

Wyoming State Veterinarian Report to the Wyoming Brucellosis Coordination Team

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WLSB veterinary staff currently has one designated Brucellosis affected herd under quarantine since the fall of 2015 in Sublette County. This herd will remain under quarantine until three consecutive, negative, whole-herd tests, with the last being post-calving, have been completed. We currently have two consecutive, negative, whole herd tests completed. The next test will be conducted post calving (likely in May) and, if that test is negative, we will release the quarantine on this herd.

The quarantine remains in effect and the producer has been very cooperative.

We have been fortunate to have the valued assistance of the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory (WSVL) in the diagnostic work on brucellosis cases. The lab has purchased many of the reactor animals and performed complete necropsies and tissue cultures as part of a research project.

The regulatory serology unit of the WSVL continues to provide excellent service for our Wyoming producers and veterinarians in testing brucellosis samples and getting results quickly and accurately. We have also been fortunate to have the good cooperation of USDA APHIS in dealing with the epidemiology and regulation of these cases.

In 2016, a total of 181,683 cattle were vaccinated for brucellosis in Wyoming. In addition, 65,508 head from the DSA and Brucellosis Area of Concern were brucellosis tested. The Wyoming Livestock Board Brucellosis Program did take a significant budget cut this year, but unless we have a substantial outbreak there should be sufficient funding available to continue the brucellosis testing and adult vaccination payments.

Staff veterinarians have been working with producers, markets, and veterinarians in and out of the DSA to educate them about Brucellosis issues and to encourage risk assessment and herd plan development. We have held meetings in Big Horn, Sheridan, and Johnson counties with producers, veterinarians, and WGFD personnel to discuss the disease risks and surveillance testing needs.

As of March 31, there were 153 total active herd plans statewide. Over the last fiscal grant year (April 1, 2016-March 31, 2017), 137 herd plans were renewed for another year. In addition, the Livestock Board reviewed 24 herd plan risk assessments, 16 of which were signed by producers and became valid, active herd plans. Six of the new herd plans are from the Brucellosis Area of Concern.

The WLSB Brucellosis (Chapter 2) rule was out for public comment from June 17, 2016 until August 5, 2016 to clarify Brucellosis testing requirements. The rule was signed by Governor Mead on October 31, 2016 and went into effect on January 1, 2017.

The following are the significant changes made to the rule:

“Test-Eligible” means all sexually intact female Bovinae ~~eighteen (18)~~ twelve (12) months of age and over. ~~(as evidenced by the full eruption of at least one of the first pair of permanent incisor teeth). All Bovinae that are visibly pregnant or Post Parturient are test eligible regardless of age.”~~

“Section 9. Testing of Specific Bovinae.

(a) All Test Eligible Bovinae within the Designated Surveillance Area are required to be tested negative for Brucellosis within the time provided in (a) (i) below prior to a change of ownership, prior to interstate movement, and prior to leaving the Designated Surveillance Area

(i) Breeding Class Test Eligible Bovinae within the Designated Surveillance Area must have a negative Brucellosis test within 30 days prior to moving or changing ownership, except that any negative test performed between August 1 and January 31 of the following calendar year will be valid from the time of test until the end of that time period (January 31).

(A) Heifers born during the previous calendar year and shipped after August 1 of their yearling year shall be tested for Brucellosis as established in (a)(i) above.”

Due to findings of brucellosis in free-ranging elk in the Bighorn Mountains of Wyoming during the fall of 2012 (since 2012 there have been a total of 10 Brucellosis seropositive elk found on hunter killed surveillance) , the Wyoming Livestock Board (WLSB) initiated voluntary brucellosis testing of test-eligible, adult cattle originating from Big Horn and Sheridan counties. Approximately 13,000 head of cattle have been tested since initiation of the surveillance program in both Sheridan and Big Horn counties with no suspect or reactor cattle found. We are encouraging producers and veterinarians to have test-eligible cattle from Big Horn and Sheridan counties tested prior to a change of ownership either at the ranch or at livestock markets and have commitments from several producers and veterinarians to test this fall.

The WLSB has discussed the situation of seropositive elk outside the DSA but declined to impose mandatory test requirements in Big Horn County until further information on elk surveillance testing and the WGFDD’s elk radio collar study are available. The board is depending on voluntary testing of cattle sold from Big Horn and Sheridan counties to provide adequate surveillance for Brucellosis.

Upcoming Brucellosis Review: USDA APHIS will be conducting a Wyoming Brucellosis Program Review on June 19-21. APHIS personnel will meet with Wyoming Livestock Board personnel at both the Cheyenne and Riverton offices, and will meet with Riverton Livestock Auction management and veterinarian during the review.