



Legislative Report

April 6, 2009

Bovine Tuberculosis Program Quarterly Update

Provided by the Animal Industry Division
Michigan Department of Agriculture

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1. New MOU Submitted to USDA APHIS VS

The 2009 bovine Tuberculosis (TB) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA), the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services (VS) was submitted to the USDA APHIS VS on Wednesday, March 3, 2009. The proposed changes to the current MOU are based on extensive input from industry partners and the scientific community. During February, the following associations reviewed proposed MOU changes and indicated, in writing, their support: Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB), Michigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA), and Michigan Cattlemen's Association (MCA). The new MOU proposes to shrink the Modified Accredited zone (MAZ) by moving the six northwestern Lower Peninsula counties (Emmet, Charlevoix, Antrim, Cheboygan, Otsego, and Crawford) to the Modified Accredited Advanced zone (MAAZ).

The MOU will move to a more risk-based testing program and reduce the statewide testing requirements. The understanding is that producers in these western counties and the proposed five-county MAZ will implement practices on their farms that reduce the risk of bovine TB spreading between wildlife and livestock. Incentives include technical assistance, limited cost-share funding for highest risk herds, and less testing and movement requirements for the western six counties. To protect Michigan's overall cattle herd, the herds of customers of those producers who do not adopt wildlife risk mitigation plans will be tested.

2. Split State Status

MDA will submit a split-state status application based on the MOU by the end of June, 2009. From that point forward, it is up to the federal regulators to review the application and post an interim rule in the Federal Register. The last application for TB-free status for the Upper Peninsula took two years.

3. Michigan Deer Advisory Team

There was a meeting on January 13, 2009 between the Michigan United Conservation Club (MUCC) Michigan Deer Advisory Team and a diverse group of stakeholder leaders that was formed to make deer management recommendations to the MDNR. Having a healthy deer herd is one of the recommendations that will come from the team. In February, the MUCC hosted several statewide public meetings to receive public input in developing recommendations for statewide deer management. MDA attended the meeting held in Hillman. There were approximately 30 in attendance, including deer hunting enthusiasts and a few farmers, provided comment, primarily involving the usage of disease control permits and baiting restrictions.

4. Indemnity

MDA has determined that budget constraints will not allow for the use of state funds to make indemnity payment for animals exposed to certain diseases (such as bovine TB in cervids or Pseudorabies virus in sport swine) and ordered destroyed by MDA. This is consistent with the USDA APHIS VS decision not to pay indemnity for certain animals destroyed.

Budget deficits, limited resources, and Michigan's struggling economy have all contributed to this situation. MDA understands the impact this decision has on producers across the industries; however, the state must make this difficult decision.

5. Wisconsin Markets

Drs. Halstead and Tilden visited with officials in Wisconsin on September 30, 2008 to discuss Wisconsin rules for importing cattle from Michigan's TB-Free Upper Peninsula (UP). Wisconsin officials indicated they would need to see the following three components in place before they would consider free-status for UP cattle:

1. Maintain the Mackinac Bridge inspection point
2. Retest all UP herds that have received cattle from the MAZ since the entire UP was TB tested in 2003
3. Those selling cattle to Wisconsin must have an annual whole herd test

MDA has decided to retest the herds in the UP who have received MAZ cattle since 2004 as part of our targeted surveillance plan for 2009. This one-time testing will not cost the UP producers anything, as it is part of our surveillance plan for 2009.

On January 16, MDA Animal Industry Division (AID) staff asked producer representatives in the UP whether in the future if producers were willing to do a whole herd test (WHT) at their own expense for future marketing. Producers indicated they are not willing to test at their own expense.

The bovine TB Program is moving ahead with the part of Wisconsin's request that can be controlled – retesting herds in the UP that purchased MAZ cattle after 2003. Maintaining the Mackinac Bridge Inspection station 24 hours a day/seven days a week will continue as long as the MDA Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division's (PPPM) funding holds out. However, the situation cannot move forward unless the UP producers themselves are willing to meet Wisconsin's demand that they have the WHT.

6. Bovine TB Positive Deer Found on Privately Owned Cervid Facility

A deer from a privately-owned cervid facility in Montmorency County was confirmed to have bovine TB on March 9, 2009 by the National Veterinary Services Lab (NVSL). This animal was part of a ranch with approximately 280 privately-owned cervids. This is the second bovine TB positive Montmorency County privately-owned cervid facility in recent months and the fourth such facility since the TB Eradication Program began. These facility owners will not receive indemnity from USDA for their livestock.

7. Field Staff Trained to Conduct Wildlife Risk Assessments

On March 11, 2009, MDA AID staff and Environmental Stewardship Division (ESD) staff trained MDA AID and USDA APHIS VS Michigan field staff on how to conduct wildlife risk mitigation assessments, write wildlife risk mitigation plans, and how to verify the plans. Twelve veterinarians, thirteen technicians, three MMPA field staff, and one USDA APHIS VS epidemiologist also participated in the training.

8. Bovine TB Positive Dairy Cow Found on State's Only Test and Remove Farm

One adult cow was diagnosed as infected with bovine TB in an approximately 225 head dairy/feedlot herd in Montmorency County. Since 2004, this herd has been on a USDA mandated testing program (test-and-remove). 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.

Investigation into potential sources of infection have begun, but given the previous history of bovine TB in the herd and in the area wildlife, it is unlikely that we will be able to determine whether the test-and-removal program was ineffective or that the herd was re-infected from surrounding wildlife.

9. TB Review

USDA's Tuberculosis Program Review report was received by MDA on March 16, 2009. There are 18 areas that require a response by April 20, 2009. MDA AID staff, and MDNR staff met March 24 to assign reporting responsibilities. As in previous reviews, the USDA office in East Lansing will be coordinating the response.

10. 2009 TB Surveillance Testing

Statewide:

Zone	Annual Surveillance Requirement	Herds Completed
Modified Accredited Zone	1,000 annual herd tests on individual farm anniversary dates	As of April 1 st there is one freezer beef herd past due. The case has been turned over to MDA's compliance officer.
Modified Accredited Advance Zone	Minimum of 500 higher risk herds	40 herds have been tested for surveillance purposes.

Updated based on the most current information reported as of March 30, 2009.

11. Zonal Boundary Compliance

December 2008

A total of 122 livestock vehicles were either inspected or accounted for by MDA staff at the Agriculture Inspection Station located at the Mackinac Bridge in St. Ignace, MI. MDA staff inspected 76 livestock vehicles containing cattle (62% of vehicles containing livestock) and found 1 possible cattle movement violation. Nine livestock vehicles (7% of all livestock vehicles) drove past MDA staff without stopping. Four of these drive-bys were intercepted by the Mackinac County Sheriff's deputy and were found to have no livestock.

There were 202 cattle movement permits issued from MAZ premises in December, 2008.

January 2009

108 livestock vehicles were processed in January through the Agriculture Inspections Station north of the Mackinac Bridge in St. Ignace. MDA staff inspected 57 vehicles containing cattle (53% of vehicles containing livestock). Eight livestock vehicles (7% of all livestock vehicles) drove past MDA staff without stopping in January. One of these was stopped by the Mackinac County Sheriff's deputy and was found to be empty.

There were 145 cattle movement permits issued from MAZ premises in January.

February 2009

113 livestock vehicles were processed in February through the Agriculture Inspections Station north of the Mackinac Bridge in St. Ignace. MDA staff inspected 76 vehicles containing cattle (67% of vehicles containing livestock) and found one movement certificate/testing violation. There were three vehicles (3% of all livestock vehicles) that drove past MDA staff without stopping. Two of these were stopped by the Mackinac County Sheriff's deputy and both were found to be empty.

The Michigan State Police Motor Carrier Division resumed activity for the MDA on February 16, 2009 and made four stops in February and found no cattle movement violations.

There were 117 cattle movement permits issued from MAZ premises in February.

12. Market Surveillance

Movement permits issued for cattle leaving Northern Michigan Livestock:

- January 2009: 85
- February 2009: 94
- March 2009: 120

13. Slaughter Surveillance

Michigan cattle reported scanned at slaughter plants:

- January 2009: 15,256
- February 2009: 11,865
- March 2009: 13,837

14. Bovine TB Communications

- Five meetings were held by MDA staff February 25 & 26 in the northern Lower Peninsula. These meetings provided updates and opportunities for public comment on MDA's Bovine TB Strategic Plan, the Wildlife Risk Mitigation Program, and the proposed 2009 MOU.

The Bovine TB Eradication Project Coordinator from the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) set up the meetings and scheduled the assistance of the local MSU Extension agents. Efforts to advertise the meetings were assisted by MDA, MSU, and Michigan Farm Bureau, with the details also being relayed by several local media outlets.

Approximately 100 stakeholders participated in additional meetings. A variety of informational material was available as handouts, including a list of Frequently Asked Questions, a map of proposed zonal changes, and copies of a recent press release. Copies of the Strategic Plan were also made available to attendees, along with formal comment sheets and instructions for their use.

- Michigan State University (MSU) Extension conducted a series of eight educational programs in March to introduce producers to the Wildlife Risk*A*Syst assessment tool and MDA's Wildlife Risk Mitigation Project. Also discussed was the proposed cost-share program to aid those in the core bovine TB area with animal handling facilities.

Over 400 producers attended these meetings. As of March 27, there have been 72 requests for wildlife risk assessments as result of these meetings.

- An ad to remind producers that they need to help prevent the spread of bovine TB by practicing good bio-security ran in the Michigan Cattleman's Spring 2009 Magazine.
- A news release and official notice regarding a potential high risk area in Iosco County, where a bovine TB positive free-ranging deer was harvested, were posted in the Iosco News Herald in March, 2009.

- The 2008 Bovine TB Activities Report is available for review. Interested individuals should contact MDCH's Bovine TB Coordinator at (517) 335-9970.