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Federal Rules Regulating Interstate Movement of Livestock Take Effect Feb. 26
Cattle are Primary Focus; Producers, Veterinarians and Others Being Briefed Now

ANNAPOLIS, MD (Feb. 13, 2013) – All livestock moving in or out of Maryland will be subject to the USDA’s newly adopted Animal Disease Traceability regulations that take effect on Feb. 26. The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), the lead agency responsible for implementing the rule in the state, is currently contacting producers, veterinarians and other concerned parties who are involved with the interstate movement of cattle to make sure they are aware of the upcoming changes and to help them comply.

“The best way to prevent the spread of an animal disease is to quickly locate animals involved in a disease outbreak and just as quickly release unaffected animals from the outbreak investigation,” said State Veterinarian Dr. Guy Hohenhaus. “The new traceability rules are designed to help us minimize the adverse impact a disease investigation has on livestock industries by identifying and releasing healthy animals that do not pose a threat and allowing them to remain in commerce.”

The new regulations which primarily affect cattle operators, require most livestock moving interstate to be identified with official ear tags. Maryland does not accept brands or tattoos as official identification for livestock entering or leaving the state.

Beef cattle under 18 months of age are exempt from the identification requirement for interstate movement unless they are moved for shows, exhibitions, rodeos, or recreational events. Livestock moving interstate directly to slaughter are also exempt. MDA will allow livestock without official identification to enter the state for delivery to an auction market or other approved tagging facility as long as those animals have an interstate certificate of veterinary inspection (ICVI).

Generally, all livestock entering Maryland from another state must be accompanied by an ICVI even if they are tagged with an official identification device. Exceptions are:

- Livestock entering Maryland for delivery to an auction market or other official tagging station provided the livestock are tagged with official identification and are accompanied by an owner-shipper statement specifying the address where the shipment originated and the official identification number of each animal in the shipment; and
- Livestock entering the state and moving directly to slaughter.

Livestock moving out of Maryland that are not exempt from the federal rule must be tagged with official identification and be accompanied by an ICVI unless the receiving state accepts alternative movement documents and/or will accept the shipment without official identification tags applied. Maryland producers moving livestock to another state should contact the receiving state about its requirements.

To facilitate the process MDA will provide livestock producers with 100 free metal ear tags to promote producer tagging and establish state location numbers necessary for the tags. After a producer uses the 100 tags, s/he will need to order official Maryland tags from authorized manufacturers.

The new federal regulations also affect the interstate movement of horses and poultry; however, no change to current movement requirements is anticipated for either group. Generally, horses moving interstate to and from
Maryland are now required – and will continue to be required – to carry an ICVI. Horses entering Maryland from Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, or Virginia to attend an event for less than 72 hours, or to a Maryland exhibition, are exempt from the ICVI requirement and may enter with a current Equine Infectious Anemia Test Report. Maryland horses entering another state must meet the requirements of that state.

“Animal disease traceability does not directly prevent disease but it can reduce the spread of disease by helping us locate diseased animals and ensure they do not pose additional risk to others,” said Dr. Hohenhaus. “An efficient and accurate traceability system also greatly reduces the number of livestock and livestock producers affected by a disease investigation which reduces the economic impact of that outbreak.”

For more information about the new regulations, see: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/traceability/. Producers or veterinarians who have questions about the rule should contact MDA Animal Health Inspectors Dave Shinham or Melissa Foster at 410-841-5810 or send email to animal.disease.traceability@maryland.gov.

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