

Bovine TB News

February 5, 2009

Phil Durst, MSU Extension Dairy Educator – NE Michigan

Dr. Dan Grooms, MSU CVM Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences

Michigan Update:

New MOU being prepared

MDA is in the process of developing and receiving input on a new Memorandum of Understanding between that agency, MDNR, USDA, and APHIS VS. This MOU refocuses the resources available for bTB to 1) Increase surveillance in the proposed expanded MAAZ where higher-risk herds may be found (counties bordering the MAZ), and 2) Preventing new infections by implementing on-farm wildlife risk mitigation plans (especially in the eastern five-county area of the MAZ that is confirmed to harbor bTB).

Six counties currently in the western MAZ are proposed to be advanced to MAAZ in an area called Compartment 1. Compartment 2 counties are those counties (two-deep) that border Compartment 1 or the MAZ. Compartment 3 of the MAAZ is the remaining counties in the Lower Peninsula. Risk is believed to decrease with increasing compartment number and requirements will be risk-based.

The Michigan Ag Commission will be presented with the proposed MOU on February 19 for review. The proposed changes will be sent to USDA on February 20. Public meetings are being scheduled and will be held in late February for input. On March 19, the Ag Commission will vote on the MOU. It will need to be approved by each of the named agencies.

Surveillance plans for each zone.

Surveillance testing of beef and dairy herds in the MAAZ and the bTB free zones will continue as in 2008. In the bTB—free zone, the Upper Peninsula, 25 herds will be randomly selected for testing. In the MAAZ, approximately 400 herds will be tested with the greatest number being those in the counties bordering the MAZ. In addition, this year MDA will focus on re-testing herds that had purchased cattle from herds that were later diagnosed with bTB. These herds were originally tested in a trace upon diagnosis, but now MDA will check them again.

Like last year, if any deer are found to be infected with bTB outside of the MAZ, all herds within a 10 mile radius will all be tested.

Educational meetings set for Wildlife Risk compliance

MSU Extension will be conducting meetings around the current MAZ to educate producers about the changes in the MOU and the need to have a Wildlife Risk*A*Syst (WRA) mitigation plan developed and implemented. Producers who sell breeding stock need to be a part of this or the buyers of their stock will be targeted in 2010 for testing. Cow-calf producers who sell feeders can start their WRA and need to be involved in implementing it by the following year. All are invited to these educational meetings.

Meeting schedule:

- March 3, 1:00 – 3:30pm, Banks Twp. Hall, 6503 Center St., Ellsworth
- March 3, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, Banks Twp. Hall, 6503 Center St., Ellsworth
- March 12, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, Petosky Fairgrounds, 1129 Charlevoix Ave, Petoskey
- March 17, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, Forest Twp. Hall, 9511 M-68, Tower
- March 18, 1:00 – 3:30 pm, Elmer Twp. Hall, 863 W. Kittle Rd., Mio
- March 23, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, Lincoln United Methodist Church, 101 E. Main St., Lincoln
- March 24, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, Hillman Free Methodist Church, 331 W. Third St., Hillman (*tentative*)

*Wildlife Risk*A*Syst booklets available*

Just off the press, Wildlife Risk*A*Syst for Bovine TB is now available. This tool is designed to help Michigan farmers reduce the risks of TB from spreading between wildlife and livestock. The booklet helps to identify and categorize risk in 19 different areas which then provides the basis for an action plan in the seven areas required for a verified Risk Mitigation Plan. Booklets will be available at the meetings listed above and is available to download at:

<http://web2.msue.msu.edu/bulletins/Bulletin/PDF/FAS113.pdf>

Cattle handling equipment no longer on the road; grants available

By this fall, MDA bTB testing crews will no longer be traveling with a gate trailer, which means that they will no longer have the ability to build holding pens or alleyways. The only piece of equipment that they will have available will be a chute. Therefore, producers will have to ensure that they have their own facilities in order to safely handle cattle, with a minimum of a holding pen and an alleyway to get cattle to theirs or MDA's chute. As of fall 2010, if producers do not have the proper handling facilities for TB testing, MDA will place a quarantine on their operation until they put in the proper handling facilities for their crew to work in.

MDA has secured funds for a cost share program this year. The cost share is 50/50 for up to \$1000 (\$2000 total) in the northern Lower Peninsula and up to \$500 (\$1000 total) in the rest of the state. These monies are to be used first to put in a holding pen and

alleyway. For producers who already have these facilities, the monies can be used for a chute and head catch. The money has been guaranteed for this year. For more information, contact Janice Rumph at 231-839-3001.

National Update:

North Dakota prepared to cull wildlife

If a herd of beef cattle in southwest North Dakota is found to be infected with bTB, wildlife in the area will be destroyed so that they do not become a reservoir of the disease. The herd testing is a result of traceback from a cow with a TB lesion found at a meat processing plant. Twenty-eight CFT suspect animals were sacrificed at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory, Ames, IA, to search for the disease. Results are expected in mid-February.

Minnesota collects \$1 per head of sold cattle for bTB

Throughout all of 2009 a \$1 per head assessment will be collected at the sale of all Minnesota-raised beef or dairy cattle. "Minnesota-raised cattle" is defined as any cattle fed, housed, or located at a Minnesota location for more than 30 days. The funds raised by this assessment are for management and education toward eradicating the disease from the Minnesota cattle herd. Even though bTB has only been identified in northwestern Minnesota, it has an impact on cattle movement and marketing in the entire state so the assessment is statewide.

Minnesota senators hear bovine TB fight saved cattle industry

Minnesota Senate Agriculture Committee members heard that TB-fighting efforts have succeeded, and federal restrictions cattle producers faced in much of the state have been relaxed, but the state continues to monitor the situation.

The state has spent \$6 million to get rid of bovine TB, far less than it would have cost cattle producers if the disease had spread out of the small area of northwestern Minnesota that remains under strict restrictions. Cattle in the rest of the state still are subject to TB tests. "It is very difficult to know that you don't have any TB anywhere in the state," said State Veterinarian Bill Hartmann.

Fears that Minnesota cattle prices would plummet proved unfounded, Martin said. But North Dakota and Wisconsin still require all Minnesota cattle to be tested for TB before they will accept them.

Sen. Steve Dille, R-Dassel, said government stepped up to fight TB. "This is an example of good government can do." Senators from around the state said farmers in their areas put a high priority of eradicating TB because they knew the entire state would face economic problems otherwise. Hartmann suggested that without further infections, federal authorities could clear all of Minnesota in four years.

Opposition to the proposal for a Yellowstone Brucellosis zone

Though state veterinarians had approved of the idea of a special Brucellosis hot-zone around Yellowstone Park during a meeting at the USAHA conference in October, some are now expressing concerns. Several state veterinarians have said that their support

hinges on stepped-up efforts to curb the disease in Yellowstone's wildlife something they say hasn't yet occurred. "You can't address the root problem without addressing the wildlife populations that are infected," said Texas State Veterinarian Bob Hillman. "The wildlife populations know no boundaries ... At some point you increase the risk that transmission is going to occur."

The creation of a special brucellosis management zone has been pushed by officials in the Yellowstone states of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. They want to limit the economic consequences of future infections. But backing from state veterinarians outside the region is considered key to the plan's success. They want assurances that Yellowstone's wildlife brucellosis isn't spreading and is actively being addressed.

International Update:

Welsh indemnity payments for bTB to be tied to farm practices

Faced with indemnity payments in the most recent eight month period of April to January that were up by 59% over the same period in the previous year, the Welsh General Assembly published a proposal on January 16 to link payments to good farming practices and disease control measures. Rural affairs minister Elin Jones said "I have said all along that action by government alone will not eradicate bovine TB. The role of the farming industry is crucial . . . The new compensation arrangements would provide a fair system for both taxpayers and farmers", said Ms Jones. She added, "Imagine what £20m (the annualized cost of indemnity) could do to support new farming entrants or to pay for two new community hospitals in rural Wales."

The Farmers Union of Wales is worried cattle owners could be penalized even if their animals were infected by wild animals, a situation it branded "completely unacceptable". Urging his members to respond to the consultation, FUW president Gareth Vaughan said: "No one would disagree genuine irresponsible behavior should be penalized. But the approach must be proportional, particularly given past government failures to address the issue which created the massive problems."

Southland, New Zealand is clear of bTB

The Southland region is claiming victory over bTB, eliminating the disease in cattle and deer herds 12 years after rates of infected herds peaked at 54. The Animal Health Board, in partnership with the Southland regional council spent \$50 million over 10 years surveying and controlling the possum, ferret and pig populations which carry the disease. Various controls were used but the eradication of the final source of infection was largely due to the targeted use of 1080 poison, in particular an aerial drop over a "hot" area in 2004.

TB-free Southland Committee chairman Mike O'Brien said the region had achieved its target of zero infected cattle and deer herds four years ahead of program projections. TB testing, wild animal control operations and surveys will continue. "As is the case with any regime, now that we have reached our goal we have to keep up a strict maintenance program so we don't waste our efforts to date. It's possible that there is still a low level of wildlife TB in some areas and we have to keep the pressure on."

Research Update:

Evaluation of blood assays for detection of mycobacterium bovis in white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) in Michigan. O'Brien DJ, Schmitt SM, Lyashchenko KP, Waters WR, Berry DE, Palmer MV, McNair J, Greenwald R, Esfandiari J, Cosgrove MK. *J Wildl Dis.* 2009 Jan;45(1):153-64.

Researchers in Michigan looked at several blood based assays for potentially detecting bovine TB infected deer. Results demonstrate that these assays can detect bTB infected deer (sensitivity 46-68%) and may be a useful tool in helping to manage bTB in deer.

- - -

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.

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Thomas G. Coon, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned.