



## NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission

*"Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893"*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Vesicular Stomatitis Detected in Two Head of Cattle in Jim Wells County

AUSTIN - Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) has been detected in two head of cattle in South Texas, 5.7 miles southwest of Mathis (Jim Wells County). The cattle were tested after the owner observed blistering and swelling on the animals' muzzles and contacted their local veterinary practitioner. Testing at the USDA Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory at Plum Island, New York confirmed the virus as the New Jersey serotype, which is the same serotype found in previously reported cases in Texas horses.

VS can cause blisters and sores in the mouth and on the tongue, muzzle, teats, or hooves of horses, cattle, swine, sheep, goats, llamas and a number of other animals. Lesions usually will heal in two or three weeks. Because of the contagious nature of VS and its resemblance to other diseases such as foot and mouth disease, animal health officials urge livestock owners and caretakers to report these symptoms to their veterinarian immediately.

The newly identified infected herd of cattle is currently under quarantine by the TAHC. Regulatory veterinarians will monitor affected and exposed cattle until all lesions have healed and a decision is made to release the quarantine (a minimum of 21 days). There is no known exposure to other horses or cattle. This is the first case of VS in cattle in the United States since 2006.

"Livestock owners should try to limit exposure of their animals to biting flies," said Dr. Dee Ellis, the Texas State Veterinarian. "Sand flies and black flies play a role in the virus transmission, so controlling insects is important."

Texas currently has a total of seven quarantined herds located in Nueces (2), San Patricio (2), Hidalgo (2), and Jim Wells (1) counties. The first quarantined herd in Texas involving horses in Kinney County has now been released. The TAHC will continue to monitor the situation for possible new cases across the state.

Some states and other countries may restrict movement of, or impose additional requirements for susceptible animals from states and counties having known cases of

VS. Animal health officials in the intended state of destination should be contacted prior to movement. For international export information, contact the USDA Veterinary Services Austin office, at 512-383-2411.

“If you suspect your animal may have VS, you should notify your veterinarian immediately,” said Dr. Andy Schwartz, TAHC State Epidemiologist. “VS is not highly contagious to people, but it can cause flu-like illness if infected saliva gets into an open wound, eyes or mouth. People handling potentially infected animals should wear gloves for protection, and talk with their physician if they have questions.”

The following states have provided the TAHC with information on enhanced entry requirements they are imposing on Texas livestock (including cattle and horses) due to the recently announced VS cases

[http://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/2014StateRestrictionsOnTX\\_VS.pdf](http://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/2014StateRestrictionsOnTX_VS.pdf) .

For more information about VS visit the TAHC’s VS brochure

[http://www.tahc.state.tx.us/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure\\_VS.pdf](http://www.tahc.state.tx.us/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_VS.pdf) .

A USDA APHIS-VS fact sheet about Vesicular Stomatitis is available at

[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal\\_health/content/printable\\_version/fs\\_vesicular\\_stomatitis\\_2012.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/content/printable_version/fs_vesicular_stomatitis_2012.pdf)

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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