

OFFICE OF VETERINARY SERVICES GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

Virginia Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services



DIVISION OF ANIMAL AND FOOD INDUSTRY SERVICES

Office of Veterinary Services

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Contents

Guidelines for Interpretation of Certain Regulations and Statutes 3
 GUIDELINES FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF ANIMAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS, 2VAC5-141..... 3
 GUIDELINES FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF EIA REGULATIONS 7
 GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO AGRICULTURAL ANIMAL WELFARE 9
Guidelines for Disease Management, Biosecurity, and Other Animal Health Issues 12
 VDACS *MYCOPLASMA GALLISEPTICUM* (MG) RESPONSE PLAN 12
 HEALTH GUIDELINES FOR VIRGINIA FAIRS EXHIBITING LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY..... 14
 BIOSECURITY PROCEDURES FOR VIRGINIA DAIRY FARM INSPECTIONS BY EPA 16
Animal Disease Traceability 20
 OFFICIAL ID FOR CATTLE: GUIDELINES FOR LARGE ANIMAL PRACTITIONERS IN VIRGINIA..... 20
 OFFICIAL ID FOR SHEEP AND GOATS: GUIDELINES FOR LARGE ANIMAL PRACTITIONERS IN VIRGINIA . 21
 TAGGING DAIRY STEERS ON THE FARM..... 22

Guidelines for Interpretation of Certain Regulations and Statutes

GUIDELINES FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF ANIMAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS, 2VAC5-141

PART 20, SWINE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- A. Requirements are to be interpreted based on the characterization of the swine herd from which pigs are being imported (with the issuing veterinarian being in the best position to make this determination if it is not clear). If that herd meets the definition of Commercial swine including no potential exposure to wildlife and therefore feral swine, additional testing is not necessary. This includes pigs imported for research. Confirmation of total confinement or double fencing by the issuing veterinarian may be necessary.
- B. Pigs from a farm of origin that raises “Pet Pigs” (pot belly pigs, miniatures pigs, etc.) are not considered commercial and require testing regardless of the facility design.

PART 70, CATTLE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- A. If OVS becomes aware of cattle greater than 18 months of age imported into Virginia without the required official identification and / or negative tuberculosis test (CFT or CCT), the following steps should be taken:
 - 1. The cattle owner at the Virginia destination (importer) should be contacted as soon as possible by OVS to make them aware of the requirement for official ID and TB testing, and to quarantine as indicated below.
 - 2. The imported cattle will be quarantined (not allowed to leave the farm) until negative TB tests with official ID which have been applied to each animal over 18 months of age are submitted to the regional office.
 - a. A written quarantine document on the imported animals referencing the CVI state of origin, certificate number, and number and type of animals listed should be issued and mailed or hand delivered to the producer.
 - b. Conditions for quarantine release will be that a negative TB test form, with official ID recorded, be submitted to the regional office. In the case of missing ID only, an amended copy of the original CVI with official ID applied by an accredited veterinarian listed, signed by that veterinarian be submitted to the regional office. For the first offense only, VDACS may allow the producer to pick up (or be mailed) official ID from the regional office and apply such ID to the cattle in question, which will be confirmed at a later date (up to 4 months?) as established when an accredited veterinarian is next on the farm to confirm the ID and amend a copy of the noncompliant

- CVI. In this case, the amended CVI will be delivered to the regional office and serve as proof of compliance.
- c. Costs associated with TB testing and official ID placement are to be assumed by the cattle owner at the Virginia destination (importer).
3. If after 2 weeks (or other established period if only ID was missing, depending on next expected visit by accredited veterinarian), the imported cattle in question have not been identified with negative TB results submitted, all of the cattle on the premises should be placed under written quarantine until the imported cattle are tested TB negative with official ID. Prosecution should be considered in cases of blatant disregard of the law or if the existence of untested, non-identified cattle puts other cattle at significant risk.
- B. In certain cases, cattle required to be TB tested may be allowed to be brought into Virginia without TB testing under special permit from the State Veterinarian and such may be granted verbally by him or the program manager if so appointed. This permit is intended only to be issued rarely, and for one of the following reasons:
- a. The cattle recently purchased are lactating dairy cows bought at an out-of-state auction where it would be logistically very burdensome for the importer to have the cattle TB tested prior to import (and concurrently arrange for them to be milked while awaiting the TB test to be read). In this case, it is the responsibility of the importer to arrange for TB testing within 1 week of arrival at his expense. The cattle will arrive with a CVI documenting official ID with a permit number listed, and be isolated and quarantined until test negative.
 - b. The cattle imported into Virginia are destined to be exported to another country whose TB requirements are such that the TB test required for entry for Virginia would cause the exporter not to be able to legally test the animals for export (ie they are scheduled to be tested within next 60 days as required for export). The cattle will arrive with a CVI documenting official ID with a permit number listed, and be isolated and quarantined until test negative.
 - c. A Virginia resident purchasing the cattle claims that he cannot get the cattle TB tested by an accredited veterinarian at their origin in time for the arranged transportation. The importer must be the owner of the cattle and request to be allowed to TB test in VA at his sole expense within 7 days. The cattle will arrive with a CVI documenting official ID with a permit number listed, and be isolated and quarantined until test negative.
- C. Regarding subsection F, “exemption” of TB test and CVI for cattle sold at a livestock market, the following guidance will be applied for interpretation:
- a. The “exemption” from the requirement of TB testing and CVIs is voluntary, but OVS encourages markets to pursue the exemption, as it will be easier on the market and result in increased traceability.
 - b. The “exemption” applies to livestock markets that agree to BOTH subparts 1 and 2 of part F. As stated in the regulation, all cattle offered for sale at the approved

livestock market over 18 months of age, dairy females of any age, and weaned beef cattle intended for breeding less than 18 months of age are required to have official ID in order for the market to qualify for the exemption. This means that cattle from within Virginia as well as those from out of state are required to have official ID in order to qualify for this exemption.

- c. Whenever official, permanent ID is required, 840 or 900-series RFID tags are greatly preferred for ease of collection unless otherwise noted below. VDACS will assist with 840 RFID systems only.
- d. For cattle over 18 months of age, adequate official ID depends on the class and disposition of the cattle, and shall be 840 or 900-series RFID tags or USDA metal tags unless one of the following exemptions applies.
 - i. If sale records indicate that they are purchased by a USDA approved slaughter facility, a back tag is sufficient.
 - ii. For all dairy-type cattle sold out of the butcher pen and all cattle sold from the slow pen where the buyer is a licensed Virginia Cattle Dealer who informs the market that the cattle will be shipped to a USDA approved slaughter facility within four days, a back tag is sufficient.
 - iii. For all non-dairy-type cattle sold out of the butcher pen where the buyer is a licensed Virginia Cattle Dealer and submits to the regional OVS office within 14 days of purchase a completed type written form indicating the backtag number of each animal purchased and not receiving a permanent official ear tag, the date of purchase, the USDA approved facility purchased from, the date and location of the USDA approved slaughter facility at which it was killed, and copies of supporting purchase invoices and plant kill sheets.
 - iv. Any cattle that are deemed to be an unreasonable risk for injury to either themselves or people by VDACS personnel will be exempt from permanent official ID.
- b. For cattle less than 18 months of age, adequate official ID depends on the class and disposition of the cattle, and is considered as follows:
 - i. For dairy type males (steers and bulls) not intended for breeding and less than 18 months of age and freemartins as determined by the seller less than 18 months of age, a USDA backtag, 840 or 900-series RFID tag, or USDA metal tag will be considered by VDACS to be official ID, as authorized by the section on cattle identification (2 VAC 5-141-30). VDACS will provide metal ear tags for this purpose.
 - ii. Dairy type females other than freemartins as determined by the seller less than 18 months of age are required to be identified the same as adults, with either a USDA metal or 840 or 900-series RFID tag.

- iii. For beef type males and females less than 18 months and intended for breeding, official permanent ID is required. Breeding intent is to be determined by interview of the buyer as to what his/her intended use for the animals bought is. It is acknowledged that a buyer may intend a heifer for feeding when bought, but decide to keep her as replacement at a later date. It is also acknowledged that some buyers may not provide a truthful response. Any female that is showing outwards signs or pregnancy, is diagnosed pregnant, or has calved is considered for breeding purposes regardless of the buyer's stated intentions.
- iv. For beef type breeds less than 18 months of age not intended for breeding, no official identification is necessary.
- c. How to conduct investigations/enforce regulations:
 - i. Investigation - Market records will be monitored, and if the consignor is listed as having an out-of-state address, they will be considered as such and investigated. Out of state vehicle license plates will also be cause for investigation. When necessary, road checks may be conducted to identify livestock coming into VA.
 - ii. The producer/animal owner that crosses state lines with an animal (whether or not the animal is intended to be consigned to a Virginia livestock market) is the entity that is primarily responsible for ensuring that the cattle have the required identification and for obtaining a CVI and any required testing. If cattle are imported into Virginia without a CVI, ID, or required testing, it is the current owner at the time of import into Virginia that is primarily responsible and on whom an investigation will be performed. If the cattle are detected before unloading at the market, unloading will not be allowed and they will be told to return to their state of origin. If the animal is accepted for sale and sold by the livestock market, that market is also in violation of import regulations, and the investigation results will be turned over to state or federal authorities (supported by 2VAC5-141-20, B).
 - iii. After a complete investigation is performed, the market will be given an opportunity to voluntarily come into compliance with issues identified by OVS investigator within seven days.
 - iv. If the market has not come into compliance within seven days, the investigation results will be turned over to the local Commonwealth's Attorney, with the recommendation to move the case forward.
 - v. As with all violations of the animal health regulations, violators are guilty of a class 1 misdemeanor, as determined by the court.

GUIDELINES FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF EIA REGULATIONS

1. A valid Coggins is not required for change of ownership.
2. When a Coggins form is required, a legible copy is acceptable. The original form is preferred, but not required, for equines being sold.
3. Each equine assembling in any activity, including an auction or sale, is required to have a valid Coggins test report.
4. A Coggins is required when going to any place where the presence of other horses could reasonably be expected (such as a state park) even if the horses (equines) in your group are of a single owner/farm. County or state park officials may request that the horse owner provide a valid Coggins test report if the request is made in the immediate vicinity of the horses truck/trailer. If the horse and rider are away from the truck/trailer, they are not required to maintain the Coggins report on their person at all times, but are required to produce one for the official, and having it on hand may avoid potential inconveniences in order to do so.
5. For horses at veterinary clinics, a valid Coggins or concurrent Coggins testing at the time of arrival to the clinic is required.
6. For horses that are boarding, or are at a rescue or retirement facility, horses must have a valid Coggins to enter the facility and to leave and re-enter the facility.

I. General Statement to Concerned Horse Owners:

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has recently revised Virginia's regulation concerning the control of Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA). The intent of this revision is to protect Virginia's horse population from this debilitating disease by ensuring that all horses participating in events or congregating in other places have been tested and found negative for EIA; horse owners will be able to participate in organized events or utilize recreational spaces such as Virginia's state parks knowing that they are not putting their horse at increased risk for contracting EIA. The revised regulation will have the following effects:

- Horse owners will need to have a current negative Coggins test certificate for any horse that they take to an equine event or other public place for recreational use. Coggins test certificates are good for twelve months from the date the blood sample needed for the test was drawn from the horse.
- A legible paper or digital copy of an original Coggins will be acceptable under the new regulation, unless an event organizer specifically requires an original for that event.
- Horse owners do not need to carry the certificate with them while riding. They can keep the certificate in their vehicle or trailer.

EIA can have serious consequences for horses, their owners, and the vitality of Virginia's horse industry. Therefore, the State Veterinarian recommends that all horses be tested for EIA annually. A horse owner who has their horses tested annually and keeps copies of the current test certificates in their truck or trailer will not need to worry about being noncompliant with this regulation; they will be prepared to enjoy any equine event or recreational opportunity that Virginia has to offer.

II. Instructions to Equine Event Managers (statement to be provided to equine groups that inquire):

The State Veterinarian's Office will continue to contact equine event managers as we have in previous years to ensure that all participating horses have a valid negative Coggins.

Any organized equine show, sale, exhibition, contest, fair, trail ride, parade, wagon train, charity or social event, or any other occurrence at which any number of horses of more than one (1) owner are gathered, is considered to be an equine event and proof of a valid negative Coggins is required. A valid test is one which has a negative result from blood drawn less than one (1) year from the event date and matches the horse presented. One person should be designated by the organization to serve as the equine event manager. Additionally, the event manager is subject to notification prior to the event from the State Veterinarian's Office to provide documentation in the form of a report detailing that each horse at the event has a valid negative Coggins test.

2VAC-5-70-20 of the regulation entitled "Health requirements governing the control of equine infectious anemia in Virginia" states that:

The person in charge will ensure that a copy of the official negative test results accompanies each horse in the event or activity, and shall make such reports available for inspection by a representative of the State Veterinarian upon request. The person in charge shall exclude any horse which is not accompanied by a negative test report.

Not all equine events will receive notice on every occasion. The reports will be either in the form of legible copies of each Coggins, or a legibly completed Equine Event Report Form, or similar legible report containing the same information, and mailed in hard copy or electronically to the address provided on initial notification. While this is not a burdensome requirement and is required by state law, we appreciate the cooperation and assistance in providing the proof of EIA testing that is necessary to protect Virginia's horses from this disease.

GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO AGRICULTURAL ANIMAL WELFARE

In compliance with Code of Virginia, §3.2-6569

1. The purpose of this policy is to provide consistent guidance to the Office of Veterinary Services that shall be applied statewide to situations involving agricultural animal welfare issues.
2. By law, the role of the Office of Veterinary Services (OVS) is limited to providing recommendations to localities regarding the disposition (defined as: “the act of transferring something to another’s care or possession; the relinquishing of property”) of an agricultural animal except in situations involving the soring of any equine or the administration of drugs to mask such soring. In these soring cases, the seizure of the horse must be undertaken by the State Veterinarian or his representative.
3. In all cases other than soring of equines, local animal control officers (ACOs), law enforcement officers, and humane investigators are authorized to seize any animal that has been abandoned, cruelly treated, or is suffering from an apparent violation of Virginia’s comprehensive animal care laws (§3.2-65) that has rendered the animal in such a condition as to constitute a direct and immediate threat to its life, safety, or health. In these cases, OVS veterinarians are not equipped to perform treatment or diagnosis of a medical condition; a private practice veterinarian should be retained for these purposes. For this reason, it is important to have a good working relationship with local private practice veterinarians and a policy in place for compensation directly by the investigating party for veterinary services provided both during investigation and the litigation process. These fees may be recovered from the owners through the judicial system.
4. The following steps are recommended to be followed when an agricultural animal welfare complaint is received and does not warrant immediate seizure:
 - a. As a primary response to complaints regarding agricultural animals, the animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or humane investigator may make recommendations to the animal owner to bring himself/herself into compliance with the comprehensive animal care laws. Noncompliance may result in charges filed or the requirement of veterinary examination at the owner’s expense. The ACO, law enforcement officer, or humane investigator should work with local Commonwealth Attorneys (CAs) to determine what documentation is necessary. These recommendations should be written with owner signature as confirmation of receipt.

- b. If the owner does not make the necessary efforts to comply with the initial recommendations, the animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or humane investigator should instruct the agricultural animal owner, in writing (also with confirmation of owner receipt), to obtain a veterinary examination by a local private practice veterinarian within a reasonable amount of time (7 days is reasonable in most cases). The ACO, law enforcement officer, or humane investigator should work with local Commonwealth Attorneys (CAs) to determine what documentation is necessary. The animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or humane investigator may explain to the owner that failure to obtain the required veterinary examination and perform recommended treatment may result in criminal charges and seizure of the animals.
5. Except in cases where there is as direct and immediate threat to the agricultural animal and immediate seizure is necessary, the animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or humane investigator shall contact their regional State Veterinarian's representative or State Veterinarian before seizing or impounding the animal. The State Veterinarian or his representative shall recommend to such investigator or officer the most appropriate action for the disposition of the agricultural animal. VDACS is not responsible for nor has the resources to plan, manage, or staff a shelter for seized animals. The ACO, law enforcement officer, or humane investigator is expected to provide the regional State Veterinary office with the following information:
 - a. nature of the complaint
 - b. when and how the animals were acquired
 - c. age, sex, species, breed, and number of animals involved
 - d. physical location of the animals
 - e. housing/shelter accessible to animals
 - f. nutritional status of the animals
 - g. body condition score or subjective assessment
 - h. vaccination/parasite control status
 - i. duration of the problem
 - j. veterinary examination findings and recommendations
 - k. assessment of the situation
 - l. digital pictures for documentation
 - m. history of previous complaints
6. In providing recommendations of seizure to localities regarding the disposition of agricultural animals, the following guideline is to be followed when determining whether a visit to evaluate the situation is warranted or if it may be handled via telephone: In cases involving a commercial agricultural enterprise (where the majority of the income of the producer is obtained from this agricultural enterprise) a visit to the premises and assessment of the situation shall be conducted. A visit to the premises may be conducted in all other cases.

7. If there is a direct and immediate threat to the agricultural animal and immediate seizure is warranted, the animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or humane investigator is authorized to seize the animal without prior notification of the Office of Veterinary Services.
8. An “Agricultural Animal Seizure Report” (Form VDACS-03147) must be completed by the seizing party (humane investigator, law enforcement officer, or animal control officer) and submitted to the regional office within 5 days of the animal seizure.

Guidelines for Disease Management, Biosecurity, and Other Animal Health Issues**VDACS MYCOPLASMA GALLISEPTICUM (MG) RESPONSE PLAN****Guidelines for internal use by the Office of Veterinary Services**

reviewed and approved by OAG 12/20/12

1. An investigation will be conducted in response to reports of poultry diseases consistent with *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* (MG) infections under the following conditions:
 - a. The report involves a flock (of any size) that is typically housed or free ranged within 1320 feet (0.25 miles) of a premises that is currently raising (including hatcheries), processing, or keeping 500 or more poultry at one time for the purposes of sale of such poultry or the eggs produced therefrom, and
 - b. There are reliable reports or evidence of an MG infection in the flock, or
 - c. There is a history of exposure to other birds known to be infected with MG, or
 - d. There is laboratory evidence to support the presence of MG in the flock, or
 - e. The flock owner voluntarily asked that a flock be evaluated.

2. The investigation will include but is not limited to the following:
 - a. A complete history, an epidemiological evaluation, and an assessment of the biosecurity program.
 - b. A clinical evaluation of the flock.
 - c. Sampling or requesting the owner to submit sick or recent mortalities to the VDACS Regional Diagnostic lab for testing (VDACS to cover lab fees). Diagnostic testing for MG can be done with serologic testing on blood/serum or PCR on oral-pharyngeal swabs of live or dead birds. Surveillance testing should be performed on 20 birds from the flock (or all birds in the flock if less than 20).

3. If a flock (meeting the criteria listed in part A above) is found to be positive for MG, that flock is then considered an infected flock, and VDACS will:
 - a. Issue a quarantine for the affected premises. Until the quarantine is released, no new poultry are allowed to be added to the premises. Conditions for quarantine release are to be either:
 - i. Depopulation and proper disposal of all poultry on the premises, with the quarantine to be released 4 weeks after depopulation; or
 - ii. Two (2) sequential negative PCR results at 3 week intervals on at least 20 birds (or all birds if the flock size is less than 20). If there are chickens and turkeys on the premises, a proportionate sample should be obtained from each species in constituting the total sample size of 20.
 - b. Work with the owners of positive flocks to develop a plan for the disposition of the flock as soon as possible, according to the following options:
 - i. Depopulation and disposal plan

- ii. Slaughter for consumption
 - 1. Controlled marketing plan – if birds are to be moved off of the farm for processing, they are required to be treated with antibiotics to reduce shedding
 - 2. At home slaughter for personal consumption plan – is allowed with or without antibiotic treatment
- iii. Remain under permanent, lifetime quarantine, subject to quarantine release conditions above.
- c. Notify infected flock owner that:
 - i. Biosecurity measures must be implemented to prevent the spread of the disease.
 - ii. It is rare for an affected flock to test negative even after treatment, and depopulation or processing is highly recommended in order for them to be able to once again raise healthy (and potentially profitable) birds
 - iii. OVS will perform the sampling/oropharyngeal swabbing required for quarantine release, but the producer will be responsible for the laboratory costs of any testing if they choose this option, according to the VDACS Office of Laboratory Services fee schedule.
 - iv. All associated costs (treatment, testing, depopulation, and disposal) are to be assumed by the flock owner. If requested and approved by the OVS Program Manager or State Veterinarian, OVS staff may be available to assist with depopulation. It is the owner's responsibility to properly dispose of the dead poultry in compliance with Article 2 of §3.2-60, 2VAC5-200, and DEQ laws and guidelines.
- d. Conduct an investigation into the source of the positive birds, following these same guidelines.
- e. Notify the Virginia Poultry Federation (VPF) providing the GPS coordinates and general location (distance to closest major road intersection) of the infected flock, as well as the proposed disposition plan, if known.

HEALTH GUIDELINES FOR VIRGINIA FAIRS EXHIBITING LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY

Virginia does not have many general laws relating to the movement of animals within the state; three notable exceptions are the requirements that horses, mules, or donkeys have a negative EIA (Coggin's) test prior to exhibition, the requirement that certain sheep and goats have USDA scrapie tags or other approved identification prior to exhibition, and the requirement that poultry be pullorum tested negative or originate from a pullorum-free flock prior to exhibition. Other than these specific laws, livestock and poultry from within the state are not subject to any other legal requirements with regard to participating in Virginia fairs or exhibitions.

All animals originating from outside of Virginia must meet *The Health Requirements Governing the Admission of Agricultural Animals, Companion Animals, and Other Animals or Birds into Virginia (2 VAC 5-141)*, which specifies that all livestock and poultry must have a certificate of veterinary inspection and all required testing. In addition, all imported poultry must abide by the requirements of the *Avian Influenza (H5 and H7) Proclamation*, which requires avian influenza testing for all poultry entering the state.

The following guidelines are provided in order to encourage good biosecurity and health management practices for fair management to consider, but the decision to follow many of the guidelines provided below is voluntary at this time. These guidelines are general recommendations for fairs; however, any fair may establish requirements that meet the animal health concerns of its exhibitors and home community. Each fair/exhibit superintendent should be responsible for checking the health status of each animal entered in that division and keep a record on file for at least 2 years to include the identification, physical address of the origin of each animal entered, used, or exhibited at the event as well as the physical address of the destination (if different than the origin) of each animal. These historical records may be critical if there are animal health reasons to trace animals to or from the fair some time after the fair.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the fair require each animal to be exhibited to be accompanied by a certificate of veterinary inspection issued within the past 30 days that is signed by an accredited veterinarian and states that the animals are free of infectious and contagious diseases. As an alternative, fair management may elect to arrange to provide veterinary examination for each animal at check-in. All animals should be individually identified and listed on the health certificate or health check-in record. Representatives of the State Veterinarian's office may request to see the health papers. For market animals that are to be sold at auction directly from the fair, the fair may elect to waive the requirement of a certificate of veterinary inspection, although it is prudent to ensure that all animals coming to the fair are healthy and free of infectious and contagious diseases including ringworm, warts, foot rot, and pinkeye.

It is recommended that all animals be vaccinated in the current show year against infectious diseases following veterinary recommendations not less than 14 days prior to the show. The type of vaccine and date of administration should be noted on the health certificate. Note that there is generally a 21 day slaughter withdrawal for animals that are vaccinated.

In addition to the above, the following specific recommendations should be considered:

CATTLE

It is important to remember that warts and ringworm are examples of infectious and contagious diseases, and that the owners are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the animals exhibited are free from these diseases. For the protection of uninfected animals, cattle exhibiting signs of these diseases should not be allowed to enter the fairgrounds.

SHEEP AND GOATS

All sheep and goats must be in compliance with the scrapie identification requirements, which specify that sheep and goats should be identified with USDA scrapie tags prior to exhibition. For the protection of uninfected animals, any animal exhibiting signs of sore mouth, ring worm (fair fungus), or foot rot should not be allowed to enter the fairgrounds.

All goats, regardless of age, should be free of clinical signs of caseous lymphadenitis (CL). Animals showing clinical signs of this disease should not be allowed to enter the fairgrounds. A clinical sign of CL is defined as an abscess of the lymph nodes, whether draining or not.

HORSES, DONKEYS, MULES

No equine is permitted on the grounds unless it is accompanied by a negative Coggins test conducted within 12 months of the date of exhibition.

POULTRY

All poultry entered for exhibition should appear healthy and be free from external parasites. Any bird which does not meet these standards should be immediately removed from the exhibit. All poultry shown in public exhibition in the Commonwealth of Virginia are required by law to originate from U.S. Pullorum-Typhoid Clean or equivalent flocks or have had a negative pullorum-typhoid test within 90 days of the movement to the public exhibition.

It is requested that poultry show superintendents notify VDACS's Office of Veterinary Services at least 4 weeks in advance of any poultry shows so that the birds congregated at the shows may be tested by VDACS employees for avian influenza (AI) surveillance.

PETTING ZOOS

Petting zoos have created public health disease outbreaks at some fairs in the past, and it is recommended that the fair work with the local health department for biosecurity recommendations specific to the petting zoo. The local health department may also make suggestions to fair attendees regarding hand sanitation and eating around animal housing areas.

BIOSECURITY PROCEDURES FOR VIRGINIA DAIRY FARM INSPECTIONS BY EPA**Biosecurity Procedures for Virginia Dairy Farm Inspections, Provided to EPA Region III, April 2012**

1. Individuals should not make on-site visits to livestock operations if they have visited a foreign country and were exposed to or had contact with farm animals (with or without a known contagious disease) within 5 days prior to the site visit. Also, clothing and shoes worn on foreign farm visits should be cleaned before use on U.S. facilities. No clothing worn in a country where foot and mouth disease or highly pathogenic avian influenza is known to exist may be worn if the individual was exposed to or had contact with any farm animals or poultry.
2. Many farms have more than one species on the property. Poultry on cattle farms and cattle on poultry farms may be sources of contagious disease for the next scheduled EPA visit even though the farm being inspected is not being inspected as a cattle or a poultry farm. Contact with livestock, poultry, wild waterfowl, other wild avian species and their wastes outside of the inspection process should be considered as an exposure of concern equal to exposures while on facilities being inspected. Avoid all contact with wild waterfowl including parks and other public areas where Canada geese or ducks and other geese have frequent access. Report all non inspection contacts when discussing inspectional activity as required in bullet 12.
3. Avoid entering animal or poultry containment facilities as much as possible. If entering multiple age production facilities (cattle, swine), work through housing areas from the youngest animals to the older animals, and visit any sick or treatment groups last. Do not go from adult housing to young stock housing without thoroughly disinfecting or changing foot wear and changing any contaminated clothing.
4. Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water or antibacterial wipes or gel before entering and after leaving any animal facility. Disposable latex gloves also may be used but not as a substitute for proper hand washing.
5. Park your vehicle on paved or concrete areas, away from farm production sites at least 50 feet from the first poultry house or other production facility encountered to the extent that maintaining this distance is safe and practical, to avoid contact with dirt, mud or manure. If not possible, be certain that tires are free of dirt and debris by hosing the tires and wheel wells before leaving the premises. If this does not clean the tires adequately, take the vehicle to a nearby pressure car wash. Including dates and types of vehicle washing in the vehicle log book is recommended.
6. Keep all vehicle windows closed while on the farm. Remove any flies that are in the vehicle before leaving the farm property.

7. Use rubber floor mats on vehicle floors of all occupied seats. Clean and disinfect vehicles inside daily.
8. An inspector should visit only one poultry farm per day if possible.
9. Consider using a vehicle supplied by the facility operator for on site travel if available.
10. Prior to entering the site, put on disinfected rubber boots or other footwear that has been cleaned and disinfected, or wear new disposable boot covers. The operator may require the inspector to use the operators' coveralls and boots. However, if visiting only low-risk areas, such as offices that are located away from animal areas, clean street shoes or boots are acceptable (hand washing is still needed). [Note: Boot covers may not provide sufficient traction to safely navigate slopes surrounding lagoons and pits. Personnel may want to use tape to secure the boot cover to prevent slippage]. Clean street shoes or boots are not acceptable unless the office is physically separated from all animal handling facilities and there is no evidence of contamination of floor and sidewalk surfaces with production facility organic material by foot traffic into the office or facility.
11. All inspectors entering a livestock or poultry premises must stop at the farm entrance and fill out the visitor log in the mailbox for farms that provide visitor log boxes. If the farm operator does not have a visitor log, the inspector should provide the farm operator with the following written information: name, date, time company association, reason for visit, and farms visits when providing the information required in bullet 24.
12. On entering a facility, acknowledge any and all other livestock facilities visited within the previous 48 hours (some facilities may require longer histories) including whether or not EPA entered any animal confinement or waste storage areas.
13. Inform the operator of where the EPA staff wants to go on the site, determine what biosecurity procedures, if any, the owner/operator has for the on-site locations to be visited, and determine which biosecurity procedures will be followed for the areas to be visited. Inspectors should anticipate and must be comply with extreme biosecurity requirements that exist on some production facilities. Inspectors entering animal containment unit must wear protective clothing (including head covering for poultry facilities) prior to entering any animal containment facility or any other part of the operation required by the operator. Inspectors should inquire of farm management about the availability of protective clothing furnished by the operator. If an operator does not choose to provide protective clothing, the inspector should wear new disposable protective clothing for maximum biosecurity facilities. All individuals entering certain operations (including but not limited to poultry breeder farms, pullet operations, and swine operations) may be required to remove all jewelry and shower upon entry. Certain maximum biosecurity operations may not allow any materials to be carried from outside the facility onto the property unless it can be and is completely

decontaminated prior to entry. Maximum biosecurity facilities may require a 72+ hour interval since the last known exposure to species of concern before entering the property. Certain maximum biosecurity facilities may require to be scheduled as the first production facility visit of the day, and that the vehicle be pressure washed immediately prior to traveling to the production unit. All disposable, protective clothing should be disposed of as required in bullet 23. Some poultry facilities may have a policy of “no feet on the ground,” meaning they require visitors to wait in their vehicles and don disposable booties provided by the facility before even stepping out of the vehicle. In this regard, the inspection team should, to the extent if possible, wait in their vehicles until greeted by the facility representative, unless other arrangements have been made with the facility prior to the inspection. At the discretion of the operator, Inspectors may wear non-disposable protective clothing and boots. Worn, non-disposable protective clothing and boots should be handled as required in bullet 22.

14. Make visits to any poultry breeder operation the first visit of the day.
15. Pressure-wash the vehicle immediately prior to departing to inspect any poultry breeder farm.
16. EPA should only enter animal production buildings if it is essential to complete the goals of the visit, and should avoid contact with livestock, poultry or other animals (wild or domestic) on any facility. If close contact with animals is expected, including walking through narrowly confined pens or lots where animals are within reach, wearing coveralls is required.
17. Designate the interior of your vehicle as a “clean area” and keep clean supplies in this area.
18. Designate a “dirty area” of your vehicle, such as the trunk of the car or a specified enclosed area of a truck bed for double bagged clothes or dirty equipment to be taken off site.
19. Before leaving the site, clean and disinfect boots or tightly bag boots for later cleaning. Scrub boot bottom and sides to remove all dirt and debris, then wash with disinfectant solution. Disinfectants are not effective on dirt, manure or other organic matter.
20. Clean and disinfect equipment if contaminated.
21. Use disinfectants that have been registered (or exempted) by EPA for the intended use (see below). Keep a copy of the label and the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for any registered disinfectant used and make both available to the facility upon its request. Follow all label safety precautions and dispose of empty containers, unused disinfectant solution, and used disinfectant in accordance with label instructions.

22. If non-disposable clothing is soiled with manure, blood, milk, or other animal secretions or there has been close contact with livestock (actual handling or walking where animals were within reach), before leaving the site, double bag clothing for later cleaning. Non-disposable, protective clothing must be laundered prior to using on any other production facility.
23. Dispose of soiled boot covers, and disposable clothing on-site if acceptable to the owner/operator. Where on-site disposal is not possible, double bag and tightly seal all contaminated clothing and gear in disposable bags.
24. Inform the owner/operator of the areas of the site that were visited, and the biosecurity procedures taken. This can be done at an inspection closing conference.

Animal Disease Traceability

OFFICIAL ID FOR CATTLE: GUIDELINES FOR LARGE ANIMAL PRACTITIONERS IN VIRGINIA



The New Animal Disease Traceability Rule and Official ID for Cattle: Guidelines for Large Animal Practitioners in Virginia

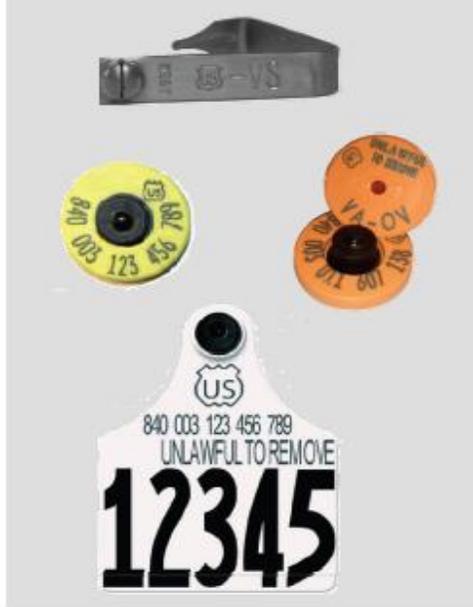
The USDA Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) Rule became effective on March 11, 2013. The new regulation primarily affects livestock moving through interstate commerce, but will require changes in the use of official identification devices for regulatory disease programs as well.

All cattle vaccinated or tested under regulatory disease programs should be tagged with official ID. At least one form of official ID must be recorded for each animal on all regulatory disease forms. This includes forms submitted for brucellosis vaccination, brucellosis testing and tuberculosis testing. Official ID must also be listed on Certificates of Veterinary Inspection for all adult cattle (excludes feeder calves under 18 months of age). Farm ID tags, animal names, breed registry tattoos and other non-official forms of identification may be included on regulatory forms, but at least one form of official ID is required.

Official Identification Devices Used in Virginia

- ◆ 840-series visual or RFID tags (RFID preferred for all classes of cattle and all purposes)
- ◆ Metal silver or “brite” tags (52-series in Virginia)
- ◆ Metal orange “Bangs” tags (52V-series in Virginia)
- ◆ Manufacturer-coded tags, 15-digit tags (9xx-series) until March 2015
- ◆ American ID (FAIR or DHIA tags) will also be accepted on vaccination and test forms in Virginia until March 2015. However, these tags should not be used as the only official ID for adult cattle moving interstate.
- ◆ Records must be kept on the distribution of all official ID tags for 5 years.

Practitioners should begin transitioning to the use of official ID on regulatory documents as soon as possible. Official ID tags are available from VDACS at no cost as long as funds are available. For additional information, please contact the VDACS Office of Veterinary Services at (804) 786-2483 or send an email to tags@vdacs.virginia.gov.



OFFICIAL ID FOR SHEEP AND GOATS: GUIDELINES FOR LARGE ANIMAL PRACTITIONERS IN VIRGINIA



September 2013

**Official ID for Sheep and Goats:
Guidelines for Large Animal Practitioners in Virginia**

The USDA Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) Rule became effective on March 11, 2013. The new regulation primarily affects livestock moving through interstate commerce, but will require changes in the use of official identification devices for regulatory disease programs as well. Farm ID tags, animal names and any other identification that is not clearly official should not be used as the ONLY identification on regulatory forms. Brucellosis test submissions (VS Form 4-33) to VDACS Regional Animal Health Laboratories must include complete official identification numbers for each sample. Inclusion of non-official ID on regulatory forms is permitted, but at least one form of official ID must be used.

Official identification devices used in Virginia

- ◆ 15-digit 840-series electronic or visual tag; 900 series tags are grandfathered-in if already present.
- ◆ Microchip implant, 15-digit ISO compliant.
- ◆ Scrapie Flock Tag: issued by the USDA to producers which has the both the scrapie flock number and the individual animal number on each tag.
- ◆ Scrapie Serial Tag: issued by USDA or VDACS to veterinarians, dealers, slaughter houses and livestock markets only; does not have a flock ID on it and distribution records are required. Begins with the state postal code, but letters and numbers following can vary, e.g. VAXX 1234 or WVX 12345.
- ◆ Official Goat Registration Tattoos located on ears, tail web or flank, consisting of a herd identification number and individual animal number. When used on a CVI, the shipper's CVI must be accompanied by Registration Papers.
- ◆ Scrapie Tattoos (Goats Only): Both herd identification number and unique individual animal number must be tattooed and recorded.

For additional information, contact the VDACS Office of Veterinary Services at (804) 786-2483.



TAGGING DAIRY STEERS ON THE FARM



Office of Veterinary Services
 102 Governor Street
 Richmond, Virginia 23219
 (804) 692-0601



Tagging Dairy Steers on the Farm

WHY?

In order to improve the traceability of animal disease in the United States, USDA recently released a new Animal Disease Traceability Rule (ADT Rule) that requires all dairy steers born after March 11, 2013 to be tagged with official identification when they are transported across state lines.

THE CHALLENGE...

Most adult dairy breeding stock and heifers are already officially identified through other programs, but typically steers have not been consistently tagged with official ID. Tagging steers at livestock markets or buying stations is logistically difficult due to the large number of animals collected for sales, places additional stress on the animals and may incur additional costs to producers for tagging services.

THE SOLUTION.

The best solution appears to be to tag cattle on the farms of origin before they are transported to markets or across state lines by dealers or other buyers. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Veterinary Services will provide official USDA metal tags and tag applicators at no cost to dairy producers for tagging steers on their farms. Tags should be placed in the right ear of the animal and should not be shared with other farms. There is no reporting requirement for producers. Producers may request tags from any of our three regional offices.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the VDACS Regional Office of Veterinary Services closest to you.

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