

Vesicular Stomatitis in Livestock

First case of painful disease detected in horse in Texas

The return of a debilitating viral disease has prompted Washington State University Extension to alert livestock owners of the symptoms and control measures.

A horse in Starr County, Texas, recently was reported as the nation's first case of vesicular stomatitis (VS) in 2009, according to the Texas Animal Health Commission.

The disease is caused by a virus that is endemic to the United States and primarily affects horses, cattle, swine and camelids.

This was the first case since an outbreak in 2006, which was limited to Wyoming. An infected horse recently was found in De Baca County, New Mexico.

Symptoms

Monitor your cattle, horses, swine or alpacas for signs of excessive salivating or having lesions in their mouths.

Other symptoms could include an animal going lame and not eating. Closer inspection might reveal blisters in the animal's mouth.

Recommendations

Call your private veterinarian or the Washington State Department of Agriculture immediately. Specific tests can be run to determine the cause of the illness.

Isolate suspect animals away from the rest of the herd to protect against disease spread and keep them on the premise.

VS is painful for affected animals, but the lesions usually heal within a couple of weeks to a month.

For severe cases, owners may elect to euthanize the animal, to put an end to its suffering.



A vesicular stomatitis lesion is identified.

The Organism

- A virus in the family rhabdoviridae.
- Types: VSV-NJ, VSV-I
- Limited to the Western Hemisphere.
- Clinical signs similar to foot and mouth disease.
- Affects: cattle, camelids, deer, horses, monkeys, bobcats, swine, raccoons and humans.
- Sheep and goats are resistant and rarely show clinical signs.

Prevention Strategies

- Control biting flies.
- Keep equine animals under a roof at night to decrease fly exposure.
- Clean stalls regularly.
- Feed/water stock from their own individual buckets.
- Disinfect borrowed equipment/tools prior to using on your premises.
- VS vaccines might be available during outbreaks, but might not be effective in preventing infection.

Contact Information

- **Washington Animal Disease and Diagnostic Laboratory:** (509) 335-9696 or www.vetmed.wsu.edu/depts_waddl
- **Washington State Department of Agriculture:** (360) 902-1878, ahealth@agr.wa.gov or <http://agr.wa.gov>
- **U.S. Department of Agriculture Emergency Programs:** (301) 734-8073 or www.usda.gov

Information for this article was provided by Washington State University Extension and College of Veterinary Medicine.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

August

Every Saturday—Trout Lake Saturday Market

Every Saturday—Goldendale Saturday Market

1—Backyard Blues Bash at Pine Springs Resort

1—Horse Heaven trail drive

3—Swimming lessons begin at the Goldendale pool

12—Goldendale Observatory: View Perseid meteor show

12-16—Skamania County Fair and Timber Carnival, Stevenson

13—Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social at the Goldendale Library

15-16—Maryhill Arts Festival at Maryhill Museum

20-23—Klickitat County Fair, fairgrounds in Goldendale

22—Jackson Browne concert at Maryhill Winery

24—Swimming lessons begin at the Goldendale pool

24-25—Art, Blues, Cruise, Microbrews and Wine Festival, Ekone Park in Goldendale

29—John Legend concert at Maryhill Winery

29—Bickleton second annual car show

To have an event listed in the community calendar, call Kathy Loveland at KPUD's Goldendale office at (509) 773-7606.

