



UPDATE: Bovine TB in Alberta

The following information is from updates from CFIA to industry groups.

What we know:

- The investigation involved one infected premise and 17 high-risk co-mingled premises. There are two risk factors that deem the 17 to be high risk and assumed infected — shared community pasture and a shared bull. This was what determined the eradication process going forward.
- There are essentially five categories for the investigation: infected premises, co-mingled premises, trace-out herds, low risk contact herds and trace-in herds. Trace-out herds are lower risk than the co-mingled herds but still of epidemiological concern.
- A full set of testing was done on the infected premises. Bovine TB was confirmed in five more animals and DNA testing confirmed it is the same strain as the initial positive. Animals that test negative on infected premises still need to be slaughtered but the negative result allows them to go into the meat system.
- Trace-out testing from the infected premise is performed, which is about determining and preventing the spread of the disease. All trace-outs have the skin test done, reactors to the skin test are processed with a post-mortem and lab cultures. Once the lab cultures results are determined negative, these herds can be released from quarantine. Thousands of tests were done and if the results from the 17 co-mingled premises come back negative, the trace-out will be considered complete.
- In the low-risk contact herds, many have already been released from quarantine following negative testing.
- In regards to the trace-in phase of the investigation, it is estimated that will include around 150 herds across Alberta and Saskatchewan. These represent the lowest risk group in the investigation. These ranchers will be contacted over the summer and have testing arranged for the fall. CFIA is expecting the trace-in testing will be less disruptive. There is no movement controls for these groups until testing and then it is expected to be a very short movement control period until results are determined. For the trace-in group, reactors to the skin test will get a blood test to determine if it is negative or positive. A negative blood test means it is free and clear.
- For the 18 premises that were depopulated, they undergo a cleaning and disinfecting regime determined by CFIA followed by a 45-day fallow period before they can begin restocking. CFIA requires two more rounds of testing after restocking. The first one, performed six months after restocking, is to ensure the ranch is restocked with TB-free cattle. The second round, performed 18 months after restocking, is to check that the cleaning and disinfecting was successful.
- The full lab results from the co-mingled premises are expected to be completed late March and it will probably be late June by the time the final sets of results come back. The trace-in cultures are projected to be complete in March 2018 and the final report from CFIA completed by Fall 2018. Total compensation paid out is estimated to be around \$36 million.
- To date, 10,5000 animals have been destroyed and 19 herds (representing 7,000 animals) have been released from quarantine.