

Attention Veterinarians: New Tuberculosis Testing Option NOW AVAILABLE for Cervid Producers

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) will now be accepting the new Cervid TB Stat-Pak Antibody Test as an official screening test for tuberculosis (TB) in captive elk, red deer, white-tailed deer, fallow deer and reindeer. The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) recently introduced the Cervid TB Stat-Pak Antibody Test as a primary test and the Dual Path Platform (DPP) Test as a secondary test for official TB program use in the above-mentioned species. The TAHC is working to make all necessary changes to its policies and procedures so that producers may take advantage of these new tests, which have the advantage of decreased animal stress and handling while maintaining the ability to ensure that livestock entering and moving in Texas are TB-free.

Historically, the single cervical tuberculin skin test (SCT) and the comparative cervical tuberculin skin test (CCT) have been the only approved official tests for tuberculosis in captive cervids. The availability of a more rapid testing option that requires only one handling event not only benefits the cervid industry, but also promotes additional testing, providing the TB program with new information on the identification and control of TB.



The newly approved testing methods are based on serological testing, and therefore a blood sample must be collected from the animal. Only Designated Accredited Veterinarians (DAVs), who have received specific training on Cervid TB Testing, are authorized to submit samples for testing. All veterinarians who wish to submit samples for this test should contact their TAHC regional office prior to offering the test. If you are not already a DAV, training to become a DAV will include such topics as the application of official identification; Single Cervical Tuberculin (SCT) Testing; the proper collection, handling, packaging, and shipping of samples for the Cervid TB Stat-Pak Antibody Test; and the proper completion of the laboratory submission forms and tuberculosis testing forms. If you are a previously trained DAV (already trained to perform the SCT in cervid species), you must still contact your local TAHC Regional office for a short supplemental training on the Cervid TB Stat-Pak Antibody Test prior to sampling.

Effective February 4, 2013, testing for cervid samples for TB at National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) began. The TAHC will be accepting the Cervid TB Stat-Pak Antibody Test as an official test effective today. Currently, the NVSL in Ames, Iowa is the only laboratory approved to run the Cervid TB Stat-Pak Antibody Test, so serum samples must be sent directly to NVSL for testing.

If the Cervid TB Stat-Pak Antibody Test has a non-negative result (i.e., a positive or inconclusive result), NVSL will perform the secondary DPP serological test using the serum from the same sample that was originally submitted. If the DPP result is non-negative, an epidemiological investigation will be done and the disposition of the animal will be determined by the area and regional TB epidemiologists according to regulations under the National TB Eradication Program.

As with any regulatory testing procedure, official identification recognized by USDA-APHIS/TAHC must be present on each animal tested with the Cervid TB Stat-Pak Antibody Test. Identification numbers must be recorded on the VS 10-4/10-4a and VS 6-22 to correspond to the sample submitted for testing. You cannot perform the Stat-Pak test on animals that have only producer tags as identification.

As always, check with the state or country of destination to determine if their animal health regulations allow the use of the Cervid TB Stat-Pak Antibody Test as an official test for tuberculosis in captive elk, red deer, white-tailed deer, fallow deer and reindeer.

When also testing a cervid for brucellosis, an additional tube of blood must be collected and submitted to an approved brucellosis testing laboratory (i.e.,: The Texas State-Federal Laboratory) accompanied by a VS Form 4-33. The VS Form 4-33 can be found at: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/forms.shtml . You cannot collect one blood sample and have it tested for both TB and Brucellosis.

Frequently Asked Questions

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/tuberculosis/downloads/stat-pak_faq.pdf

USDA VS Guidance Document

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/tuberculosis/downloads/stat-pak_vs_guidance.pdf

Link to USDA's TB page (which contains the above links as well as a PowerPoint presentation. Scroll down the page for the cervid TB information)

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/tuberculosis/

Region 1 — Amarillo
806-354-9335

Region 2 — Hempstead
979-921-9481

Region 3 — Ft Worth
817-244-2597

Region 4 — Mt Pleasant
903-572-1966

Region 5 — Beeville
361-358-3234

Region 6 — Lampasas
512-556-6277

Region 7 — Rockdale
512-446-2507

