



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
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USDA ISSUES FEDERAL ORDER MODIFYING CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF THE BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS ERADICATION PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, April 15, 2010 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) today issued a Federal Order modifying certain elements of the bovine tuberculosis (TB) eradication program. The changes will better allow the program to meet the circumstances and needs of today's producers.

"The bovine tuberculosis program has been very successful at reducing the disease in this country," said John Clifford, chief veterinary officer for APHIS. "The program's regulations have been effective when the disease was widespread. But today, the disease is mostly eliminated, except for sporadic outbreaks. There's no longer a good reason for certain movement restrictions on animals unaffected by the disease, just because TB has been found elsewhere in the state. We are updating the TB program to reflect today's reality."

Under the new Federal Order, it will be easier for producers not affected by TB to move their animals interstate, even if TB is present in their state. Specifically, the Federal Order:

- ends the automatic downgrade of an accredited free state or zone to a modified accredited advanced state or zone when TB-affected herds are found, as long as the state meets certain criteria for preventing the spread of the disease
- ends movement restrictions for cattle and bison that are not known to be infected with or exposed to TB from modified accredited advanced states or zones, as long as the state meets certain criteria for preventing the spread of the disease
- provides for increased surveillance in part or all of a state or zone and/or movement restrictions as required by the APHIS Administrator to address risks from TB in wildlife or under other circumstances to prevent the spread of TB.

The Federal Order is effective for two years beginning today, unless it is extended by APHIS or superseded by revisions to the Code of Federal Regulations.

The Federal Order is only the first step towards updating the TB program, which is consistent with the proposed changes set out in the concept paper USDA published in October 2009. As USDA continues to move forward with developing new regulations for the TB program, we will continue to engage stakeholders and other interested parties for input.

Bovine TB is a contagious and infectious disease caused by *Mycobacterium bovis*. It affects cattle, bison, deer, elk, goats, humans and other warm-blooded species and can be fatal. While USDA and the states have robust surveillance and control measures in place for TB, outbreaks of the disease are costly to both producers and the government. Since 2002, USDA has spent approximately \$90 million on TB control activities and owner indemnification.

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