ANIMAL HEALTH BRANCH

NEWSLETTER

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cdfa CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Message From the Chief

By: Mandy Murray, DVM, MPVM, PhD, AHB Branch Chief



Dr. Murray with Sperry, the Barred Rock chicken.

Happy Spring!

As the storms are receding, we are seeing the signs of spring – the beef cattle are starting to move northward; it is "chick season" where the feedstores are receiving regular deliveries of chicks and new and seasoned backyard poultry owners are creating or adding to their flocks; horse show attendance is picking up; the State and County fairs are gearing up for the season; and mosquitos and flies are coming back out.

For the past few months, Animal Health Branch (AHB) staff have been working diligently to close out the 2023/2024 outbreaks. For the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak in poultry, all control areas and most of the quarantines have been released. We had our last Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV) detection in the middle of January and the export restrictions of VSV susceptible species were lifted from California on February 18, 2024.

This spring has brought the emergence of a new syndrome affecting dairy cattle that has been associated with a spillover event of HPAI from wild birds into dairy cattle. While no cases have been detected in California, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) has urged all producers and veterinarians to keep an eye out for clinical signs. In response to the detections in other states, California has shortened the time between Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) issuance and movement from 30 to seven days for

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dairy cattle coming from affected states. More about this syndrome can be found in the following article.

What do HPAI, VSV, and this dairy syndrome have in common? Biosecurity is the best prevention! Another commonality is that it takes everyone doing their part. Whether faced with a known or unknown disease threat, the best way to protect our flocks and herds is knowing the disease threats for your animals (i.e., how can disease get on your farm and infect your animals?); having good, regular and/or enhanced biosecurity practices that are followed by everyone; and by staying vigilant for and reporting signs of disease. CDFA and many industry organizations have many resources to assist with threats, including those on biosecurity for all sizes of herds, flocks, or farms.

Today, I want to recognize the diligence and dedication of everyone at the AHB; our state USDA counterparts; our partners at the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory; other branches within CDFA including Livestock Identification, Meat Poultry and Egg Safety, Milk Dairy Food Safety, Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship, Animal Care, and the Border Protection Stations run by Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services; our industry and academic partners; the accredited veterinarians within the state; the producers; and our State veterinarian, Dr. Annette Jones. Thank you everyone for doing your part to protect California's animal agriculture.

Spillage – An Unusual Influenza A Event

By: Kavishti Kokaram, DVM, DACVPM, Supervising Veterinarian

In the recent weeks the cattle industry has been dealing with the news from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) of a spillover event of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) into dairy cattle. Various states across the country are in the process of developing response and surveillance strategies to mitigate the effects of this event with discussions around movement controls. Affected dairy herds have reported a syndrome in cattle that appeared to predominantly affect older dairy cattle (2nd lactation or greater); cows in peak milk being most severely affected (150 days); with cattle presenting with a sudden/acute drop in feed intake, decreased rumination and



rumen motility, marked acute drop in herd level milk production, changes in manure consistency (most premises reporting tacky to dry manure), sporadic fevers, and mild respiratory signs. The most severely affected cows were also reported to have



thickened milk that almost appeared colostrum-like or essentially no milk. Subsequent reports and detections from additional premises in multiple states suggest that this syndrome may also affect younger animals but may be less evident and there may be a herd-level effect of the syndrome. There have been no direct cattle mortalities linked to this event but while many of the affected cows return to production within 30-45 days, some of the most severely affected cows have had to be culled from the herds.

HPAI has been subsequently identified in many of the affected herds that have reported this syndrome in their cattle; but it has not been definitively identified as the primary causative agent in this syndrome. The primary source of these HPAI infections appears to be wild bird introductions to these premises much like the case with poultry detections during the most recent HPAI outbreak. Most recently, however, newly identified herd detections suggest that there may be the possibility of cow-to-cow spread via milk as a possible avenue for spread within a naïve herd (likely mechanical transmission). Active testing and investigation continue to be conducted on affected herds to identify the role HPAI plays in the observed syndrome as well as the various aspects of the disease progression itself.

No detections have been reported in beef cattle herds at

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this time despite being in close proximity to affected dairy cattle. Currently, milk from the affected/clinical cattle is being diverted away from the human food chain. There is no food safety concern around milk or meat as the process of pasteurization effectively eliminates such pathogens as HPAI in the commercial milk supply and cattle going to slaughter do not present any concern for transmission of disease. Industry stakeholders have been strongly advised to review and promote enhanced biosecurity measures to mitigate the risk of exposure and to compliment enhanced screening of cattle entering the state via border crossings. Producers and veterinarians are highly encouraged to engage with CDFA District offices should they notice clinical signs consistent with this syndrome on their premises.

More information can be found on the USDA, FDA and CDC Share Update on HPAI Detections in Dairy Cattle webpage.

Influenza Virus Affecting Poultry Identified in a Minnesota Goat Herd

By: Nicki Humphrey, DVM, Swine and Small Ruminant Program

In early March a goat producer notified the Minnesota Board of Animal Health of the unusual deaths of newly kidded goats on a property where a backyard poultry (ducks and chickens) flock was depopulated due to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in late February. The goats and poultry had access to the same pasture, including a shared water source. One of the goat carcasses was taken to the University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VDL), where it tested positive for Influenza A. The National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) later confirmed H5N1 HPAI, which is the same virus circulating in the national outbreak that began in 2022. Of 10 goat kids that died, five goat kids between the ages of seven and nine days tested positive on brain and other tissues for H5N1. Samples from the adult goats were negative for HPAI and all appear healthy; no more sick goat kids have been reported since March 11, 2024.

HPAI has been previously diagnosed in other mammalian species such as skunks, dogs and cats. Animals with weakened or immature immune systems, like the goat kids in the Minnesota case, are at higher risk of contracting disease. There has been limited experimental data on HPAI infection in ruminants, and there are no prior reports of natural HPAI infection in goats. The USDA has tracked more than 200 detections of HPAI in mammals across the country since the start of the 2022 HPAI outbreak.

California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) recommends producers practice enhanced biosecurity, particularly related to introducing new animals (know the disease status of the origin herd) and movements on and off a farm or ranch. Producers are encouraged to contact their veterinarian in the event of disease outbreaks or unusual clinical signs in their animals. The risk of disease transmission to the public is extremely low, and any risk of infection (exhibiting respiratory or gastrointestinal symptoms) is limited to people in direct contact with infected animals.



Biosecurity is the first line of defense for anyone to protect their animals from disease and includes simple measures like cleaning equipment and housing regularly, separating livestock by species and from wild animals, and calling your veterinarian when animals appear sick or dead birds are found on the property. To learn more important steps to protect your animals from HPAI and other diseases, visit CDFA's biosecurity webpage and CDFA's Secure Food Supply Program webpage. For more information on the CDFA's work to combat the spread of HPAI in California, please visit our Avian Influenza webpage.

Enhanced Biosecurity for a Novel Spillover Event

By: Kavishti Kokaram, DVM, DACVPM, Supervising Veterinarian

Recently there have been reports within the cattle industry of a novel disease syndrome affecting dairy cattle in several states. Within the past week, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has indicated that this syndrome may involve a spillover infection of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) into dairy cattle. Various states across the country are in the process of developing response and surveillance strategies to mitigate the effects of this event along with discussions around movement controls. Currently, California has not implemented movement restrictions for cattle entering the state but have enhanced surveillance of cattle at border crossings as well as promoting enhanced on-farm biosecurity.

While the primary introduction of HPAI into dairy herds has been predominantly via exposure to wild birds,

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recent detections suggest the possibility of cow-to-cow transmission as a potential route of spread and exposure for dairy cattle. As such, on-farm biosecurity measures that mitigate exposure to cattle to potential sources of contamination are highly encouraged at this time. These would include: ensuring that cattle trailers are only used to haul your own animals or thoroughly cleaning and disinfecting between use, adhering to an isolation period of at least 21-days for new arrivals with active observational surveillance, feeding only pasteurized/heat treated milk to calves and other livestock, milking affected animals last (utilizing dedicated milking units if possible), strict attention to the use of dedicated coveralls and boots or disposable coveralls and boots (dedicated staff if possible as well), maintenance of visitor logs and restricted access to cattle on farm, consideration of essential movements onto the dairy (feed deliveries, milk pick-ups, etc.), cleaning and disinfection of vehicles on and off the farm, etc. Since the leading source of introduction onto the dairy has been via wild birds, engaging with state animal health and wildlife agencies for wild bird mitigation strategies on farm to reduce exposure would be highly encouraged as well.

Dairy-specific resources (Dairy Enhanced Biosecurity Plan Template and Manual) can be found on the CDFA Secure Food Supply Program website, the Biosecurity module of the FARM 5.0 plan can be found on the National Dairy FARM Program website, and the National Milk Producers Federation website. Producers can utilize the resources therein with their herd veterinarian to create an enhanced biosecurity plan for their dairy to mitigate risk of introduction of disease.

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHD) Case Study

By: Danny Dickason, DVM, MCM, Wildlife Interface Program

In February of 2024, an owner submitted several rabbit carcasses from their commercial meat operation to the California Animal Health Food and Safety (CAHFS) laboratory after noticing an increased mortality rate. These rabbits were housed in raised cages (off the ground) in an enclosed facility. A few days later, rabbits from that same owner's home who had never been on the commercial meat operation premises or in contact with rabbits from the operation also suddenly passed away. The operation had no new animals introduced to the colony/nest/herd in the previous four months. The owner had visited a rabbit show the previous month but had not heard of any other unusual mortality events in the rabbit community. They had also introduced a new brand of bailed hay from a location they had not previously sourced from. A few days later, the specimens submitted to CAHFS were confirmed positive for Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus 2 (RHDV2).



RHDV2 is a virus affecting domestic and wild rabbits including jackrabbits, cottontails, pygmy rabbits, and brush rabbits. It results in mortality rates as high as 70-100%, principally due to liver failure and coagulation abnormalities 1-9 days after infection. The virus was first discovered in America in the states of New York and New Mexico in 2020 and subsequently spread to several other states. The virus is now considered endemic in many of the western United States. A distinct but related virus (RHD1 or classical RHD) had been circulating in Asia, Europe, and Australia since it was first reported in China in 1984, but RHDV2 arose in France in 2010, exhibiting distinct genetic, antigenic, and pathogenic characteristics. It is important to note that there are several RHD vaccines, but they don't all work on the same strains. The RHDV2 vaccine made by Medgene is very safe and effective and currently available for use by licensed veterinarians in California.

The affected premises' mortalities resolved with thorough cleaning and disinfection, increased biosecurity practices, and time. The source of the infection was not definitively determined. Due to the virus' hardiness in the environment and potential for surviving rabbits to spread the virus for up to four months, it can be a difficult virus to prevent or eradicate. Potential sources of the virus in this case include the bailed hay (which can be contaminated by viral shedding from wild rabbits in the vicinity

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of the hay farm), shoes and clothing worn onto the premises that were previously exposed to virus elsewhere, and wildlife which can carry virus in and on their bodies and find their way into facilities and homes where rabbits are housed. This case serves as a great reminder of the importance of biosecurity, as the mortalities resolved with cleaning, disinfection, regular clothing changes, and foot baths utilizing an appropriate disinfectant. And while excluding wildlife from operations can seem like a daunting and unending task, advice can be obtained by contacting CDFA's Animal Health Branch as well as Wildlife Services California. More information can be found at:

- CDFA Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Website
- USDA APHIS Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Factsheet
- Medgene Labs Website

California Participating in USDA's NAHMS Sheep 2024 Study

By: Nicki Humphrey, DVM, Swine and Small Ruminant Program

In January of 2024, the USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) and National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) began conducting its fourth national study of the U.S. sheep industry. This study has two phases. Phase I is conducted by the National Agriculture Statistic Service (NASS) and Phase II is conducted by USDA Veterinary Services (VS), California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship (AUS), and Animal Health Branch (AHB). CDFA AUS is collaborating with federal agencies to expand the California sample size in this year's study. California's participation in the NAHMS sheep study provides an in-depth look at California sheep operations and provides the industry with updated valuable information regarding health and management issues facing California's and the United States' sheep industry. Study participants are selected at random by USDA and producer participation is voluntary. If a California producer is contacted to be a part of the study, CDFA encourages participation and information collected will remain confidential.

Study Objectives:

1. Describe occurrence of common, economically important diseases of sheep as well as management and biosecurity practices associated with those diseases.
2. Describe antimicrobial stewardship on sheep operations and estimate the prevalence of enteric microbes and antimicrobial resistance patterns.
3. Describe management practices producers use to control internal parasites and reduce resistance to dewormers.
4. Describe changes in animal health, nutrition, and management practices in the U.S. sheep industry from 1996–2024.
5. Provide serum to include in the serologic bank for future research.

Benefits to Producers/Industry:

Participating producers will receive:

1. Results of gastrointestinal parasite and enteric microbe testing.
2. Information about lameness and results from lameness pathogen testing.

The sheep industry will benefit from:

1. Benchmark data on important sheep health management practices and the health of sheep in the United States.
2. Improved understanding of disease preparedness on sheep operations.
3. Information important for policy makers and industry stakeholders.
4. Identification of educational needs and opportunities related to sheep health.

For questions regarding California's participation in the NAHMS Sheep 2024 Study please contact Jay Adams at Jaymes.adams@cdfa.ca.gov or 916-704-8335.



Foreign Animal Disease Investigations December 16, 2023 – March 15, 2024

By: Alireza Javidmehr, DVM, MPVM, PhD,
Emergency Preparedness and Response Section

It is essential to be aware of Foreign Animal Diseases (FADs) and their potential impact on the food supply chain and international trade. Even though these diseases have either been eradicated or never occurred in the United States, a widespread outbreak could have severe consequences. This includes posing a public health risk if they can be transmitted to humans. Therefore, detecting them early and taking immediate action to control and eradicate FADs is crucial. California is investing significant resources to protect the livestock industry against FAD outbreaks. You can learn about the critical activities when a FAD is detected in the state by viewing 13 infographics and three short video clips on the CDFA Preparedness and Response webpage.

Due to the recent detection of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) among dairy herds in Idaho, Texas, Kansas, Michigan, and New Mexico, the Animal Health Branch (AHB) started an outreach campaign to livestock producers in California emphasizing biosecurity measures. While HPAI is a foreign animal disease in birds, it is considered an emerging disease in cattle. Should we have any suspicious cases of HPAI in California dairy herds, we urge private practitioners to notify the nearest CDFA AHB District Office to obtain a foreign animal disease investigation number which will facilitate the necessary testing at the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory. To date, there are no HPAI dairy herd cases reported in California. More information and announcements can be found on the USDA APHIS HPAI Detections in Livestock webpage which contains relevant biosecurity information and announcements about HPAI livestock detections.

Between December 16, 2023, and March 15, 2024, California FAD diagnosticians investigated 65 FAD suspicious cases (Table 1). Out of the 65 investigations conducted, almost 95 percent were to rule out Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in pigs being shipped to slaughterhouses. The lesions observed in these cases were found to be caused by Senecavirus A (SVA). Although SVA is an endemic disease in the US, it triggers an investigation for FAD due to the similarity of lesions to FMD. It is essential to treat any animal diseases presenting similar signs to FADS as an FAD until the condition can be ruled out.

All Emergency conditions listed in the California reportable animal disease list must be reported to the local animal health authorities within 24 hours. Contact information for the AHB district offices is listed on the last page of this newsletter and on the reportable disease list.

Table 1. Summary of FAD investigations from December 16 2023 to March 15, 2024

AHB Districts	Disease	Species	Sample Type	Number of Investigations	Destination Lab*
Modesto	Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Senecavirus A (SVA)	Porcine	Swab	51	CAHFS-Davis
	Perkinsus olseni Disease	Giant Dwarf Clam	Tissue	1	University of Florida
Ontario	Venezuelan equine encephalitis (VEE)	Equine	Tissue	1	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis
Redding	FMD, SVA	Porcine	Swab	1	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis
	Schmallenberg Disease, Cache Valley Disease	Ovine	Fetus	1	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis
Tulare	FMD, SVA	Porcine	Swab	10	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis

*NVSL: National Veterinary Services Laboratory
CAHFS: California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory

CAHEN's Coop Scoop

By: Laura Bradley, DVM, CAHEN

Our California Avian Health Education Network (CAHEN) program has become a well-established part of many southern California communities since our start nearly four years ago. Our Sick Bird Hotline has addressed nearly 2,000 callers with avian related questions and over 750 of them in search of help and resources for their poultry. CAHEN participates in poultry and egg related inspections such as the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) and the California Egg Quality Assurance Program (CEQAP) to ensure that our California poultry and poultry products maintain high food safety and avian health standards including mitigation of diseases like Salmonella and Avian Influenza. In addition to our inspections, our team continues to regularly test birds for virulent Newcastle Disease (vND) and Avian influenza at swap meets, live animal auctions, and feedstores. During these visits, we like taking the time to get to know the staff and customers while sharing biosecurity recommendations, resources, and educational materials. As they say, "teamwork makes the dream work" and we could not agree more. The more we collaborate with a shared goal of improving animal care and health, the better it is for our communities and for the animals we adore.

As CAHEN has integrated into our southern California communities, we have been invited to collaborate with schools, agricultural programs and clubs, veterinary hospitals, fairs, and feedstores. Since the new year, we have held an educational booth at the KAMAR Poultry Show in Norco, OC Farm supply Festival de Tomates in Orange, the Exotic Bird Mart in Ventura, and City Farmers Nursery in San Diego. In addition to these events, CAHEN has presented at two schools discussing avian health, veterinary career paths, and the CAHEN program within the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). We are grateful for these opportunities to learn about our communities and discover what their needs are because we are here to support our fellow avian enthusiasts.

We hope to see you at one of our upcoming spring and summer events:

- Wednesday April 24th (9am – 2pm) Antelope Valley Fair Jr. Livestock Auction
- Sunday April 28th (10:30am – 5pm) Robeez SoCal Family Farm Expo
- LA County Fair
  - Thursday May 9th and May 16th (9am – 2pm)
  - Friday May 10th and May 17th (9am – 2pm)
  - Saturday May 11th and May 18th (11am – 4pm)
- Friday to Sunday May 31st – June 2nd (2pm – 8pm) San Bernardino County Fair
- Sunday June 2nd (10am – 3pm) Exotic Bird and Poultry Expo in San Diego
- Saturday June 8th (10am – 4pm) San Bernardino County Family Fish and Wildlife Festival
- Friday to Saturday July 5th and 6th (time TBD) San Diego County Fair
- Chino Fair Jr. Livestock Auction (date TBD)
- Sunday July 14th (10am – 3pm) Exotic Bird Mart and Poultry Expo in Bakersfield
- Wednesday to Sunday July 24th – July 28th (time TB) Orange County Fair
- Sunday July 28th (10am – 3pm) Exotic Bird and Poultry Expo in Lancaster
- More events ongoing through the end of the year

Do you have any pictures or fun stories of your feathered friends that you would like to share with us? Follow us on Facebook at California Avian Health Education Network and Instagram @cahensocal. We would love the opportunity to admire your birds!



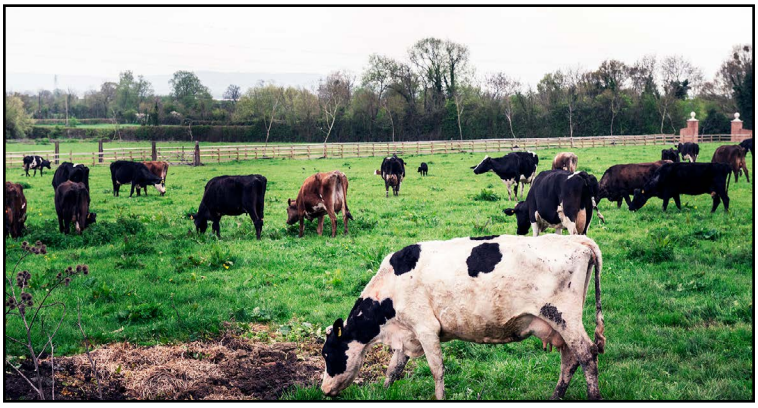
CAHEN outreach booth at the Festival de Tomates 2024.

Movement Document Reminders from Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) Staff

By: Kristen Cox, Environmental Scientist

Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (CVIs) are regularly required for livestock to travel interstate. The white and yellow copies of paper CVIs (also known as AHB form 77-010) must be mailed to the Animal Health Branch's Sacramento office within seven days of issuance by the accredited California veterinarian. Once received, ADT staff forward all CVIs along to the destination state.

Electronic CVIs (eCVIs) are a great alternative to our paper forms as copies are immediately sent to both the origin and destination states once issued. To learn more about the benefits of eCVIs and various eCVI providers available for use by accredited veterinarians in California, please visit the CDFA Electronic Certificates of Veterinary Inspection website.



Springtime is upon us, which means California beef cattle herds will be on the move to greener pastures! If you are a veterinarian and you or one of your clients are interested in applying for a pasture-to-pasture permit to ship beef cattle from California to either Oregon, Nevada, or Idaho, you will need to submit a completed application at least 30 days in advance of the anticipated move date. To qualify, the cattle must belong to a breeding herd, not change ownership, and leave and return to California within eight months. If approved, the permit will exempt the cattle from needing a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection. The California Pasture to Pasture Permit application can be either emailed, faxed, or mailed to our office in Sacramento. If you have any questions, reach out to Kristen or Lauren at the Permit Desk at (916) 900-5303 or evet@cdfa.ca.gov.

Pasture to pasture permits are different from 50-Mile Permits, which are issued by the Bureau of Livestock Identification (LID), and can exempt your cattle from brand inspections. To inquire about a 50-Mile permit, please contact LID staff at 916-900-5006.

Notice of Updated FDA Direction on Issuance of Veterinary Feed Directives for Medicated Milk Replacers

By: CDFA Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship (AUS) program will be providing information on a clarification from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding veterinary feed directives (VFDs) and medicated milk replacers.

As medicated milk replacers are considered a Type C medicated feed that administers medically important antimicrobials, their use requires veterinary issuance of a VFD. Recently, FDA has updated their webpage on medicated milk replacers to include a clarification of what is considered permissible use from what has been previously accepted by feed distributors in California.

In these new materials, FDA stated two main points for feeding medicated milk replacer on-farm:

1. Adding a Type A medicated article or a Type B medicated feed directly to water or milk is *not legal*. Both Type A medicated articles and Type B medicated feeds must first be further mixed with dry non-medicated milk replacer to make a dry Type C medicated milk replacer. Type B trade names include products such as Calfmilco Prevent Aid and NT concentrate, among others.
2. A dry Type C medicated milk replacer may **only** be reconstituted with **warm water**. This means a medicated milk replacer fed to calves or other young mammals **may not be reconstituted with milk**, including waste milk.

FDA and CDFA are currently engaging with feed distributors to correct any medicated milk replacer product labels that may contain erroneous product details or instructions. In the meantime, it is the veterinarian's responsibility to ensure any VFDs issued follow all FDA regulations and guidance as written,

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many of which can be found at the following:

- Code of Federal Regulation: 21 CFR Part 558
- FDA's Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) webpage
- Updated FDA guidance regarding VFDs and medicated milk replacers: Medicated Milk Replacers FDA webpage

CDFA AUS is updating both customized and publicly available outreach and engagement documents to reflect this recent update from the FDA. Please continue to monitor FDA's and CDFA's websites to stay current on VFDs. Once available, CDFA AUS' notice addressing the FDA's updated guidance will be posted on the CDFA AUS website

If you are a California-licensed veterinarian and would like to receive updated VFD guidance as it becomes available, please email us at cdfa_aus@cdfa.ca.gov.

AB-888: Mobile Custom Livestock Slaughter — Expanding Local Meat Markets

By: CDFA Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety

Effective January 1, 2022, California's law allows for multiple livestock purchased by multiple owners from a livestock producer to be slaughtered on the livestock producer's premises for the new owner(s) of the livestock, provided that certain specified general conditions are met:

- The slaughter must be conducted by a Mobile Slaughter Operator (MSO) licensed by Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety (MPES) as a Custom Livestock Slaughter Operation
- The MSO must be a MPES-licensed Livestock Meat Inspector (LMI)
- The livestock slaughter must be performed by an MPES-licensed LMI
- The Livestock Producer and all premises where the slaughter occurs must be registered with MPES

For details on additional requirements, please refer to the full text of AB-888 (Food and Agricultural Code, Sections 19020-19023)

All carcasses of animals slaughtered by a licensed MSO and any resulting meat cuts are only for personal use and consumption by the owner(s), owners' family, employees, and other identified individuals and must be identified as "NOT FOR SALE".

MPES is currently working on updating its Meat Inspection regulations to implement AB 888 and provide regulatory oversight to protect California's food safety and animal



welfare and reduce environmental impact while expanding direct market opportunities for Livestock Producers. The requirements and standards significantly enhance animal traceability and transparency to make certain that the source of the custom carcass and any resulting meat cuts can easily be identified, if needed. They also strengthen consumer trust and safety while expanding markets by allowing MSOs to conduct slaughter services for multiple customers on the Livestock Producers' premises.

In addition to the regulatory actions, the MPES team is also continuously implementing and revising outreach materials to guide stakeholders and the rest of the industry who are interested in utilizing this new law. MPES is certain that by strengthening and modernizing its regulation, the branch will continue to accomplish its ongoing mission: to protect public health and ensure the safety of the California's food supply chain.

MSO Guidelines and Flowchart are available on the MPES website and at the links below:

- MSO Guidelines
- MSO Flowcharts

For updates on AB-888 as implementation progresses, subscribe to the email list "Licensed Mobile Slaughter" under the section "Animal Health & Food Safety". Contact MPES at CDFA.MPES_feedback@cdfa.ca.gov or (916) 900-5004.



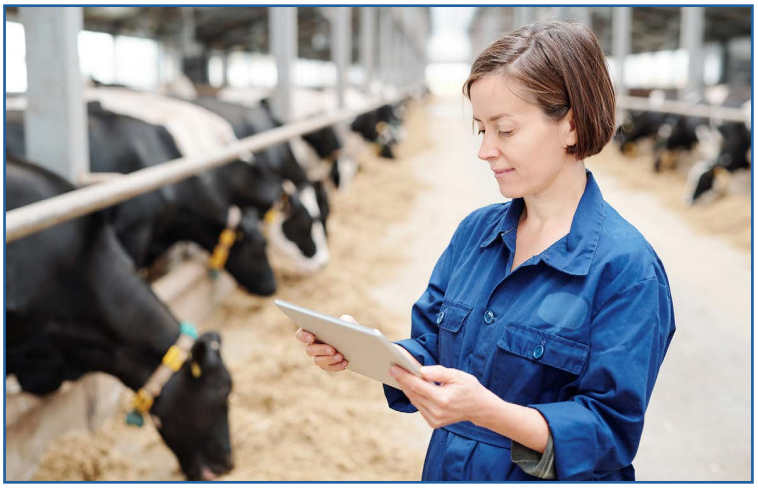
The Animal Health Branch is Hiring!

By: Mandy Murray, DVM, MPVM, PhD, AHB Branch Chief

Do you want to make a difference for California Agriculture? Come work for CDFA – Animal Health Branch.

The AHB is looking for bright, enthusiastic, committed people with a passion for animals and/or animal agriculture to join our team. We have several vacancies throughout the state including:

- Veterinarians in all four districts and Sacramento including generalists, specialists, and a supervisor position;
- Livestock Inspectors and Environmental Scientists in our district offices;
- Emergency Services Coordinators and Environmental Scientists to work in Emergency Programs; and
- Seasonal Agricultural Technician vacancies in the EMMP and CAHEN programs.



All positions are or will be posted through CalCareers. If you would like to find out more, you can reach out to Dr. Jessica Light, Assistant Branch Chief at Jessica.light@cdfa.ca.gov.



Animal Health Branch Staff Biographies

Jessica Light, DVM, MA,
Assistant Branch Chief



Dr. Jessica Light grew up in Wilton learning to care for animals through Sloughhouse 4-H, Sacramento Wildlife Care Association and her grandfather. She finished high school as an intern at the San Diego Zoo then moved on to Stanford University getting dual degrees in Human Biology and Anthropology. Prior to attending veterinary school, she taught at College of the Sequoias in Visalia, got horse wrangling lessons while volunteering at Bakersfield Veterinary Hospital, put PIT tags in kangaroo rats at Pixley NWR, and learned to tube feed sea lions at the Marine Mammal Center in Marin. Choosing the food animal track at University of California, Davis veterinary school, Dr. Light rotated through Tulare's VMTRC, University of Utrecht in the Netherlands, a robust Rio Vista lambing season and many dairy veterinary practices throughout the state. She moved to Gooding, Idaho to begin her practice life at North Valley Veterinary Clinic and to hike the Sawtooths. Later she moved down to Texas and practiced at Conroe Veterinary Hospital before finishing her migration back to California. Once in her home state, she embarked on a 20-year career beginning with Upjohn as a technical sales veterinarian within the California cattle community. In this role, she developed impeccably strong relationships with dairy veterinarians providing science-based solutions to vaccine and antimicrobial use programs, sound reproductive breeding protocols and mastitis control and quality milk programs. In 2021, she received the Distinguished Service Award from University of California, Davis veterinary school for her unwavering work connecting veterinary students to authentic bovine practice experiences.

Dr. Light has a passion for leadership and team building having served as a D1 student-athlete team captain, National Student AVMA President, and later as a member of AVMA's Council on Biologics and Therapeutic Agents and Class 44 California Ag Leadership.

She spends her free time with her rockhound husband misidentifying birds in their backyard.

Nicki Humphrey, DVM,
Veterinarian (Specialist), Swine and Small Ruminant Program



Dr. Nicki Humphrey joined the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Animal Health Branch in January of 2024 as a Veterinary Specialist in the Swine and Small Ruminant Program. She is a fourth-generation commercial cow-calf producer native to northern California. Dr. Humphrey obtained her DVM from Colorado State University College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences in 2011. After graduation she worked as a mixed animal veterinarian for practices in Northern California and Southern Oregon. Dr. Humphrey joined the United States Department of Agriculture in 2013 and served in various roles prior to joining the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Service's Swine Commodity staff in 2019 where she served as a senior staff veterinarian responsible for national oversite of the African Swine Fever, Classical Swine Fever, Foot and Mouth Disease, Pseudorabies, and Swine Brucellosis surveillance programs, US Swine Health Improvement Plan development and assisted with preparedness efforts for responding to swine disease events. In her free time Nicki works on her family's cattle and hay farm, enjoys baking, reading, and walking her mini-Aussie Sage.

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Animal Health Branch Programs

- Animal Disease Traceability (ADT)
- Avian Program
- California Animal Response Emergency System (CARES)
- California Avian Health Education Network (CAHEN)
- Cattle Program
- Emergency Preparedness Response Section (EPRS)
- Equine Medication Monitoring Program (EMMP)
- Equine Program
- Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) Program
- Secure Food Supply (SFS) Program
- Small Ruminant Program
- Swine Program
- Wildlife Interface Program

Mission Statement
The Animal Health Branch is the State's organized, professional veterinary medical unit that protects livestock populations, consumers, and California's economy from catastrophic animal diseases, disasters that impact animals, and other health or agricultural problems. The Branch addresses diseases and other problems that cannot be successfully controlled on an individual animal or herd basis but require state-wide coordinated resources. Implementing programs that protect California's livestock industries and consumers, ensures the availability, affordability, and wholesomeness of food.