



# Western Stock Growers' Association

## BULLETIN #4

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## UPDATE: Bovine TB in Alberta

The following information is from industry conference calls on November 22 and 24.

### What we know:

- There are approximately 40 herds under quarantine so far.
- There are six confirmed cases of bovine TB in the index herd. Those confirmed cases include both female and male animals.
- The index herd is now located on six premises (This info is as of November 24. See Breaking News below). The three additional premises are associated with one owner who has cattle in multiple locations. Based on the epidemiological evaluation, the CFIA has determined that the animals from the three additional premises present the same disease risk as those already in the index herd. It appears that this risk is the result of exposure to infected bull(s) as previous information was that there was no co-mingling of that owner's herds except for the bulls. The animals on the additional premises will be depopulated and compensation will be paid to the owner.
- CFIA will also be doing epidemiological evaluations for other high risk herds.
- There are multiple risk categories: high risk for those animals that shared pasture with the index herd and lower risk for those animals that had fence-line contact with the index herd.
- CFIA has tested around 4000 animals so far, out of a current test eligible quarantined population of approximately 12,000 head and an estimated capacity of 1200 per week.
- CFIA has completed its review and approval of a protocol to move calves to an approved feedlot. This was an industry proposal and it is industry's responsibility to find an available feedlot. Calves can be moved to a feedlot as early as Monday or Tuesday. CFIA is also optimistic the calves will be out of quarantine by the time they reach slaughter weight.
- Challenges in the process have been getting scheduled time at slaughter facilities for slaughter of the index herd (non-reactor animals) and for euthanization and the enhanced post-mortems for reactor animals. It is anticipated the remainder of the index herd will be humanely destroyed on Monday.
- When asked about using accredited veterinarians outside of CFIA to speed up the process, CFIA said it is an option but don't feel that it is necessary at this point. There is a different element in this case because it's an investigation for a disease under eradication protocol, and at this time veterinary personnel are not the limiting factor in the investigation. CFIA are using their own staff from their regional offices to follow up on animals originally from the infected herd that had been sold and delivered prior to the quarantine are. These animals are identified through the trace-out process which goes back five years. The trace-out is ongoing for the six premises declared infected.
- A formal request has been made to the federal government for assistance to ranchers under quarantine to recover extraordinary costs as a result of having to keep calves over the winter. Assistance may be available through AgriRecovery.

## **BREAKING NEWS**

Later today (November 28) the CFIA will be adding additional premises to the bovine TB infected herd.

An updated risk evaluation has been completed on the high risk herds under quarantine. This evaluation applies to herds with animals that were in co-mingled grazing with bovine TB positive animals. The infected herd is now located on 18 premises.

The affected owners have been notified that their animals will now be part of the infected herd. Their herds will be humanely destroyed and the ranchers will be paid compensation.



### **What a depopulated ranch has to do to stock cows again**

A cleaning and disinfection evaluation will be completed to identify all areas on the infected premises that may be contaminated and assigns a degree/risk of expected contamination (high, medium, low). The assessment includes findings from the CFIA epidemiological investigation, herd testing results and necropsy results of exposed animals. A cleaning and disinfection plan will be provided to the producer and will specify actions required such as removal of organic debris, cleaning and disinfection of potentially contaminated hard surfaces, removal of top layer of soil in areas that are not exposed to sunlight for example.

An infected herd premise will be required to complete satisfactory cleaning and disinfection and as well as a vacant period. The vacant period will be based on a risk evaluation that includes the epidemiological information and herd test results. When a premise is restocked, two annual herd tests are required for all testable animals during which time no quarantine is in place. The standard vacant period is 45 days however this will vary depending on the cleaning and disinfection protocol, landscape conditions, weather and other factors.

High risk herds that test negative for bTB will be released from quarantine under direction from the CFIA. Producers will be expected to keep adequate records to enable tracing if there are further disease incidents. Subsequent testing may be required but normally there would not be a pre-determined testing requirement.

#### **Latest information from CFIA:**

CFIA has committed to keeping the TB investigation web page updated with the most current information they can share.

Click on this link: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/animals/terrestrial-animals/diseases/reportable/tuberculosis/investigation-southeast-alberta/eng/1477438380160/1477438380659>

On this page is a link to ask questions of CFIA via email regarding the current investigation.