

Bovine Tuberculosis Update

Current as of Nov. 3, 2017

- We remain at six positive cases all from the same herd, and the same strain of bovine tuberculosis (bTB).
- Aside from the six positives, all other culture results (approx. 800) have been negative to date.
- Approximately 11,500 animals were destroyed with compensation and 17,500 animals have been released from quarantine.

Cleaning & Disinfection

- Has largely been completed, including the fallow period.
- Four premises (without cattle) are still in the process of completing the required cleaning and disinfection procedures and remain under quarantine.

Restocking

- Those premises that have completed cleaning and disinfection and have observed the necessary fallow period are released from quarantine and now able to put cattle back on those pieces of land.
- Restocking testing consists of two tests, the first is to confirm that the producer was not unlucky enough to have purchased cattle infected with bTB, and the second ensures that a reservoir of the disease did not remain after cleaning and disinfection.
- The first restocking tests are currently being scheduled and performed with those producers at times convenient for their production cycle, and some of the restocking testing will be performed by CFIA Accredited private veterinarians.
- The second restocking test will occur next fall.
- If a producer decided to wait two years prior to restocking, they do not have to undergo restocking testing.

Trace-out Activities (herds that purchased animals from the index herd over the past five years)

- Trace-out is largely complete.
- Two trace-out herds are still under quarantine, pending laboratory results.

Trace-in Activities (herds that sold animals to the index herd over the past five years)

- This is the lowest risk category.
- Approximately 170 producers were initially contacted as potential trace-in herds.
- After in-depth interviews with these producers, approximately 68 trace-in herds will be undergoing testing.
- Each trace-in herd has a case officer working with them to help answer questions and schedule testing dates.
- Some testing has begun, the bulk will occur in October and November, with expectations of being largely completed by Christmas.
- Thirty are in Alberta (four released to date).
- Thirty-five are in Saskatchewan (six released to date).
- Three are in Manitoba (one released to date).
- A serial testing process is used where reactors to the caudal fold (tail) test are tested with a blood test. This reduces the number of false positives. Upon both a positive caudal fold test and a positive blood test, the animal be humanely slaughtered and sent for enhanced post-mortem, laboratory testing and culture.
- Most trace-in herds can expect to be under quarantine for about a month.

- While we expect these numbers to be low, producers that do have an animal that reacts both the caudal fold and blood test that must go for enhanced post mortem, laboratory testing and culture will be under quarantine for a longer period of time. However, they will be eligible for early release if the histopathology comes back negative.

Compensation

- Compensation for animals ordered destroyed by CFIA is generally paid in about six weeks, and for this investigation, totals approximately \$40 million to date.
- Compensation for extraordinary costs associated with unforeseen effects of lengthy quarantines, etc., from the Canada-Alberta Bovine Tuberculosis Assistance Initiative through Agri-Recovery totals approximately \$7.1 million to date.

Wildlife Surveillance

- Surveillance during the 2016/17 hunting season on the Suffield base was passive – showing hunters what to look for and examining anything out of the ordinary that hunters presented. Out of 1,258 elk harvested, no evidence of bTB was discovered.
- Going forward, active surveillance will be taking place. This means a proportion of animals hunted will be tested regardless of whether any unusual lesions are present.
- This sampling is being conducted under a memorandum of understanding between the province and CFIA.
- Over the next three years, approximately 120 elk/year in WMU 732 (Suffield area) will have lymph nodes tested.
- This sampling strategy will detect bTB in the elk population if the disease prevalence in the population is one percent or higher.
- As per usual, anything unusual presented by hunters throughout the province will undergo post mortem examinations and tested appropriately based on the findings of the post mortem.

Tax Deferral

- The current regulations allow for tax deferral of compensation money paid out from depopulation due to a federally reportable disease for one year at 100 percent. The proposal currently before the Department of Finance is to allow that income to be spread out over two additional years at 18 percent and 8 percent, respectively, but this proposal needs to be approved by Treasury Board.
- Additional questions on this issue can be directed to Brady Stadnicki at CCA.