



For Immediate Release
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State Veterinarian Encourages Annual Livestock Vaccination Against Anthrax

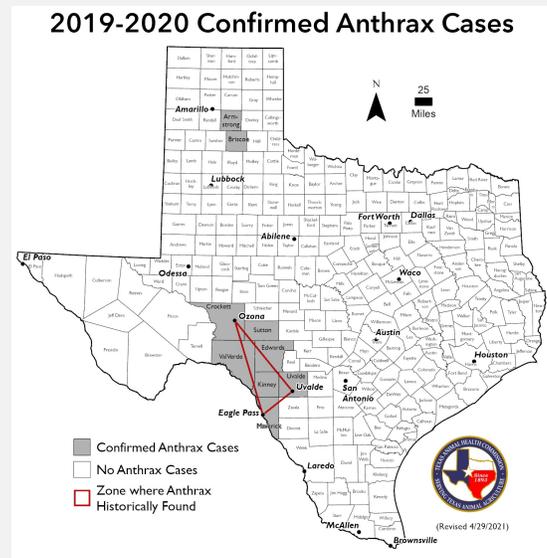
AUSTIN, TX – The State Veterinarian of Texas, Dr. Andy Schwartz, encourages livestock owners in anthrax prone areas to have their animals vaccinated against the disease this spring.

"Due to outbreaks in recent years, we would like to remind and encourage livestock owners in areas of the state where anthrax has been confirmed to consult with their veterinarian about vaccinating animals before warmer weather arrives," said Dr. Andy Schwartz. "The anthrax vaccine is dependable and proven to protect cattle, swine, equine, sheep and goats from the disease."

Anthrax Prone Areas

In Texas, anthrax cases are most often confined to a triangular area bound by the towns of Uvalde, Ozona and Eagle Pass. This area includes portions of Crockett, Edwards, Kinney, Maverick, Sutton, and Val Verde counties. In 2019, numerous cases of anthrax were found in the triangular area, followed by confirmations in Briscoe and Armstrong counties in 2020. For more information on past outbreaks visit, www.tahc.texas.gov/animal_health/cattle/#anthrax.

Owners with anthrax susceptible animals in these areas are highly encouraged to vaccinate their herds this spring, prior to another outbreak.



It is common to see an increase in anthrax cases after periods of wet, cool weather, followed by hot, dry conditions, which is typical for a Texas spring. At that time, animals ingest the anthrax bacteria when they consume contaminated grass and hay or inhale the spores. Outbreaks usually end when cooler weather arrives. The anthrax vaccine is most effective when administered two to four weeks prior to an outbreak.

Anthrax is a bacterial disease caused by *Bacillus anthracis*, a spore-forming bacterium that can remain alive but dormant in the soil for years. Upon becoming infected, animals typically display symptoms of anthrax within three to seven days. Once symptoms begin, death will usually occur within 48 hours. Anthrax may also affect humans. It is important to practice good biosecurity when handling vaccines and/or carcasses.



For more information about anthrax as it relates to animal health visit https://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCFactsheet_Anthrax.pdf or human health visit <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/anthrax/information/faqs/>.

Anthrax is a reportable disease to the TAHC and anyone suspecting an animal with the disease should notify a local veterinarian or the TAHC at 1-800-550-8242.

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The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) was established in 1893 as the Livestock Sanitary Commission and charged with protecting the state's domestic animals "from all contagious or infectious diseases of a malignant character." TAHC remains true to this charge while evolving with the times to protect the health and marketability of all Texas livestock and poultry. Learn more about the TAHC by visiting www.tahc.texas.gov.