

## 2009 - TB Assessment is About Wrapped Up

Minnesota's 2009 Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) assessment is about wrapped up. Cattlemen across Minnesota paid a special \$1 per head TB assessment on Minnesota cattle sold during calendar year 2009. As this goes to press Curt Zimmerman from Minnesota's Agricultural Marketing Services Division indicated that a total of \$931,878 dollars had been received from cattlemen throughout Minnesota. That is well above the \$650,000 revenue estimate for the program when it was originally conceived. The state legislation passed the legislation creating the program with the direction that it only be a one year program for calendar year 2009.

The TB assessment was collected at auction markets and other transaction points, as well as cattlemen voluntarily submitted TB assessments from private treaty sale of cattle. Zimmerman said, "Cooperation has been outstanding, we have even received TB assessments from individuals that have sold 1/2 a live animal to their neighbor for butchering." He added, "We continue to receive assessments, as cattlemen work through their 2009 income tax filings and discover they may have sold cattle private treaty and didn't remember to submit the assessment."

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture contracted with the Minnesota Beef Council to provide administrative collection services for the 2009 TB assessment. That contract has been completed. However, should anyone discover that they did not submit a TB assessment for cattle sold during calendar year 2009, they can still submit that assessment directly to: MN Dept. Of Ag, Attn: TB Assessment, 625 Robert Street North, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-2538.

Visit: [www.bah.state.mn.us/tb/files/tb\\_assessment\\_form.pdf](http://www.bah.state.mn.us/tb/files/tb_assessment_form.pdf) to get a copy of the TB assessment form. It is the seller's responsibility to make the submission for private treaty sales of livestock that took place in calendar year 2009. The program was a 1 year program only and does not apply to cattle sold in calendar year 2010 and going forward.

The revenue raised through the 2009 TB assessment goes directly to the Minnesota Board of Animal Health to fund the on going TB management operations necessary to regain TB free status for the entire State of Minnesota. Minnesota's cattlemen can be proud of the pro-active approach the industry has taken on dealing with the TB issue. The Minnesota Beef Council provided excellent administrative support providing accounting services to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture for collection of the TB assessment during 2009.

While the assessment was not popular with everyone at the time it was approved, it was also clear to everyone in the industry that it was imperative that Minnesota regain TB free status as quickly as possible. The Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association listened to its membership and took on a leadership role in helping shape the state's aggressive TB eradication program including; the \$1 - 2009 TB assessment, the herd buy-out program, creation of special TB management zones & gaining split state TB status, a white tail deer testing & surveillance program and a comprehensive statewide TB testing program.

The cooperative effort between the livestock industry and the Minnesota Board of Animal Health, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and our state legislators has paid big dividends. Minnesota is now well positioned to proceed forward to gain an upgrade to the current split state status and ultimately statewide TB free status.

## BAH Budget May be Trimmed

The governor's proposed budget for the Board of Animal Health has a roughly 3% reduction (\$228,000) per year going forward. That compares with a 8.5% reduction in the Department of Ag's overall budget, a 50% reduction for AURI and a State Veterinarian Bill Hartmann recently testified before the legislature outlining how the agency would be able to reduce out-year spending.

Dr. Hartmann outlined three areas where savings would be made:

(1) It is the board's intention to stop testing for avian pneumovirus in poultry. It was felt that the testing program that has been in place has accomplished its objective and is no longer warranted.

(2) Going forward there will likely be several retirements within the department. Depending the veterinarian specialty areas involved there may likely be an opportunity to consolidate responsibilities and work load within the remaining staff. Thus some of the positions that may be vacated by retirements may not be filled.

(3) The department also had budgeted for some software upgrades that are desirable, but not absolutely mandatory. It was felt that those upgrades could be deferred into the future without impacting the department's near term overall effectiveness.

During the hearings at the legislature in Saint Paul Dr. Hartmann stressed, "None of the proposed budget adjustments would impact the ability to aggressively pursue regaining Minnesota's TB free status."

Since discovering TB back in 2005 the Minnesota legislature has not hesitated to provide funding for the huge additional expenses the state has incurred in the effort to eradicate TB. MSCA will continue to work closely with state legislators and agencies to ensure this effort is properly funded.

## 2010 Minnesota Summer Beef Tour & Trade Show

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The two day event includes the summer MSCA Board of Directors quarterly meeting, a golf outing and steak fry on July 12, 2010 at the Pomme de Terre Golf Club in Morris, MN. July 13th, provides full day of touring of area beef operations and beef industry trade show. The tour features farm stops and attractions in Stevens County and surrounding areas including several cow/calf and feedlot operations, a dairy with a methane digester, a kidney bean processing plant, and a manufacturing facility.

Breakfast, lunch, and steak supper is included with registration. Individuals interested in attending the event should visit [www.mn-sca.org](http://www.mn-sca.org) to find additional info and a registration form. A huge part of the success of this event is participation of our industry partners. There are many ways to participate including the trade show or sponsorship of various elements of the program.

Industry partners interested in participating can get schedule of trade show exhibit fees and sponsorships at [mnsca.org](http://mnsca.org) or by contacting Robby Rinkenberger at [wcca2010@yahoo.com](mailto:wcca2010@yahoo.com) or 320-815-0415. Trade show space is limited and there are only so many tour stop sponsorships, it's important to reserve early on.

West Central Cattlemen's Association serve all or part of Stevens, Swift, Traverse, Big Stone, Grant and Pope Counties. The area has about 49,000 head of beef cattle and 66,000 head of dairy cows. The tour will begin in Morris, the largest city in Stevens County. Morris is also home to the University of Minnesota, Morris, the West Central Research and Outreach Center, and USDA's North Central Soil Lab. More information about the Morris area, including tourist and lodging information, can be found at [www.morrismnchamber.org](http://www.morrismnchamber.org).

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## Morrell to Close Sioux City, IA Hog Plant

The John Morrell Company a division of Smithfield Foods recently announced it will close its Sioux City swine processing plant in April of this year.

That will cost the local area about 1,450 jobs and reduce the number of processing plants available for U.S. swine producers in the Midwest.

Smithfield Foods has three other swine processing plants; Sioux Falls, SD; Denison, IA; and Crete, NE. It is expected that they will likely absorb most of number of hogs currently being sent to the Sioux City Plant.

While the other plants are expected to pick up the additional production, Smithfield has indicated they do not plan to hire additional employees at the three remaining plants.



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