



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission

"Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893"

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cattle Brucellosis Testing Complete in Starr County *Adjacent Herds Test Negative*

Austin – After a small beef cattle herd in Starr County was diagnosed with Bovine Brucellosis (Bangs) in early January, testing of all adjacent premises within a one mile radius of the index premises has been completed. There were a total of 54 adjacent premises identified. Twenty three of those premises had no cattle on them. The remaining 31 premises consisted of 836 cattle and all tested negative.

This was the first time in over five years that a positive Brucellosis cattle herd had been detected in Texas. Routine surveillance (blood testing) at a livestock market led to the discovery of the infected herd. Six cows were tested at the market and three of those tested positive for Brucellosis.

During the herd test, six animals tested positive for Brucellosis. The affected herd was depopulated with indemnity. "All cattle that left the herd were traced and no additional Brucellosis was found. The exact source of infection was not identified. The final investigation revealed, however, that the herd had most likely been infected for several years. The herd had probably gone undetected because very few test eligible cattle had been sold over the years," Dr. Andy Schwartz, Assistant Executive Director, said.

Despite the recent Brucellosis diagnosis, Texas did not lose its Class Free status as designated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA.) Brucellosis is a bacterial disease of cattle that can cause abortions, weak calves and low milk production. Humans can also catch Brucellosis (undulant fever) most commonly by consuming unpasteurized milk products or handling contaminated birthing material when assisting with difficult calving situations in infected cows. Brucellosis is contagious to cattle and other ruminant animals such as bison.

The TAHC reminds Texas producers, marketers and veterinarians that maintaining a Brucellosis-free Texas requires constant awareness and vigilance. Producers/ranchers should make sure all adult cattle being purchased have a negative test and any cows that abort should be tested for brucellosis. Cooperation is needed to ensure a Brucellosis-free state and healthy cattle.

Producers seeking more information on Brucellosis may call the local TAHC office at 361-358-3234 or visit the website at www.tahc.state.tx.us.

Founded in 1893, the Texas Animal Health Commission works to protect the health of all Texas livestock, including: cattle, swine, poultry, sheep, goats, equine animals, and exotic livestock.

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