vaccinating the badgers and will be trained this year. Last year, Benn ruled out any culling of diseased badgers to help to stamp out the disease but is under increasing pressure to take action. The vaccine will be used in six areas of up to 100 square km, where there is a high incidence of bTB in cattle. Vaccination will start in 2010 and continue for at least five years. It will be the first practical use of a vaccine for TB in badgers outside research trials. However, farm leaders and others branded the announcement 'too little, too late' in the face of the rapid spread of the disease.

In Wales, a different strategy is being deployed. The Welsh Assembly has announced it is to carry out a trial badger cull as part of the next stage in its battle to eradicate bovine TB. Rural affairs minister Elin Jones said that after a comprehensive investigation of different ways to control badgers, she still considered a cull was necessary alongside additional cattle measures. Jones said it was necessary to pursue the eradication of TB urgently and that increased testing of cattle and additional movement restrictions was not enough; "There is no point tackling one source of

infection only to ignore another," she said. "This only allows the infection to return. I want to see a Welsh livestock and Welsh wildlife co-existing in a disease free environment."

Chief veterinary officer for Wales, Christianne Glossop said "I have consistently said that the bovine TB situation is unsustainable. The cost of bovine TB - to the farmer both emotionally and financially, and to the taxpayer, is unacceptable." The Welsh Assembly Government is pursuing vigorously a comprehensive bTB eradication program. "We are tackling the disease on all fronts, including a review of the TB compensation system, testing the entire Welsh herd, stepping up biosecurity, and addressing any link between the disease in cattle and in wildlife."

Sources: Farmer's Guardian, The Times of London, Farmers Weekly Interactive, BBC News

Elk population to be culled in TB hot zone near Canadian Riding Mountain National Park

After several years of capturing elk and killing them only after an initial blood test proved they had TB, Parks Canada is now in the process of shooting 50 elk in a known TB hot spot in Riding Mountain National Park in southwestern Manitoba, and then testing the carcasses for the disease. Parks Canada is also culling another 50 deer using the same method, as well as increasing the number of elk it captures, radio collars, and recaptures to kill if blood tests come back positive for TB. Parks Canada wants to eliminate TB in the elk to protect the health of cattle herds in areas around the park.

Ken Kingdon, coordinator of the wildlife health program at the park, said the new approach was taken because the percentage of elk with TB hasn't changed since the program began in 2002. "The objective is to eradicate bovine TB while we still having an elk population," Kingdon said. "We're certain the approach we're taking will not be detrimental to the overall elk and deer herd." Kingdon said they decided to cull 50 animals from the elk herd in a specific area because of the high incidence of TB there.

Source: Calgary Herald

New effort to map outbreaks of wildlife diseases

Disease outbreaks in wildlife may have implications for livestock and humans. Yet, keeping track of where outbreaks occur globally has been difficult for researchers and practitioners. A new interactive map, the Global Wildlife Disease News Map, is providing the link that was needed. The site was developed and is maintained by NBII as a collaborative effort with the U.S. Geological Survey's National Wildlife Health Center and the University of Wisconsin's Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies. Updated daily, the site tracks where diseases such as West Nile virus, bird flu and monkey pox are making news. Wildlife disease information is collected from newspapers all over the world. Then, it is sorted by region, date and disease and displayed on a map giving people a bigger picture of the problem. You can access the map by going to <http://wildlifedisease.nbio.gov>. Tuberculosis is listed as a disease to be tracked but information to date in the database is minimal.

Source: Inside this Science of Ivanhoe Broadcast News

Research Update:

Veterinarian injuries associated with bovine TB testing livestock in Michigan, 2001. Wilkins MJ et al. *Prev Vet Med.* 2009 Mar 18. [Epub ahead of print]

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The objective of this study was to describe the type and incidence of injuries associated with bTB testing in Michigan, and to evaluate factors associated with the risk of injury. There were 175 veterinarians involved in the Michigan bTB control program who participated in the mail survey study. Thirty-six veterinarians reported a total of 53 injuries (10 major, 12 minor and 31 self-treated). Hands (29%) and legs (21%) were the locations most frequently injured, with sprains/strains (30%) and abrasion/contusion (30%) the most common types of injuries reported. The overall incidence of injuries was 1.9 per 10,000 animals tested. Female gender, being employed by the government and smoking were significantly associated with a higher rate of injury. *This study provides information about additional public health risks surrounding bTB and its control.*

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This newsletter is meant to keep you updated about bTB in Michigan and elsewhere and to answer questions you may have. If you have a question, please send it by return e-mail. Address questions or comments to Phil Durst at 989-826-1160 or durstp@msu.edu.

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