



Stock Quotes: Animal Health Newsletter

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Quarterly Newsletter from the Animal Health Bureau of the
Montana Department of Livestock (MDOL)

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

State Veterinarian Notes	1
DSA Expansion	2
Vesicular Stomatitis	3
ADT	4
NPIP	5
Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease	5
MVDL Update	6

What's New

- New Lab Facility, p. 1
- Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease, p. 5
- DSA Expansion, p. 2

State Veterinarian Notes

The Department of Livestock is still operating on a modified work schedule because of the threat of coronavirus. With the majority of employees working from home, we've made an effort to minimize disruptions to our services. Hopefully, you have been able to reach our office as needed to resolve any issues. Please take advantage of the main phone number for the Animal Health Bureau import office to easily reach someone at 406/444-2976. Outside of business hours the phone is staffed by an answering service that will dial our veterinary staff in case of a report of a foreign animal disease or other emergency.

VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LAB: We're making slow but steady progress on a new laboratory facility. Dr. Juda, the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (MVDL) director, has been working with the laboratory a design firm to produce a near-final floor plan. We are anxiously waiting on renderings of the exterior of the facility which is critical to transition the project from an abstract goal to reality. And most importantly, we received initial support from several constituencies for a 50/50 funding split where the \$25M cost to build the facility would be evenly shared by livestock owner assessments (per capita) and the state's general fund. This type of funding model acknowledges the shared benefit of a veterinary diagnostic laboratory to not just livestock producers, but also for the public good.

The 2021 legislature will review the proposal for a new laboratory as part of the Long-Range Building Planning, so we will be making our case for a new facility in just a few short months.

BRUCELLOSIS: In what has become a joyless, but necessary process, the Department of Livestock (DOL) has expanded the boundaries of the Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) after a finding of brucellosis in elk outside of the previous boundary. This latest expansion added approximately 9,000 head of cattle, and while we share Montanans' frustration about increasing

area under surveillance, we also should acknowledge that the DSA has been a remarkable success in ensuring that brucellosis affected herds are located within the DSA boundary, are detected early, and the vast majority of Montana's cattle can be marketed interstate without the burden of unnecessary testing.

CONTRACT VETERINARIANS: Dr. Kaleczyc, with the Meat & Poultry Bureau, is making the following request. The Bureau is seeking accredited veterinarians who are interested in providing services at state inspected slaughter establishments in Eureka, Columbia Falls, Plains, Superior, and White Sulphur Springs. The state inspection program relies on veterinarians to make dispositions according to regulation and to ensure food safety when the staff inspector at a slaughter facility identifies disease conditions in animals or carcasses. This work is sporadic, occurs during business hours, and is not an emergency call. The department reimburses contract veterinarians \$80 per visit to the slaughter facility. If you are interested in becoming a contract veterinary meat inspector please contact Dr. Kaleczyc (ekaleczyc@mt.gov or 406-438-6262).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR WORK: My last point will be to put a plug in for vigilance. Just in the last 12 months, you've had to familiarize yourself with African Swine Fever (ASF), Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHD), a novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and other emerging diseases which join the alphabet soup of long-standing concerns such as Foot and Mouth Disease. Two recent reports from private veterinarians of possible RHD (both, thankfully negative) emphasize the key role of practicing veterinarians as our first, and most important line of defense in early detection of devastating disease of livestock and other animals. Thank you for all you do.

✂ By Marty Zaluski, DVM

Brucellosis – Designated Surveillance Area

Boundary Adjustment: The Department of Livestock (DOL) recently completed the rule-making process on a Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) boundary adjustment in Madison and Beaverhead Counties (see Figure 1) This change will be effective July 11, 2020.

The boundary adjustment was proposed following the detection of seropositive elk outside the current DSA during the January 2020 live elk capture conducted by Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP). The capture results were discussed in the March 2020 edition of Stock Quotes found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yalcybva>.

This expansion is the 5th time in 10 years that the boundary of the DSA has been adjusted due to the presence of seropositive wildlife outside of the boundary. A rapid response to these findings is important to protect trading partner confidence in the brucellosis free status of cattle exports from Montana. DOL received pressure from a neighboring state on the timing of the boundary adjustment in relation to the finding of brucellosis exposed elk outside of the current DSA boundary. This included discussion on whether to impose import restrictions on Montana livestock ahead of the completion of the

boundary change. We were successful in avoiding that outcome this time through the cooperation of producers within the proposed expansion area.

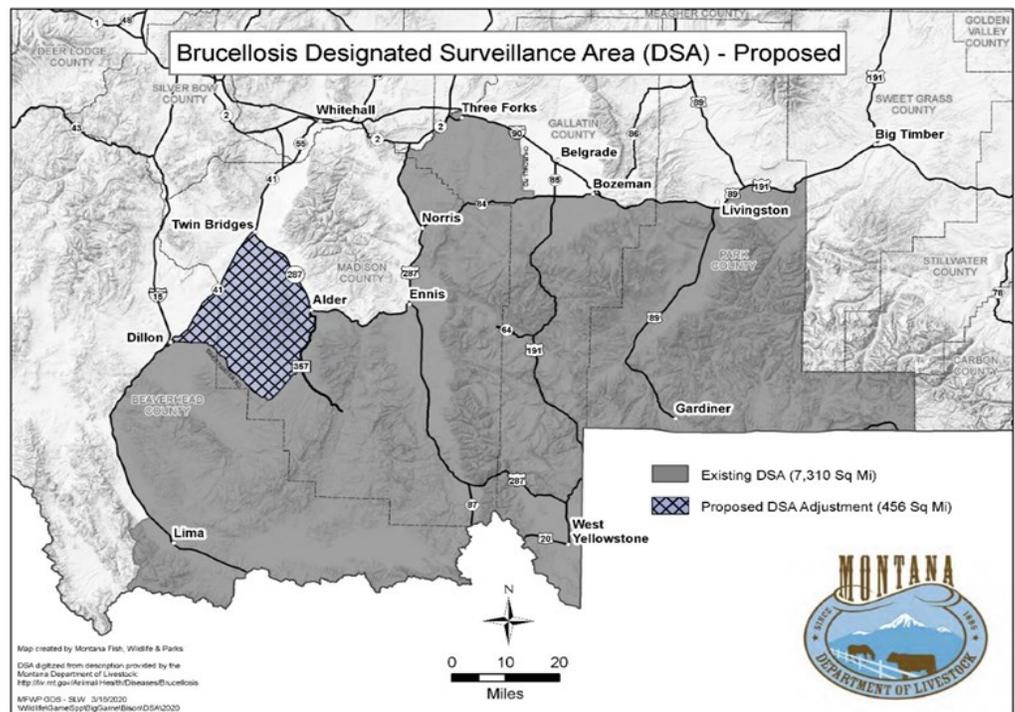
DOL worked with local veterinarians and Brands Enforcement field staff to identify producers operating within the addition. Many of these producers, representing approximately 98% of the cattle in the expansion area, agreed to voluntarily conduct change of ownership and movement testing, ahead of the regulatory change. DOL is appreciative of this cooperation.

The adjustment adds an estimated 46 new herds and 9,000 animals to the DSA. Many of the producers in the expansion were already subject to some DSA regulations due to seasonal use of the DSA.

For more information on rule changes please visit the Department of Livestock’s Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) Notice page: <http://liv.mt.gov/Home/ARMNotices>.

✉ *By Tahnee Szymanski, DVM*

Figure 1 below. DSA Expansion Boundary. Source FWP.



Vesicular Stomatitis

Vesicular stomatitis (VSV) has been diagnosed in multiple states so far in 2020. To date, affected states include Arizona, Kansas, New Mexico, Texas, Nebraska and most recently Oklahoma. The first confirmed case was April 13, 2020 in New Mexico.

While VSV primarily affects horses and cattle, it can also affect swine, sheep, goats, llamas, alpacas, and people. The incubation period for the disease is 2 to 8 days. Classic lesions associated with the disease include blanched and raised vesicles or blister-like lesions on the inner surfaces of lips, gums, tongue, and/or dental pad. These lesions can also form on the lips, nostrils, coronary band, prepuce, vulva, and teats. In recent years, many cases have included lesions on the ears of horses. A fever may or may not be present. The 2020 outbreak to date involves 107 affected premises, 103 with only equine species affected and four premises with clinically affected cattle.

VSV circulates year-round in southern Mexico and occasionally moves north into the United States when climatic factors favor vector populations (See Figure 2). Black flies, sand flies, and biting midges are all capable of transmitting the virus. Other insects may also be involved in VSV transmission. The natural movement of infected vectors tends to follow waterways. Cases in Wyoming in 2019 were heavily distributed along irrigation channels. Serologic examination of infected herds has shown up to 70% of the herd with titers indicative of exposure, but only 10% or less of a herd will develop clinical lesions.

When characterizing a VSV outbreak for a given year, USDA looks at the serotype involved and whether the outbreak is a new disease incursion or whether it is an expansion year. Incursion years are new introductions of the virus into the United States. Expansion years occur when the virus overwinters in our vector populations. Interestingly, the 2020 outbreak has both characteristics. Cases in southern Texas are incursions of VSV-New Jersey, last seen in the 2014-15 VSV outbreak. The remainder of the 2020 cases are VSV-Indiana, the same serotype from the 2019 outbreak, and are therefore classified as expansions. Similar to brucellosis isolates, USDA uses genome sequencing of virus isolates to determine related cases. The last US outbreak involving both serotypes occurred in 1997-98.

Typically, we expect that expansion years will involve a broader geographic distribution of VSV. As such, it is important to remain vigilant for compatible clinical signs in horses and cattle here in Montana. VSV is a reportable disease and any suspected lesions should be reported to state or federal officials immediately.

Lesions in cattle will be treated as a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) investigation and a state or federal animal health official will travel to the suspect premises to collect samples. For lesions in horses, we are able to work with you, the attending veterinarian, on sample submission to NVSL. Until an index case has been diagnosed in a state, all samples must be submitted through coordination with the state and federal office to NVSL. Once an index case is confirmed, the Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (MVDL) in Bozeman can be activated and begin testing submissions.

Serum and swabs from lesions are to be collected for submission. Should we have a confirmed case of VSV in Montana, additional clinical suspects within Montana can either have diagnostic testing performed at the owner's expense to confirm or rule out VSV or can be subject to a 14-day quarantine from the onset of clinical signs in order to avoid diagnostic expenses. The 14-day quarantine is correlated to the known time period for viral shedding from lesioned animals.

✂ *By Tahnee Szymanski, DVM*

Figure 2. VSV Statistics. Source: DOL Staff

Year	# States Affected	States	# Infected Premises
2004	3	CO, NM, TX	294
2005	9	AZ, CO, ID, MT, NE, NM, TX, UT, WY	445
2006	1	WY	13
2009	2	NM, TX	5
2010	1	AZ	2
2012	2	CO, NM	36
2014	4	AZ, CO, NE, TX	435
2015	8	AZ, CO, NE, NM, SD, TX, UT, WY	823
2019	8	CO, KS, NE, NM, OK, TX, UT, WY	1,144
2020 *	5*	AZ, KS, NE, NM, TX*	77*

* Year to Date

Movement and Documentation Exemptions

While many animal movement exemptions pertain to animals moving to and from livestock markets, DOL believes all veterinarians can benefit from a review of permissible exemptions.

Qualify on Arrival:

A longstanding section of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is contained within Part 78 dealing with brucellosis. This is likely the exemption you are most familiar with, allowing animals moving from the farm of origin to travel directly to an approved stockyard or livestock market. This exemption has long been used to allow animals to move across state lines without meeting required brucellosis vaccination or testing requirements, and to move without a certificate of veterinary inspection. The specific language from CFR is as follows:

§78.9 Cattle from herds not known to be affected

(a) *Class Free States/areas. Test-eligible cattle which originate in Class Free States or areas, are not brucellosis exposed, and are from a herd not known to be affected may be moved interstate from Class Free States or areas only as specified below:*

(3) *Such cattle may be moved interstate other than in accordance with paragraphs (a)(1) and (2) of this section only if:*

(i) *Such cattle are moved interstate from a farm of origin directly to a specifically approved stockyard;*

Sections (a)(1) and (2) pertain to movements direct to slaughter and movements to quarantine feedlots. All other movements of cattle require animals to move on a certificate of veterinary inspection (ICVI) or be an approved seasonal grazer herd.

Health Certificate Exemptions:

With the addition of animal disease traceability (ADT) regulations to CFR, it is important to recognize that the “farm of origin” exemption does not supersede regulations outlined in Part 86 pertaining to ADT. Cattle and bison moved interstate must be accompanied by an ICVI unless:

(1) *Moved directly to a recognized slaughtering establishment, or directly to an approved livestock facility and then directly to a recognized slaughtering establishment, and they are accompanied by an owner-shipper statement.*

(2) *They are moved directly to an approved livestock facility with an owner-shipper statement*

and do not move interstate from the facility unless accompanied by an ICVI.

ADT regulations require animals moving to an approved livestock facility to travel with an owner-shipper statement. In most instances, brand inspections will fulfill this requirement, but individuals who move animals across state lines to approved livestock markets should be aware of the state specific import requirements.

Identification Exemptions:

An additional exemption that exists in ADT regulations is the ability to move animals to an approved tagging site where the animals are held until they can be tagged, and the applied ID linked to the source. Remember ADT requires official ID be applied and listed on a CVI for required classes of cattle, including sexually intact beef cattle 18 mos. of age and older, dairy cattle, and animals for exhibition. If you are sending cattle to an approved tagging site, such as an approved feedlot, any existing official ID in the animal's ears needs to be read and listed on the CVI. The exemption for untagged cattle to travel to an approved tagging site does not exempt the listing of existing ID.



Figure 3. Cows. Source: USDA.

DOL appreciates the difficulty of potentially sorting animals by ID in order to read just those ID's. However, tagging sites DO NOT read existing ID of incoming cattle. If ID is not listed on the CVI prior to the animal's departing Montana, that traceability is lost. To alleviate the need to sort animals to read ID, the entire group could be worked and ID read or applied as needed.

If you have questions about these requirements, please contact Dr. Tahnee Szymanski at tszymanski@mt.gov or (406) 444-5214. We appreciate the effort you make to comply with regulations and understand the associated challenges.

✂ By Tahnee Szymanski, DVM

National Poultry Improvement Plan

The Department of Livestock (DOL) is looking for veterinarians who are interested in participating in the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) by sampling flocks for program diseases including Salmonella pullorum/typhoid and Avian Influenza.

NPIP is a nationally recognized poultry program, run by USDA, that focuses on the health and biosecurity of chickens, turkeys, waterfowl and others. The program is regulated individually, by each state. In Montana, individuals allowed to collect samples to qualify for the NPIP program include approved accredited veterinarians, DOL Animal Health employees, or Certified Testing Agents.

Poultry producers raising waterfowl, exhibition poultry, backyard poultry, game birds, and commercial poultry can participate in the program. There are three main benefits for participating producers:

- Flock health testing is conducted routinely
- Producers satisfy the import requirements of many states with their participation
- Producers have an opportunity to sell live birds and/or hatching eggs to a larger pool of customers who will only purchase from NPIP participants

The enrollment testing requirements depend on the type and size of the flock but may include blood collection from up to 300 birds and/or swabbing up to 30 birds for Avian Influenza. The frequency of testing that is required to maintain certification depends on the flock's production style (layers vs. hobbyist/exhibition, vs. waterfowl, etc.), the source of replacement stock, and the housing conditions of the birds. In general, producers who raise their flock in an outdoor environment and/or who do not purchase stock from another NPIP participant will be required to test more often.

The DOL will pay participating veterinarians up to \$4.50 per bird, to help offset the costs being charged to the producer. The DOL will also pay for laboratory costs associated with Avian Influenza testing.

Prior experience sampling poultry is not required. Veterinarians who are interested should reach out to Dr. Anna Forseth at anna.forseth@mt.gov, 406-444- 2939. ✉

By Anna Forseth, DVM

Figure 4. Logo. Source DOL Staff.



Disease Spotlight: Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease

Rabbit hemorrhagic disease (RHD) is a viral disease of domestic and wild rabbits that has been recently diagnosed in New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, Nevada, Colorado, Washington, New York and California.

RHD is caused by Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus (RHDV) and can present with varying clinical signs including fever, sudden death, terminal squeals, dullness, anorexia, neurologic signs, and/or respiratory signs including bloody discharge from the nose or mouth. This virus does not affect humans or domestic animals other than rabbits. The disease is associated with a high death rate in unvaccinated animals. Currently there is no commercially available vaccine in the United States. States with confirmed cases can approve the conditional use of imported vaccines. Should Montana experience cases of RHD, approval for use of the vaccine will be considered on a case by case basis. Please note, the process to obtain vaccine will take several weeks and should not be relied upon as a primary control measure.

RHDV is spread by direct contact with live or dead rabbits, or indirectly through contact with contaminated objects. The virus is mainly spread by oral exposure, though it can also infect rabbits via the nasal cavity or conjunctiva. Urine, feces and respiratory secretions from infected animals may contain the virus, and RHDV can remain infectious in carcasses including rabbit fur, for long periods of time. Further, animals who survive the disease can shed the virus for at least a month after recovery.

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease is a reportable disease in Montana. MDOL and Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP) encourage Montanans to report any mortality events in domestic or wild rabbits. People are discouraged from handling dead wildlife, including rabbits, due to concerns of zoonotic diseases such as tularemia and plague. At this time, MDOL is not implementing import restrictions but may do so based upon progression of this outbreak.

In the event that an animal is suspected of RHD, we ask that the DOL or FWP be notified. Sample collection and submission will be facilitated by the appropriate department, along with USDA. Due to the classification of RHD as a foreign animal disease, all samples will go to the Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (FADDL) in New York.

If you have questions or if you would like to report a mortality event, please contact our office at (406) 444-2976. If you would like to report the mortality of a wild rabbit, please contact the FWP office at (406) 577-7880. ✉ By Anna Forseth, DVM

Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Lab Update

Physical address requirements for diagnostic laboratory submissions:

The Department of Livestock (DOL) would like to remind you of the new requirement for submissions to the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (MVDL). **Beginning July 1, 2020**, all large animal submissions to the diagnostic laboratory must include a complete physical address for the animals being tested. Consistently available animal location data will allow the DOL to evaluate disease surveillance/testing trends, determine which submissions should include an out-of-state surcharge, and help identify designated surveillance area (DSA) vs. non-DSA associated brucellosis testing. This policy is consistent with recent requirements by United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) testing, and the requirements of some other state laboratories.

If sample submission forms do not contain a physical address, you will be contacted by MVDL staff to provide this information prior to the commencement of testing. We thank you for your cooperation and patience while adapting to these new requirements.

Reminder on the proper submission of samples for Tritrichomonas foetus testing.

The MVDL does not accept samples for Tritrichomonas foetus testing that arrive in collection pouches that are past their expiration date.

This was a policy change that was implemented approximately two years ago and was necessitated due to regulatory requirements associated with the diagnostic testing of this high impact animal disease. In the event a sample is submitted in an expired collection pouch, we will contact the submitting veterinarian and request recollection in a pouch that has a valid expiration date.

Take advantage of \$7 UPS flat rate ground shipping through the MVDL client portal!

In January the MVDL announced that flat-rate shipping with UPS is available through our client web portal. This allows the majority of Montana clients to ship samples overnight utilizing UPS ground, at a discounted rate. To take advantage of this service please visit <https://mvdل.mt.gov>. ✉ By Gregory Juda, Ph.D

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