



Animal Health Notes

July 07, 2017

RAM EPIDIDYMITIS

Brucella ovis (*B. ovis*) causes epididymitis, orchitis, and impaired fertility in rams. It has occasionally been associated with abortion in ewes and can cause increased mortality in lambs at lambing.

Rams can acquire *B. ovis* through various modes of transmission. One mode is venereal transmission from an infected ewe. Ewes can carry the organism in the vagina for at least two months and act as mechanical vectors. Some ewes become infected, and shed *B. ovis* in vaginal discharges and milk. Another mode of transmission is direct non-venereal contact between rams. Transmission from ram-to-ram is not completely understood and may occur in a variety of routes, including oral transmission. Shedding has been demonstrated in the urine as well as in semen and genital secretions. Rams often become persistently infected, and will shed *B. ovis* intermittently in semen for 2 to 4 years.

South Dakota rules require that all rams over 6 months of age that are to be sold, loaned, or leased for the purpose of breeding must have a negative *B. ovis* test prior to such movement or originate from a *B. ovis*-free flock. Producers can establish a *B. ovis*-free flock by testing all rams over 6 months of age negative on two consecutive tests occurring no less than 45 and no more than 60 days apart. With an annual test to maintain free flock status.

Understanding that false positive tests frequently occur with the ELISA test method, clinicians need to consider flock reproductive history as well as conducting complete breeding soundness examinations of individual rams if *B. ovis* is suspected in a flock.

SD GAME FISH AND PARKS TB UPDATE

Test results from the National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, IA for bovine tuberculosis were negative for all white-tailed deer, mule deer, pronghorn, coyote and raccoon sampled in western Harding County. The surveillance and sampling of wildlife species was

conducted in response to the discovery of a TB affected cattle herd in early 2017. The salvageable meat from the game species will now be delivered to local food pantries through Feeding South Dakota. South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks staff, in consultation with the South Dakota Animal Industry Board, will soon begin discussions for surveillance of TB in wildlife during the upcoming hunting season.

TULAREMIA

Two cats in the state have recently been diagnosed with Tularemia. Tularemia is a zoonotic bacterial disease that can affect many mammals. It is most prevalent in wild animals such as rabbits, muskrats, beaver, and a variety of rodents. Among domesticated animals, sheep and cats seem to be most susceptible to clinical disease, but cases have been diagnosed in dogs, pigs, horses, nonhuman primates, ranched mink, and captive prairie dogs. The bacteria are transmitted by ingestion, inhalation, arthropod-borne transfer, or direct contact.

If you suspect tularemia please take the proper precautions to protect the parties that may have exposure to the animal and report the findings to the State Veterinarian's office.

SDAIB WELCOMES DR. CAROLYN GEIS

Dr. Carolyn Geis grew up in Wolsey and received a Bachelor's degree in Animal Science from South Dakota State University before receiving her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University in 2015. She worked as a student intern with the SDAIB for two summers, and upon graduation joined Tyndall Veterinary Clinic with her husband, Dr. Jacob Geis. The Board is delighted to have Dr. Carolyn Geis join us as the Area Veterinary Supervisor for the southeast region of the state.

