



SD ANIMAL INDUSTRY BOARD

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NEWS RELEASE – ANTHRAX Dustin Oedekoven, DVM, State Veterinarian March 25, 2015

PIERRE, S.D. – Anthrax has been confirmed as the cause of recent death loss in a Stanley county cattle herd. State Veterinarian Dr. Dustin Oedekoven says that two 11-month-old replacement heifers died suddenly last week. A local veterinarian who was called to the ranch suspected Anthrax, which was later confirmed by laboratory testing. The group of replacement heifers was not vaccinated, while the rest of the cow herd has a good vaccination history.

Dr. Oedekoven says that, while this is not the typical time of year that anthrax cases appear, it is likely that the unseasonably warm and dry weather conditions have contributed to the infection in this herd.

Anthrax spores survive indefinitely in contaminated alkaline soils and nearly all areas of South Dakota have the potential of experiencing an outbreak under ideal climatic conditions. Significant climate change, such as drought, floods and winds can expose anthrax spores to grazing livestock.

Livestock producers should be aware that anthrax should be suspected in cases of sudden death loss. Affected animals are often found dead with no prior illness detected. An effective vaccine is available to protect livestock from anthrax, and producers across the state should consult their veterinarians regarding appropriate vaccination protocols.

Strict enforcement of quarantines and proper disposal of carcasses from livestock suspected to have died from anthrax is important to prevent further soil contamination with the bacterial spores.

*OEDEKOVEN (OH' dih koh ven)