



Livestock Auction Market Animal Health Notes

April 2021

Bovine TB identified in SD herd

Bovine tuberculosis (TB) has been identified in a Corson County beef herd. The index cow had been culled and sold through a SD livestock auction market in late January 2021 and was shipped directly to a federally inspected slaughter establishment in Minnesota. USDA FSIS inspection staff collected suspect lymph nodes observed during routine slaughter inspection, and *Mycobacteria bovis* was cultured and detected by PCR at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, IA.

The index cow did not have an official identification eartag or backtag. Several other cows in the lot did retain the market-applied backtag and/or had an official eartag. Market records were used to identify potential source herds. Caudal Fold Tuberculin (CFT) testing was conducted in the most likely herd of origin in Corson County. CFT suspect animals were necropsied at ADRDL and two additional infected animals were confirmed through laboratory testing at NVSL.

This is the 5th instance of *M. bovis* infection in South Dakota beef herds since 2010. Past attempts at identifying the source of infection have been unrewarding. As in other SD cases, whole genome sequencing of the *M. bovis* isolate in this case revealed a novel strain from a family of isolates primarily identified in samples collected from cattle and people in Mexico. Investigators will include questions about the possibility of Mexican-origin feeder or event cattle, as well as any human visitors or workers from Mexico. However, as in previous cases it is unlikely that a source of pathogen introduction will be found, and this is quite frustrating.

Initial efforts will be focused on managing the infected herd, which may include a complete herd depopulation

by slaughter of test negative animals, or development of a long-term test and removal plan. Both approaches have been successfully used to stop the spread of TB in previous SD cases. Additionally, trace-in and trace-out investigations will be conducted to test at-risk herds and determine the extent of the infection. Wildlife officials will conduct surveillance in small mammals and deer.

This investigation highlights once again the importance of maintaining compliance with animal disease traceability efforts. Accurate and timely certificates of veterinary inspection including animal identification records are critical in timely responding to findings of bovine tuberculosis. Animal identification records and livestock auction market records help investigators to quickly locate animals at risk and conduct additional testing as timely as possible. Thank you for your efforts to promote compliance with animal identification and CVI requirements.

USDA Announcement on RFID

On March 23, 2021, USDA APHIS announced that after reviewing comments received on the July 2020 proposal to transition to RFID tags only as the official eartags for use in interstate movement of cattle, USDA APHIS has decided to use the rulemaking process for any future actions related to the proposal. So, the original proposal to transition to RFID will not be finalized and all current USDA-approved official identification eartags may continue to be used until further notice.

Thank you! We appreciate the work you do in your role as an auction market inspecting veterinarian. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns. We welcome any suggestions you may have for future topics.