

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.



Inside This Issue:

- Message from the Chief - Pg. 1
- Prevent the Misuse of the Animal Product Ivermectin - Pg. 2
- Job Opening - Pg. 2
- FAD Investigation Updates - Pg. 3
- Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Update - Pg. 4
- Brucellosis Regulatory Updates - Pg. 5
- Equine West Nile Virus 2021 Updates - Pg. 6
- Swine Biosecurity - Pg. 7
- Biosecurity Requirements for HPAI Indemnity Eligibility - Pg. 8
- AUS Updates - Pg. 8
- Fall/Winter Avian Influenza Season is Around the Corner - Pg. 9
- CAHEN 2021 Summer Outreach - Pg. 10
- The Case for 840 RFID Tags - Pg. 10
- Renewal for Trichomonosis Approved Veterinarians and Laboratories - Pg. 11
- We've Only Just Begun - Pg. 12
- Pets on Public Transportation - Pg. 12
- @AHBgov is Live on Facebook! - Pg. 13
- Staff Biographies - Pg. 14
- Animal Health Branch Contact Information - Pg. 16



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Animal Health Branch Newsletter

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Animal Health Branch Message

By: Anita Edmondson, BVMS, MPVM, MRCVS, Branch Chief

"To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often."

- Winston Churchill

This is a time of change for many people, including Animal Health Branch personnel; a time for improving, rearranging, and innovating our work environment and work mentality. In September, the Branch headquarters office engaged in a stressful and eventful move from Gateway Oaks to 1220 N Street, Sacramento. Masses of records and documents had to be organized and packed; equipment labeled and reassigned, and storage facilities emptied and cleaned. The new office space accommodates less staff and encourages personnel to telework from the comfort of their home. Most of the office spaces are shared and staff come into the office on specific days to meet with their team members. This change requires adjustments for all, but it increases the family friendly environment the Branch is creating, and decreases facility costs for the State. Even though our physical location has changed, our phone and email contacts remain the same. A big thank you to those who helped facilitate this move.

The Branch launched a new social media site intended to connect with people, like you, who care about California's agriculture. Our goal is to share our story, show our work, and educate on important diseases and agricultural topics. The creative social media team also worked long and hard on a logo for the Branch; I am proud to officially introduce the logo for the branch in this newsletter, which our social media team worked so hard to create and hope you like it as much as I do. Some of our staff also worked hard to develop an infographic, to show what the Branch does in a simplified way; please follow the link to check it out [CDFA - AHFSS - AHB \(ca.gov\)](https://www.cdffarmers.org/ahb).

I am excited that we have added several new personnel to our creative and vibrant team, bringing new ideas and concepts to the Branch that will greatly benefit our programs. Please contact us if you are interested in joining our team as we offer flexible work schedules, a family friendly atmosphere, and enhanced safety in work environments to avoid the impacts of COVID.

The Branch has shown its strength, as it changes and adapts to the eradication of some diseases, the emergence of new diseases, and environmental issues in this fast-changing world around us. I am proud to lead the Branch in its new chapter on N street, and I look forward to more improvements and changes in the future.

- Dr. Anita Edmondson

Prevent the Misuse of the Animal Product Ivermectin

By: Anita Varga, DVM, MS, DACVIM-LA

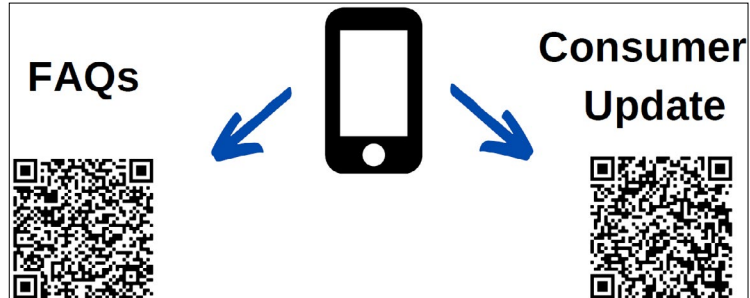
A lot of misconceptions about the treatment and prevention of COVID-19 are still circulating in the general population. One of them is the use of Ivermectin, a drug approved to control parasite infections, to treat or prevent COVID-19 infections.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as, poison control centers across the U.S. are reporting

a massive increase in reports of people suffering from adverse health effects after taking the animal drug Ivermectin. Ivermectin is marketed as “pour on”, injectable formulation, oral paste, and as a “drench” intended for the use on cattle, sheep, and horses. People using this animal drug can have adverse health effects and can become very sick.

The use of an animal formulated medication in people has several issues: this formulation has not been tested and evaluated for use in people; it has not been evaluated for effectiveness or safety; people using this medication can have dangerous side effects; the drug might not work at all; or the drug may increase, or worsen the illness and/or lead to dangerous and potentially life-threatening health effects. It is not recommended that people use any products that are labeled for veterinary use on animals due to the risk.

Please help protect public health by reporting any animal drug advertising/animal ivermectin products with claims about preventing or curing COVID-19 by emailing FDA-COVID-19-Fraudulent-Products@fda.hhs.gov or calling 1-888-InfoFDA (1-888-463-6332).



Job Opening: JC- 263107 Veterinarian (General) Avian (Sacramento)

By: Felicia Pohl, Research Scientist

The AHB is recruiting for an avian veterinarian to join our Avian Health Team. The person in this position will act as a technical scientific consultant in such areas as:

- Epidemiologic or biostatistical investigations of poultry diseases and outbreaks.
- Serving as an expert or lead in one or more of the poultry programs or functions.
- Establishing and maintaining contact with poultry and bird producers, and backyard flock owners, feed stores, Live Bird Markets, and auctions.

More details about this position may be found on CALHR's website at the link below:

[JC- 263107 - VETERINARIAN \(GENERAL\) – SACRAMENTO COUNTY](#)

Foreign Animal Disease Investigations July 1- September 30, 2021

By: Alireza Javidmehr, DVM, MPVM, PhD

Protecting the livestock industry against Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) outbreaks is the highest priority for California's Animal Health Officials. This mission is accomplished by continuously preparing the responders, strengthening diagnostic capabilities, and utilizing the latest technologies for the detection of reportable disease conditions. **One hundred and eighty-six (186)** FAD suspicious cases (Table 1) were investigated by CDFA/AHB and USDA/VS veterinarians during the past three months to help safeguard California's livestock industry. Almost 95% of all State investigations were conducted to rule out Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in pigs. In all of these cases, lesions were instead caused by Senecavirus (SVA), an endemic disease in the US. Since lesions are similar in both diseases, any swine with vesicular lesions are suspects of FADs.

Any animal presenting similar signs of FADs must be treated as though it has the disease of concern until FADs can be ruled out. All emergency conditions listed in the California reportable animal disease list can be found in the below web link, and must be reported to the local animal health authorities within 24 hours. The AHB district offices' contact information is listed on the last page of this newsletter. For the list of reportable conditions, please visit the following site: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/animal_health/pdfs/CA_reportable_disease_list_poster.pdf

Table 1. Summary of FAD investigations from July 1 to September 30, 2021

AHB Districts	Disease	Species	Sample Type	Number of Investigations	Destination Lab*	NVSL Result
Modesto	Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Senecavirus A (SVA)	Porcine	Swab	161	CAHFS-Davis	All positive for SVA
	Schmallenberg Virus (SBV)	Caprine	Carcass	1	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis	Negative
	Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV)	Equine	Swabs, Blood	1	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis	Negative
Ontario	VSV	Equine	Blood	3	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis	Negative
	African Swine Fever (ASF), Classical Swine Fever (CSF)	Porcine	Swab	1	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis	Negative
Redding	ASF, CSF	Porcine	Swab	1	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis	Negative
	VSV	Equine	Swabs, Blood	1	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis	Negative
	Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus Serotype 2 (RHDV2)	Rabbit	Carcass	1	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis	Positive
Tulare	FMD, SVA	Porcine	Swab	14	CAHFS-Davis	All positive for SVA
	FMD, VSV	Bovine	Swab	1	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis	Negative
	RHDV2	Rabbit	Liver Tissue	1	NVSL, CAHFS-Davis	Positive

*NVSL: National Veterinary Services Laboratory
CAHFS: California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory
NWHC: USGS National Wildlife Health Center

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHD) Update - September 27, 2021

By: Dr. Andrea Mikolon, DVM, MPVM, PhD

New Vaccine for Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Receives Emergency Use Authorization:

In late September 2021, Medgene Labs (Brookings, SD) received Emergency Use authorization from the United States Department of Agriculture's Center for Veterinary Biologics to sell an experimental vaccine for prevention of Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus serotype 2 (RHDV2). The vaccine is a killed recombinant vaccine which is authorized as a two-dose series, with the second dose given 21 days after the first. The vaccine will be available directly from Medgene Labs for distribution to California licensed veterinarians, starting on October 4, 2021. There previously was no RHD vaccine approved for use in the United States, however, CDFA did allow California-licensed veterinarians to import the European vaccine under permit to protect against RHDV2. Rabbit owners should contact their private veterinarian if they are interested in vaccination for RHD. Veterinarians may contact CDFA at AHBFeedback@cdfa.ca.gov to inquire about obtaining RHD vaccines.

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Detections in California 2020-2021

RHDV2 has been spreading in wild, feral domestic, and domestic rabbits in North America since March 2020, resulting in widespread morbidity and mortality. Over the past year, it has been detected in fifteen (15) U.S. states, seventeen (17) Mexican states, and Alberta, Canada. In California, RHDV2 has been confirmed in domestic rabbits at fifty-seven (57) properties

County	Affected domestic properties	Detected in wild rabbits	Most recent confirmation
Alameda	0	yes	June 2021 (wild)
Fresno	1	no	August 19, 2021 (domestic)
Kern	6	yes	June 29, 2021 (domestic)
Los Angeles	17	yes	June 25, 2021 (domestic)
Orange	0	yes	June 2020 (wild)
Riverside	15	yes	June 15, 2021 (domestic)
San Bernardino	5	yes	March 17, 2021 (domestic), May 2021 (wild)
San Diego	6	yes	May 17, 2021 (domestic), June 2021 (wild)
San Luis Obispo	1	no	July 1, 2021 (domestic)
Sonoma	1	no	August 19, 2021 (domestic)
Ventura	5	no	May 7, 2021 (feral domestic)
Grand Total	57		

since July 2020. The most recent detections in Ventura County were in feral domestic rabbits. RHDV2 is now moving northward; in June 2021 it was detected in a wild jackrabbit in Alameda County. In July 2021 it was detected in domestic rabbits in San Luis Obispo County, and in August 2021 it was detected in domestic rabbits in Fresno and Sonoma Counties.

Please report dead domestic rabbits to CDFA at 909-947-4462. Consult your private veterinarian if your domestic rabbit is sick. Report dead wild rabbits to the California Department of Fish & Wildlife at 916-358-2790 or <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Laboratories/Wildlife-Health/Monitoring/Mortality-Report>.

Brucellosis Regulatory Updates

By: Angelina Velez, Associate Governmental Program Analyst

Effective October 1st, 2021, the State's Brucellosis vaccination requirements have been amended. The amendments include repealing the requirements for Brucellosis vaccination of female beef breed cattle moving within and into the State of California, updates to the interstate movement requirements of rams pertaining to ovine Brucellosis, and updates to the Animal Health Branch official forms.

Summary of regulation updates impacting private veterinarians and producers:

- Brucellosis Requirements for Moving Cattle Intrastate
 - o Brucellosis vaccination is not required for female beef breed cattle moving within the State
- Brucellosis Requirements for Cattle Entry into California
 - o Brucellosis vaccination is not required for entry of female beef breed cattle
- Requirements for Entry of Rams into California
 - o Rams are exempt from the *Brucella ovis* test requirement when:
 - Moving direct to slaughter; or
 - Entered in a show or sale outside of California and the ram returns to California, with or without change of ownership
- Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI)
 - o For heifers spayed after arrival into California, the name and telephone number of the veterinarian in California performing the spay must be included on the CVI

The Department's Cattle Health Advisory Task Force recommended elimination of the brucellosis vaccination requirements for female beef breed cattle imported into California from other states, citing the risk of brucellosis infection too low to justify the requirement. The last brucellosis infected beef herd in California was detected in 1992, and the United States has been classified as brucellosis-free since 2009. Additionally, the *Brucella ovis* testing requirement for rams moving into California now exempts rams that are moving directly to slaughter, as these animals will be harvested soon after arrival, and their threat for introducing and spreading *Brucella ovis* to otherwise healthy sheep in California is negligible.



These amendments benefit California's cattle and sheep industries by updating existing interstate and intrastate movement requirements for consistency with industry trends, and practices to better control, manage, and eliminate livestock diseases.

Please contact the CDFA Animal Health Branch (AHB) permit desk with any questions regarding movement requirements at 916-900-5002. To access the updated California Code of Regulations (CCR) you can utilize the following link <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Regulations.html>.

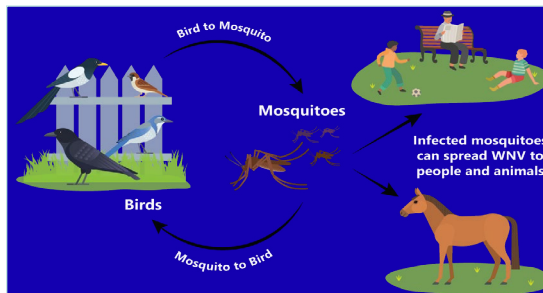
Equine West Nile Virus 2021 Updates

By: Emily Nietrzeba, DVM, MPH

As of October 14, 2021, thirteen (13) cases of equine West Nile Virus (WNV) have been confirmed in California in 2021. A confirmed positive equine WNV case is defined as a horse displaying neurological signs that has a positive IgM capture ELISA test for WNV. The number of equine WNV cases reported only reflects horses with clinical signs that test positive for WNV, and may not be a true representation of the occurrence of WNV infection. This is because horses with mild signs often recover with or without treatment, and may not be tested for WNV. The positive horses in 2021 to date were located in Amador County (one case), Fresno County (two cases), Kings County (one case), Merced County (one case), Sacramento County (two cases), San Joaquin County (three cases), Stanislaus County (one case), and Yuba County (two cases). Nine of these horses were unvaccinated, two horses had unknown vaccine history, and two horses were vaccinated for WNV. Eleven horses are alive and/or recovering, one horse died, and one horse was euthanized.



West Nile Virus is the leading cause of arthropod-borne encephalitis (brain inflammation) in horses and humans in the United States, with horses representing 96.9% of all non-human mammalian cases. The virus is present in all 48 continental United States, Mexico, and Canada, and is transmitted from avian reservoir hosts to mammals by a variety of mosquito species. It is important to remember that both humans and horses are considered dead-end hosts



for WNV, and the virus is not directly contagious from horse to horse or horse to human. WNV vaccination is considered a core vaccination by the American Association of Equine Practitioners and an essential standard of care for all horses in North America.

The most common signs of WNV infection in horses include stumbling, incoordination, weak limbs, partial paralysis, muscle twitching and in some cases, inability to rise, or death. Horse owners should consult a veterinarian immediately if their horse displays any of these signs.

West Nile virus is endemic, meaning here to stay, in the United States. Cases of WNV infection will continue to be detected, especially in the unvaccinated horse population. Vaccination and mosquito control measures will continue to be essential to protecting the health of horses, and humans, in the United States.

This is an excellent opportunity to remind ourselves of the importance of developing and adhering to a protective vaccination program with a licensed veterinarian, and to discuss vector control measures at home and on the farm. In addition to minimizing equine (and human) exposure to mosquitos during peak feeding periods of dawn and dusk and appropriate application of mosquito repellent, effective mosquito abatement recommendations include:

- Draining unnecessary standing water found in wheelbarrows, tires, etc.
- Cleaning water containers at least weekly (i.e., bird baths, plant saucers).
- Scheduling pasture irrigation to minimize standing water.
- Keeping swimming pools optimally chlorinated and draining water from pool covers.
- Stocking water tanks with fish that consume mosquito larvae (Contact local mosquito control for assistance or use mosquito "dunk" available at hardware stores).

Additional information and updated alerts are available here:

https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal_health/Wnv_Info.html

<https://westnile.ca.gov/>

Swine Biosecurity

By: Hector Webster, DVM, MS

The swine industry is invaluable to California's agriculture. The Animal Health Branch aids in the management of swine diseases that cannot be managed by a single producer with private veterinarian assistance. For all swine producers and breeders, having an active working relationship with a private practitioner to aid in disease diagnosis is important because of the highly contagious nature of some diseases specific to swine, as well as, diseases that affect pigs and other species of livestock and/or people. The demand for swine in California is increasing greatly, with expanding ethnic populations also creating new demands on the marketplace. Some marketing may occur through non-traditional avenues, and these avenues are not easily monitored.

Contaminated meat in untreated food waste can cause diseases that may spread to swine and other livestock. Illegally imported animal products, such as meats and sausages, have the potential to cause outbreaks of foreign animal diseases (FADs) such as African and Classical Swine Fever, Foot and Mouth Disease, Vesicular Exanthema, and Swine Vesicular Disease. California state statutes ban the feeding of raw or uncooked "garbage" food waste to swine. The swine garbage feeding laws are the direct result of past occurrences of Swine Vesicular Exanthema and its spread by garbage feeding. The purpose of the law is to prevent the spread of contagious and infectious diseases of swine, as well as, to prevent introduction of economically devastating FADs into California. For this reason, all meat garbage must be sterilized prior to being fed to swine. The Animal Health Branch licenses swine operators that feed food waste to swine, and these facilities are inspected monthly by a Livestock Inspector and/or Veterinarian. Inspectors are also always on the lookout for illegal garbage feeding, which can result in heavy fines or penalties. In cases where other food products are transported to a premises in the same container as raw garbage, the entire load must be heat-treated (cooked) prior to feeding. Other food products, such as produce or bakery goods, may be fed without heat treatment only if kept completely separate from untreated garbage and all equipment used to handle untreated meat garbage.

When traveling internationally, do not bring back animal products from other countries, especially pork products, and do not feed raw or improperly cooked meat waste products to swine. Practice standard biosecurity measures at all times, which include:

- Cleaning and disinfecting clothing, equipment, and vehicles entering and exiting the farm.
- Never allowing human food to enter animal areas, as international food products especially pose an increased risk of disease transmission, and should not be allowed on the farm.
- Maintaining an effective rodent and tick control program.
- Fencing property securely to prevent wild pigs from coming into contact with domestic pigs.

Additional Swine Health Information Resources:

USDA: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/swine-disease-information>

CDFA: https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/AHFSS/Animal_Health/Swine_Health.html

Biosecurity Requirements for HPAI Indemnity Eligibility; Program for Non-NPIP Producers

By: Felicia Pohl, Research Scientist

CDFA Animal Health Branch has implemented a biosecurity audit program to verify compliance with USDA regulations for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) indemnity eligibility. This program will be for producers in specified production categories* that are NOT members of the [National Poultry Improvement Plan](#) (NPIP).

* The specified production categories are premises with:

- More than 100,000 broilers (annually).
- More than 75,000 table egg layers.
- More than 30,000 meat turkeys (annually).
- More than 25,000 raised-for-release upland game birds or raised-for-release waterfowl.
- More than 25,000 commercial upland game bird or waterfowl producing eggs for human consumption.
- More than 5,000 breeding birds.

Non-NPIP producers in the specified categories will not be eligible for HPAI indemnity if they do not participate in this program. Participation in this program is not associated with Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) indemnity. More information about the program can be found at [Commercial Poultry Biosecurity](#).

AUS Updates

By: Antimicrobial Use & Stewardship Program

CDFA Providing VFD Outreach to Veterinarians

The Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship branch (AUS) has teamed up with Inspection Services and Animal Health Branch to provide educational outreach to California veterinarians on common Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) errors. AUS is currently reaching out to, and consulting with veterinarians who have written a VFD within the past two years that contains errors. With this outreach effort, and as familiarity with writing VFDs increases, it is expected that there will be fewer VFDs with issues in the future. For more information regarding the Veterinary Feed Directive, please contact AUS at cdfa_aus@cdfa.ca.gov or (916) 576-0300.

AUS Collaboration with VIN to Produce VFD Calculator

In an effort to help veterinarians calculate drug dosages for Veterinary Feed Directives (VFDs), AUS has joined in a public-private partnership with the Veterinary Information Network (VIN) to produce a free, online tool for veterinary use in completing VFDs for all types of livestock. Access to this publicly available, online calculator for both non-members and members of VIN is available at the following link: <https://www.vin.com/vfd>

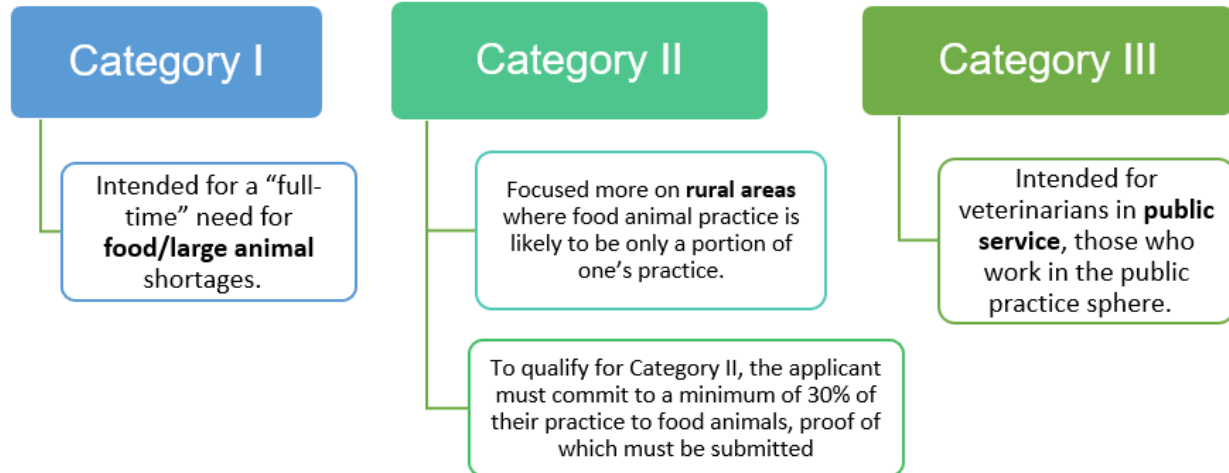
Identify Veterinary Shortage Areas for Nomination by CDFA

Veterinarians and producers can help guide CDFA's efforts to nominate veterinary shortage areas for [USDA NIFA's Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program \(VMLRP\)](#). The program helps qualified veterinarians offset a significant portion of the debt incurred in pursuit of their veterinary medicine degrees, in return for their service in certain high-priority veterinary shortage situations. CDFA is currently seeking input on areas experiencing a veterinary shortage for consideration in the 2022 nomination cycle. Veterinarians can then apply for funding in Spring 2022 if they work in a designated shortage area, and meet the requirements for positions designated as one of the three categories, described below in Figure 1.

(Continued on page 9)

AUS Updates - continued

Figure 1. Types of Nominations Accepted by USDA NIFA



CDFA AUS requests that nomination suggestions be emailed to cdfa_aus@cdfa.ca.gov, or be [submitted as a survey entry](#) prior to the end of October 2021 for consideration as a potential nomination.

Understanding Disease Challenges and Antibiotic Use Practices across California's Diverse Aquaculture Sectors

The CDFA AUS program has worked with [UC Davis Aquaculture Cooperative Extension](#) experts to develop a survey that will be issued statewide to all aquaculture sectors, including state-run hatcheries, starting in early October 2021. The aquaculture industry in California is diverse and this survey will collect comprehensive data on disease challenges across the different sectors, including management practices pertaining to animal health, biosecurity protocols, and antibiotic use practices. Data collected through this survey, a review of literature, and input from an expert work group will be used to develop antibiotic stewardship guidelines to assist producers in making informed decisions regarding antibiotic use on their farms. For more information, please contact Alex Wright at axwright@ucdavis.edu.

Fall/Winter Avian Influenza Season is Around the Corner

By: Felicia Pohl, Research Scientist

Waterfowl and shorebirds (known reservoirs of Avian Influenza) are migrating, and it is important to be vigilant to mitigate chances of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) infection during this time. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Ensure your flock is biosecure: Review your biosecurity plan and make sure your employees do so as well. Refer to CDFA's Commercial Poultry & Backyard Poultry Biosecurity pages, and Simple Wildlife Practices.
- Know the signs of HPAI.
- Call your veterinarian at the first signs of illness, or if you do not have a regular veterinarian, call the Sick Bird Hotline 1-866-922-2473.
- Keep an eye on wild birds: Check the CDFW Avian Investigations webpage for further details, and to know when to call to report dead wild birds. You can also refer to the California Waterfowl Tracker to better assess the locations of waterfowl relative to poultry farms.

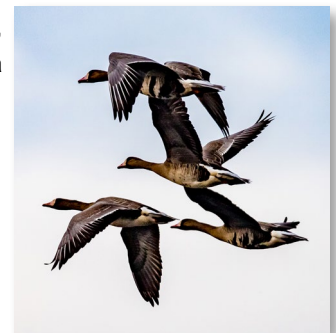


Photo Credit: Dayv Glusing

CAHEN 2021 Summer Outreach

By: Laura Bradley, DVM

California Avian Health Education Network (CAHEN) is one of the CDFA Animal Health Branch's newest programs, which serves Southern California poultry enthusiasts. One of our primary missions is to provide information to our communities about preventing the spread of avian diseases, and keeping poultry healthy. The pandemic provided many global hurdles, and has impacted the way we communicate with one another. We understand how important it is to provide the public with the resources, and knowledge necessary to prevent the spread of deadly avian diseases such as Avian Influenza and virulent Newcastle Disease. In response to the need for more outreach, we have opened new lines of communication with you through our social media including Facebook (@California Avian Health Education Network) and Instagram (@cahenet).

While respecting current COVID-19 protocols, CAHEN attended events like the Exotic Bird Mart, the Ramona Country Fair, and the Orange County Fair to connect with community members, and provide resources such as take home literature, educational coloring books, laboratory and online resources such as www.socalnestbox.com.

We shared over 900 amazing conversations with fellow avian advocates through these events, and we would love to say "Hi" to you! To see where we might pop up next, be sure to follow us on social media and visit us at www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal_health/cahen.html.



The Case for 840 RFID Tags

By: Halley Fobes, DVM

When we talk about electronic identification for livestock species, we are generally referring to Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) eartags. An RFID tag contains a microchip encoding a unique number, which can be read when it is energized by a electronic reader/transceiver. The tag itself does not emit any kind of signal until the reader is within a few feet; when the wand comes close enough, the short-range radio frequency it emits gives the transponder tag enough energy that its number can be read.

Many dairies and feedyards use RFID tags for their management, because this method saves processing

(Continued on page 11)

The Case for 840 RFID Tags - continued

time. Specific management software imports scanned RFID numbers, and associates them with the animal's more visible tag number, and its herd management health data, such as weight and drug administrations. Scanning of these tags also reduces errors that may occur when numbers are transcribed by hand.



While there are several types of RFIDs, the “840” series tags are accepted by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as a form of official identification. These 840 tags encode a 15-digit number that starts with the digits 8-4-0; the entire number is also printed on the tag. The 840-RFID eartags can be used in place of metal NUES tags (aka “silver brite” or brucellosis tags) for border crossing, brucellosis vaccination, TB testing, or any other situation where an official identification is required. 840-RFID eartags not only provide the convenience of RFID management, but they also eliminate the requirement for additional tags, reducing both labor and animal handling time. Because of their placement and structure, RFID tags are less prone to falling out or causing infection compared to metal NUES tags.



Other RFID eartags, for example the 982 series tags (tag numbers begin with the digits 9-8-2), are not accepted as official identification, and cannot be used for border crossings, TB testing, or brucellosis vaccinations. Hence an animal with a 982 tag requires an additional official ID to cross state lines, meaning that the cattle have to be retagged with an official ID, requiring additional time, and labor costs.

Official RFIDs are easy to trace in a disease outbreak, and quickly identify the affected herd and animals, leading to faster mitigation and eradication of diseases that could significantly influence California's agriculture. Fast



and efficient traceability of diseased animals saves time, reduces the economic impact on the industry, and protects unaffected herds from disease exposure. Effective traceability improves consumer confidence in California's food supply, increasing sales of US produced animal products.

Renewal for Trichomonosis Approved Veterinarians and Laboratories

By: Beth Francia Wilson, Senior Livestock Inspector

Thank you for your continued participation in helping detect and control bovine trichomonosis. Approval for veterinarians to officially sample for bovine trichomonosis with the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Animal Health Branch must be renewed every two years. The new agreement will be mailed to you in the near future. Please update your contact information, sign and return your renewal before your current agreement expires on **December 31, 2021**. Any testing, reading or diagnosing of trichomonosis samples must be performed in a trichomonosis approved laboratory. Initial laboratory approval requires training with the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory and is renewed on a two year schedule. Laboratory renewal forms will also be distributed this year in a separate mailing.

Reminder: The 2021-22 trich year began on September 1, 2021, and goes through August 31, 2022. The trich approved tags for this year are **white**.

For more information please visit our webpage: www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/animal_health/Trichomonosis_Info.html

We've Only Just Begun

By: Sonia Brown, Program Manager II

The most recent [report](#) from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change states that changing climate will likely drive “more frequent and severe” weather disasters, meaning more “heatwaves, drought and forest fires”. Emergency managers everywhere, including here in the AHB, are focused on that future.

California has had its share of wildfires due to these conditions. Since January 19, 2021 to the most recent fire that started on September 5, California has seen 64 fires of varying degrees of severity. According to CAL FIRE, three (3) of the largest wildfires in history have occurred this year in California alone. The reality of the situation is that we've only just begun the true fire season as September through November are the most vulnerable months for wildfires. Rising temperatures and little to no rainfall contribute to an increasingly dry climate, and fierce winds that reach hurricane strength can carry embers for extraordinary distances, causing more destructive fires. Due to the changing weather patterns, some experts suggest that the fire season in California is now year-round.



Many people are realizing that places they thought were safe may now be vulnerable. Threats exist not only to their homes, but also to their animals. There has been an average of 500+ large and small animals evacuated from each of the larger fires. During the Caldor Fire alone, volunteer animal rescue groups evacuated about 1,800 large and small animals. The Caldor Fire in El Dorado County prompted the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to seek assistance from CDFA through a mission resource task (MRT) for various roles because personnel resources had become scarce.

CDFA was activated on August 5 and several Animal Health Branch (AHB) employees were deployed under the California Animal Response Emergency System (CARES) Program. Some of the deployments included activation of the CDFA CA Emergency Support Function 11 (CA-ESF 11), a Resource Coordinator to virtually support the El Dorado County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), a CDFA Agency Representative to report to the State Operations Center (SOC), and three (3) employees supporting the El Dorado County Animal Services Department Operations Center (DOC) to fill the positions of Planning and Intelligence Section Chief, Resource Unit Leader, and Logistics Chief. Additionally, the CA-ESF 11 Coordinator, jointly with the CA-ESF 8 Public Health and Medical Coordinator, coordinated the activation of the California Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (CAVMRC). During this incident, the AHB CARES Program's primary focus has been to provide efficient assistance and support to state, federal, and local government officials, including animal services to ensure the welfare of animals.

Pets on Public Transportation – Best Practices Public Utilities Code 99166

By: Sonia Brown, Program Manager II

Public Utilities Code (PUC) 99166 tasked the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), and California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), in consultation with public transportation, and county emergency management officials, to develop best practices for animal evacuation on public transportation during emergencies. The Best Practices was completed in August 2021. Although the document has not been widely disseminated, the California Animal Response Emergency System (CARES) program manager recently presented the document at a Transportation Workshop, which included several transit agencies and local government emergency management officials. Advanced copies have been provided to select transit agencies and local government emergency managers based on their consultation services. Thus far, there has been an overwhelming positive response. The Best Practices are available on the [CDFA Animal Health Branch website](#).

@AHBgov is Live on Facebook!

By: Andrea Garbaba, DVM; Lani Gusman, DVM

During the first week of September 2021, the Animal Health Branch's Social Media Group (AHB-SMG) received approval by California State veterinarian, Dr. Annette Jones, to unveil the first social media platform for the Branch with Facebook. The AHB-SMG plans to post three times a week to engage the public with positive, professional, fun, and factual messaging. There have been several posts on the new Facebook page so far, and we are gaining more followers every week. The first post received over 1,600 views, showing us that we are off to a great start with our followers.

The goals of the AHB-SMG are to engage the public through various social media outlets with regulatory and agricultural topics presented in a useful and entertaining way. These include fun facts, pop quiz questions, the importance of our job duties, and useful information about disease prevention and mitigation. We strive to show the positive impact AHB has on protecting California's agriculture and ensuring the health of our livestock industries.

The social media team is a collaborative effort between veterinarians, social media experts, and YOU! Please send any topic ideas, photos, or blurbs you would like to see posted to: ahbfeedback@cdfa.ca.gov. As always, we ask that photos do not include any identifying information (faces of the public, premise information, etc.). Please make sure to "like" and "follow" our [AHB Facebook page](#), and help us gain an even greater following and continue our outreach efforts.

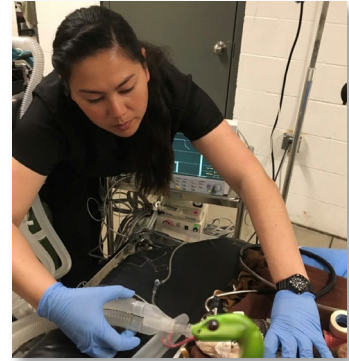




Staff Biographies



Dr. Laura Bradley joined CDFA Animal Health Branch as a Veterinarian with the California Avian Health Education Network (CAHEN) in November 2020. Dr. Bradley knew that veterinary medicine was her path when she was eight years old after finding an injured California scrub jay (bird). She nursed it back to health, and then released it back into the wild. The happiness of seeing that jay fly made her realize where her future would lead, and she has never looked back. After graduating with a Bachelors Degree in Cellular and Developmental Biology from the California State University Fullerton, she was accepted into the veterinary medicine program at Ross University.



Through her veterinary path, Dr. Bradley further developed her passions in the One Health ideology, and healing all creatures big and small through volunteering at wildlife rehabilitation sites, bird of prey release programs, and externships through SeaWorld San Antonio and Wildlife Safari, Oregon. After working at a private small animal practice for some time, she felt the calling to serve her community in a different way and joined the public service through CDFA.

Dr. Bradley is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association, the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council, Association of Avian Veterinarians, and the Southern California Veterinary Medical Association. When she is not serving the public, she can be found volunteering through the California Disaster healthcare Volunteers, VolunteerMatch.org, and BethMatch.org, or baking with her sphinx cat, named Mr. Phil, or spending time with friends over a good board game.



Dr. Halley Fobes grew up in Gold River, just east of Sacramento. From an early age, she was outside exploring nature, and almost every vacation her family took had a bird list, and a long hike. She was also an active member of Sacramento County 4-H, raising and showing rabbits. A family friend working on an HIV prophylactic sparked her interest in epidemiology. Initially intending to be a physician, Dr. Fobes fell in love with dairy cattle while an undergraduate at UC Davis. She lived and worked on the campus dairy, and rode with a local veterinarian. She chose to become a dairy veterinarian because it combined her interest in epidemiology with her love of animals and being outdoors. Dr. Fobes attended Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, graduating in 2015. Her first job was at a busy Central Valley dairy and livestock practice. During her time there, she was very involved in the milk quality lab and found her passion helping clients with mastitis issues. After sustaining multiple injuries, Dr. Fobes' transitioned from dairy practitioner to small animal medicine in 2019, first in relief and then as a full-time general practitioner. She is very excited to return to the livestock world as part of the Animal Disease Traceability Program. Dr. Fobes looks forward to being of service to the industry, animals, the environment, and the state.



Dr. Fobes lives in Turlock with her husband, two children, and three cats. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking and backpacking.



Staff Biographies



Mandy Johnson, Senior Emergency Services Coordinator, has been working with the Emergency Preparedness and Response Section of the Animal Health Branch (AHB) for almost two (2) years. Growing up in the inner city of Chicago, Mandy was inspired to be part of community change and began pursuing opportunities that would lead to a life in public service. As a young adult, Mandy moved from an urban landscape in a state known for cows and cornfields to California's capital city, Sacramento, a city proud to be called "Cow Town".

Mandy earned a Bachelor's degree in Psychology/Criminal Justice at Sacramento State University followed by a Master's degree in Criminal Justice through the University of Phoenix. After many years in law enforcement, Mandy's desire for continued professional development led her down the path of emergency preparedness and response. Her continued education and certifications in this field include a Fire Technology Associate's degree, completion of FEMA's Basic Emergency Management Academy, ProBoard certification, and Outreach Instructor certification through the California Office of Emergency Services, California Specialized Training Institute. She has also published public safety and emergency preparedness best practices in newspapers on behalf of Roseville Police Department, and online at PoliceOne.com, and CorrectionsOne.com. Throughout her career, Mandy has served as an adjunct professor, peer trainer, and an industry expert on a variety of topics including criminal street gangs, human trafficking, the incident command system, and emergency preparedness. When the chance to merge her training and experience in public safety and emergency preparedness with animal health at AHB became available, it was a welcomed opportunity.

Mandy enjoys humor and team building with her co-workers. In her personal time, Mandy gives her time to help support wellness and good mental health of military personnel, by volunteering at a non-profit organization that sends care packages to deployed service members worldwide. Mandy also enjoys taking on projects that help care for her family, or bring joy to others, such as teaching herself how to safely preserve and can foods, or learning a new crochet pattern. Mandy is self-taught in sign language and is currently learning how to speak Russian conversationally. Mandy and her family, which includes two furbabies, live in the Sacramento area.



Dr. Dan Hagerty recently joined the Animal Health Branch as Supervising Veterinarian for the Disease Mitigation and Surveillance section. Dr. Hagerty is very excited to join the AHB team, and hopes to continue exploring and broadening his role within veterinary medicine. Dr. Hagerty graduated from the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine in 2013, focusing on large animal medicine and surgery. After graduation, he completed an intensive, year-long internship at Loomis Basin Equine Medical Center in Penryn, CA. This provided him a foundation in critical care, surgery, and all aspects of ambulatory equine medicine. He continued working as an equine veterinary associate for a few years before starting his own ambulatory, mixed animal practice in 2017. Dr.

Hagerty professional interests include focus on preventative care for all species, public health and zoonotic diseases, and bovine/equine reproduction. Prior to veterinary school, he worked as a wildlife biologist studying small mammal population dynamics in various California national forests. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his family, fishing, reading, playing music, working at his ranch, and exploring the back country.



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