



SD ANIMAL INDUSTRY BOARD

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NEWS RELEASE

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Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus 2 Confirmed in South Dakota Domestic Rabbits

PIERRE, SD. – Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus 2 (RHDV2), an infectious viral disease of rabbits, has recently been confirmed in a domestic rabbit in Custer County through collaboration with the South Dakota Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (ADRDL) and USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. This is the first confirmed case of RHDV2 in domestic rabbits in South Dakota.

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease is a highly contagious disease of wild and domestic rabbits that can kill 80 - 100% of infected animals. RHDV2 does not affect people or other animals. This virus can cause sudden death in rabbits and may spread through direct contact with other infected rabbits, their meat or fur, or materials coming in contact with them. Rabbits at highest risk are those exposed to wild rabbits or jackrabbits. RHDV2 can survive in the environment for an extended period of time. This disease has also been reported in New Mexico, Texas, Colorado, California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, Florida, Montana, Oregon, Idaho, and Wyoming.

Rabbit owners are advised to enhance their typical biosecurity measures by not allowing visitors to rabbitries, keeping wild rabbits from co-mingling with domestic or pet rabbits, limiting new introductions and including an isolation period for any newly acquired rabbits. Additionally, rabbit owners should wash hands before and after working with rabbits, have a designated change of clothing and footwear when working with rabbits, and avoid sharing equipment with other rabbit owners. Rabbit owners who have questions about this disease should contact their veterinarian.

RHDV2 is a reportable disease in South Dakota and the United States. Anyone suspecting the disease in domestic rabbits should notify the South Dakota State Veterinarian's office at 605-773-3321.

Individuals who observe large numbers of dead wild rabbits are encouraged to report these to the South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks 605-223-7660. Additionally, anyone who comes into contact with dead game is advised to wear gloves if handling/cleaning carcasses, and to not harvest sick animals.

Visit the SD AIB RHDV2 webpage for more information and resources on Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease: <https://aib.sd.gov/RHDV2.html>

*OEDEKOVEN (OH' dih koh ven)