



### **UPDATE: Bovine TB in Alberta**

The following information is from conference calls with CFIA on January 24 and 26, 2017.

What we are told:

- CFIA is nearly caught up with the on-farm testing for trace-out farms.
- Once the trace-in investigation protocol is developed (over the next few weeks), CFIA can schedule the on-farm testing for those. As calving gets closer, ranchers don't want to be running cows through for testing. CFIA will schedule testing for when it is most convenient for the ranchers, which may mean the on-farm testing will not be scheduled until fall. These farms are not under quarantine or any kind of movement controls so it should not affect the management of their operations. For the on-farm testing on these trace-in ranches, only the caudal fold test will be used. There is still the expected 2% reactors from these farms which will undergo either the comparative cervical or BOVIGAM testing to try to differentiate between avian TB cross reactions and bovine TB reactors.
- On Tuesday this week, nearly 250 reactors from 13 direct contact low risk herds were slaughtered. These animals, because they are low risk, just needed to undergo the regular post-mortem exam for lesions. 12 out of the 13 herds were clean of lesions and CFIA will start the paperwork for a full release of those herds from quarantine. One reactor animal had lesions which appear to be typical non-TB post-mortem lesions, but samples will be sent for further testing and potentially culture to determine if it is TB positive. The herd that animal comes from will remain under quarantine until the possibility of TB is ruled out.
- All assessments for non-bovine companion animals (horses, dogs and cats) are complete on the infected premises, including the original index farm. The way these ranches manage their livestock means there is no risk of infection of those animals so all farms that were under quarantine that had other animals are being contacted to let them know those animals are released. Just those non-bovine animals are released from quarantine; it's not a full quarantine release.
- For the farms under quarantine that have had herd tests and are waiting to slot their reactors into a plant, CFIA is prioritizing them in terms of highest concern for animal welfare due to overcrowding or availability of adequate food and water once calving is underway. For many of these farms, CFIA will offer early conditional quarantine release if the reactors are lesion-free. Conditional release includes keeping detailed records on the movement of the animals. The feedback CFIA has been getting on conditional release is that most ranchers are not interested because they would prefer to wait until they have the freedom to market the cows with no conditions.
- CFIA has indicated that the clean-up and disinfection will likely be the same for all premises that required depopulation, regardless of the TB testing results. CFIA will go into more detail at a producer meeting for infected premises on February 2.
- CFIA continues to do trace-out of the index herd but have not started the trace-out on the other 17 premises considered infected. If no more positives are found in the lab cultures, CFIA does not expect to do trace-out investigations on the 17 herds.
- After being approached by a rancher from one of the infected premises, CFIA is investigating the plausibility of donating veal from the calf depopulation to food banks. The veal is perfectly safe for human consumption but the economics are not favourable for the plants running the calf depopulation to harvest the veal for market. With some follow-up with smaller plants by the rancher, it may be feasible to harvest the veal for donation to food banks. This would all be subject to CFIA approval and conditions.



## **INFORMATION FROM CFIA** **RE: Update on destruction scheduling and supplemental testing options**

The CFIA has completed its calls to quarantined producers to gather information on destruction scheduling and interest in supplemental testing.

Almost all of the producers contacted indicated a preference for destruction as soon as possible rather than any further testing. The CFIA is working to accommodate this preference as quickly as possible.

### **Progress on removal of reactors**

On January 24, 2017 approximately 250 animals from 13 herds were humanely destroyed by slaughter at a federally registered establishment. Processing of compensation under the Health of Animals Act is underway.

Low risk contact herds whose reactor animals do not exhibit lesions consistent with bovine TB at the time of slaughter will now go through an epidemiological case review and where applicable, the paperwork for release of quarantine will be issued.

Reactors from trace-out herds require an in-depth post mortem and as a result the destruction process is more complex and requires more time for each animal. The CFIA is able to complete approximately 80 post-mortems a week and continues to make progress on the removal and destruction of trace-out reactors.

### **Clarification on supplemental testing**

While reviewing preferences for the removal or supplemental testing with producers, incorrect information about supplemental testing for trace-out herds was identified. A revised version of the supplemental testing information follows below.

### **Contact herds**

As of January 15, 2017 contact herds are being tested with the caudal fold skin test only and reactors may 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



## **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

