

New rules set for shipping cattle

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

The U.S. Department of Agriculture released its new Animal Disease Traceability rule earlier this year. Its main purpose is to ensure a rapid response when livestock disease events take place. The new rule took effect March 11.

“There are a tremendous number of animals on the roads every day; a national program is needed to protect the entire livestock industry,” said state veterinarian Dr. Keith Roehr. “An efficient and accurate animal disease traceability system helps reduce the number of animals involved in an investigation, reduces the time needed to respond and decreases the cost to producers and the government.”

On Jan. 9, the USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service’s Veterinary Services published the final rule. Their mission is to protect American agriculture by helping ensure the health of livestock. This new rule is a vital component of that mission. The goal of ADT is to improve the traceability of animals that move between states involved in a disease outbreak.

The new federal traceability rule requires the State Veterinarian’s Office to meet new animal disease traceability performance standards which will increase CDA’s capabilities to respond to a significant livestock disease and ultimately help protect the Colorado livestock industry from the negative impacts of a disease outbreak.

One of the main components of the new rule involves animals traveling interstate. They must be officially identified per their species’ requirement and be accompanied by an interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection, in some cases with their individual official animal identification listed. Animals traveling directly to slaughter may be identified with USDA-approved back-tags.

Other terms of shipping may be agreed upon between individual states or tribes, such as acceptance of brands and owner-shipper statements. The State Veterinarian’s Office recommends veterinarians contact the receiving state to ensure proper import requirements are met.

Livestock producers affected the most by the rule will be those who have cattle; other species

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have minimal changes to current identification standards. A summary of changes by species can be found at www.coanimalid.org.

For cattle, the following animals must be identified with official ID ear tags:

—All sexually intact cattle and bison over 18 months of age.

—All female dairy cattle of any age.

—All dairy males (intact or castrated) born after March 11, 2013.

—Cattle and bison of any age used for rodeo, shows, exhibition and recreational events.

The most common official ID ear tags for cattle that will be used by producers and veterinarians are 840 tags (RFID, “bangle” visual tags or a combination RFID/bangle); brucellosis or Bang’s tags (orange metal or orange RFID); and silver, “Brite” or NUES tags (silver metal).

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