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**NEWS RELEASE – ANTHRAX**  
**Beth Thompson, JD, DVM, State Veterinarian**  
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PIERRE, S.D. – Anthrax has been confirmed in South Dakota livestock for the first time this year. According to South Dakota State Veterinarian Dr. Beth Thompson, several cows died from a herd of 160 unvaccinated cattle in Meade County. The Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory at SDSU confirmed the disease from samples submitted over the weekend.

Anthrax is an economically devastating disease for the livestock industry because it can cause the rapid loss of many animals in a short time. Affected livestock are often found dead with no illness detected. Anthrax spores survive indefinitely in contaminated soil, and much of South Dakota has the potential of experiencing an outbreak. Significant climate change, such as drought, floods, and winds, can expose anthrax spores to grazing livestock. Alkaline soils, high humidity and high temperatures present conditions for anthrax spores to vegetate and become infectious to grazing livestock.

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

**If Anthrax is Suspected Contact Your Local Veterinarian or the Animal Industry Board.**

Thompson emphasizes preventative actions. “During the summer, producers should take time to check all cattle frequently and promptly investigate any unexpected deaths on pasture, whether in cows, bulls or calves. With anthrax and many other diseases, treatments and preventive measures are available, and prompt action can help prevent excessive losses.” If a producer suspects anthrax, the case should be reported immediately to local veterinarians or to the State Veterinarian at 605-773-3321. **Suspect carcasses should not be moved or disturbed until a diagnosis has been made.** “Local veterinarians are excellent sources of information for cattle producers regarding anthrax,” Thompson said.