



Western Stock Growers' Association

BULLETIN # 9

January 20, 2017 Volume 5, Issue 3

UPDATE: Bovine TB in Alberta

This is information from conference call with CFIA on January 17 and 19, 2017.

What we know:

- There is no change in the number of positives (6) and the number of premises under depopulation order (18). The number of animals affected by the quarantine has increased to 28,000 and the number of quarantined herds is now 58. This increase is to be expected as trace-out and trace-in investigation continues and is not an indication of disease spread.
- The depopulation on the 18 infected premises is nearly complete for mature animals (cows and bulls). It is expected they will be complete by January 24th. All reactors from the 18 premises have been slaughtered and the samples are lining up at the lab for culture. The remaining cattle are the calves which are expected to be slaughtered by the end of January.
- The evaluations for non-cattle animals on the infected premises are complete. All non-cattle animals will be released from quarantine. This does not include the premise where cows tested TB positive but the evaluation for the premise with the positives looks promising that these animals will be released from quarantine as well.
- The trace-out investigation up to this point has been tracing out animals from the one premise that has had TB positive animals. CFIA will be conducting meetings in the upcoming weeks to map out the investigation for trace-outs on the remaining 17 infected premises.
- For the trace-out herds that are considered low-risk, CFIA is working on policy whereby animals that need to be slaughtered (not reactors) can make their way into a regular slaughter plant. There is no need for an enhanced post mortem on these animals unless something is seen. The animals from these trace-out herds that reacted to the TB screening test (caudal fold or ELISA) need to go for a full enhanced post-mortem and samples need to go for culture. At present the reactors are processed only in Lacombe. CFIA continues to talk about adding plants for additional capacity for reactor processing.
- For farms that are worried about over stocking now that calving is coming up, CFIA have contacted them to discuss if there are options to save the higher genetic value animals through supplemental testing and talk about the current situation with their calving. CFIA can develop a priority list detailing which reactors from which farms go to slaughter first so we can avoid any animal welfare issues. CFIA is also trying to ramp up the capacity of reactor slaughter. They are talking to a plant in Saskatoon and one of the other slaughter plants that may be able to help with reactors.
- For the trace-in herds, there has been some trace-in investigation around the Brooks area but the CFIA continues to work on the policy for trace-in for the geographic outliers and will let us know about that when the policy and procedure for the expanded testing is developed.
- CFIA will be releasing further information on post-quarantine procedures and expectations soon.
- CFIA has also released a one-pager on conditional release of quarantine and movement controls prior to final lab culture results.



INFORMATION FROM CFIA

RE: Destruction scheduling and supplemental testing options for trace-out and contact herds

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) continues to work on expanded capacity for the destruction and post-mortem examination of reactor animals. The CFIA has also listened to the concerns from producers about the need to get reactors removed as quickly as possible because of calving season starting soon.

The CFIA has identified options for supplemental testing of certain reactor animals which may:

- alleviate the pressures associated with limited facility capacity for reactor destruction and post-mortem exams through supplemental testing of eligible reactors to screen out nonbovine TB reactors
- provide an opportunity for producers to potentially retain higher value animals that can be screened out with supplemental testing

Trace-out herds

Trace-out herds will continue to be tested by caudal fold skin test and ELISA blood tests. Animals that react to the ELISA test will be ordered destroyed for post-mortem examination and laboratory testing. Animals that react to only the caudal fold skin test will be eligible for supplemental live animal testing to screen out false positive results. This testing will be completed with either:

- a comparative cervical test (CCT) which allows the field testers to determine if the animal has reacted to potential avian TB or bovine TB
- the BOVIGAM Interferon-gamma (IFN-gamma) blood test which allows laboratory analysis to determine if the animal has reacted to potential avian TB or bovine TB

The CFIA will determine which test is best for each herd but generally intends to use the BOVIGAM blood test.

Producers will be given the option of having supplemental testing done for caudal fold skin reactors. If the supplemental testing confirms the initial result was a false positive, destruction for the individual animals will not be required. If the CCT or BOVIGAM test results are nonnegative, the animal will be ordered destroyed for post-mortem examination and laboratory testing.

For some herds, the BOVIGAM test can only begin 60 days after the initial TB test and as a result the quarantine period may be longer than if all reactors are scheduled for destruction immediately. For those herds, the supplemental testing will also require additional handling of animals. Therefore, producers may only want to consider this option for reactor animals with a market value greater than the compensation maximum or having highly desirable genetic traits.

The intent is to complete the calls with the producers by January 18 and provide scheduling dates soon after.

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Contact herds

As of January 15, contact herds will be tested with the caudal fold skin test only and reactors will be retested with either:

- a comparative cervical test (CCT) which allows the field testers to determine if the animal has reacted to potential avian TB or bovine TB
- the BOVIGAM Interferon-gamma (IFN-gamma) blood test which allows laboratory analysis to determine if the animal has reacted to potential avian TB or bovine TB

The CFIA will determine which test is best for each herd but generally intends to use the BOVIGAM blood test.

For contact herds that have already been tested by caudal fold skin test and ELISA blood tests, the same supplemental testing options of caudal fold reactors for trace-out herds will be available. The contact herds tested after January 15, 2017 will be eligible for the BOVIGAM test without the 60 day waiting period.

Identifying animals for supplemental testing and scheduling removal

CFIA staff will be contacting all producers from non-infected premises who have reactor animals awaiting destruction to review the supplemental testing options and determine which animals should be scheduled for removal as soon as possible.

CFIA staff will also gather some additional information about each producer's situation and then establish a removal and destruction schedule that takes into account factors such as:

- date that quarantine was issued
- date that calving is expected to start and whether there are animal welfare concerns related to crowding because of 2016 calves still on the farm
- date of any other events such as planned sales, shows or special events

The intent is to complete the calls with the producers by January 18 and provide scheduling dates soon after.



WSGA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A CFIA representative will be at the WSGA AGM to speak on the current TB investigation.

PLEASE JOIN US!

February 15, 2017 2:00—5:00 pm
Red Deer Sheraton Hotel and Conference Centre

