Anthrax



Anthrax is a serious zoonotic disease that can affect most mammals and several species of birds but is particularly important in herbivores. This disease is caused by a sporeforming bacterium, *Bacillus anthracis*.

Anthrax spores are extremely resistant to inactivation by heat or chemicals and can survive in the environment for decades. Susceptibility to clinical disease varies, with domesticated and wild ruminants most susceptible, horses somewhat less susceptible, and omnivores and carnivores relatively resistant. Anthrax is not spread by animal to animal contact like many other livestock diseases. Rather, anthrax spores in the soil are likely ingested by livestock while they graze on pasture. In South Dakota, anthrax can be a serious problem in unvaccinated ruminants. The course of disease is usually rapid in these animals, and symptomatic infections are often fatal.

Protocol when anthrax is confirmed on a South Dakota farm:

- Herd placed under quarantine the quarantine can be released 30 days after proper disposal of the last carcass.
- Immediate disposal of carcasses by burning and burial.
- Vaccinate and treat herd as advised by the Animal Industry Board and private veterinarian.

Additional Resources:

<u>Anthrax Pamphlet</u> <u>Anthrax Technical Factsheet - CFSPH</u>