February 10, 2025

News from the Office of the Chief Veterinarian, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Report a Disease
Anyone in BC who suspects a reportable or notifiable disease in an animal is required to report within 24 hours. Veterinarians are our most important eyes and ears on the ground for reporting. Better reporting means better data about trends and events, which can be shared back to veterinarians. OCV has just launched a **Submit a Report** button which makes reporting quick and easy. Lists of regulated diseases and the **Submit a Report** button can be found here: Reportable and notifiable diseases - Province of British Columbia

Bolstering Food Animal Veterinary Services in BC

1. Funding for practices that offer food animal services to hire veterinary and RVT summer students ($6000 per student): Applications open until Mar. 7, 2025 Veterinary and veterinary technologist students working in B.C. food animal practices - Province of British Columbia
2. Funding for veterinarian and RVT locums to work in clinics that provide food animal services: Current locum bank is available to accredited veterinary practices that offer food animal services at Chief.Veterinarian@gov.bc.ca. Limited applications from veterinarians and RVTs may be accepted again in late April/May 2025. Veterinary and veterinary technologist locums working in the B.C. Food Animal Practices Pilot Program - Province of British Columbia
3. Funding for veterinary clinics that offer food animal services for recruitment, and retention of veterinarians and RVTs and food animal service delivery (up to $40,000 per practice), regional strategic planning and partnerships (up to $10,000 per practice), and enhancing telemedicine delivery ($3,000 per practice): Applications open Feb. 17 to Mar. 19, 2025 Regional Recruitment and Retention of Veterinary Service – Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)
All suspect cases of HPAI in domestic animals are reportable to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (Contact a Canadian Food Inspection Agency office by telephone - inspection.canada.ca) and the BC Chief Veterinarian (Reportable and notifiable diseases - Province of British Columbia). BC specific information about HPAI can be found here: Avian influenza - Province of British Columbia

More on Companion Animals and HPAI
While no companion animals (cats, dogs) HPAI cases have been reported in B.C., companion animals in the United States and other parts of Canada have contracted HPAI through exposure to sick and dead wild birds and domestic poultry, as well as infected raw milk and raw meat, including exposure through commercial raw food diets. Reported signs included neurological and respiratory problems and death.

Key points for BC companion animal veterinarians:

- Ask about signs of HPAI in sick pets so that if a client is bringing a pet in for an examination that might have HPAI, your clinic can take measures to protect staff and other patients,
- Contact your nearest Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) Animal Health office and the BC Chief Veterinarian,
- Testing of samples from companion animals that have symptoms compatible with HPAI can be arranged through the CFIA or BC Chief Veterinarian at the Animal Health Centre. For more information contact the BC Office of the Chief Veterinarian (Chief.Veterinarian@gov.bc.ca)