

Introduction

This position is located in the Tick Force Activity, Texas Area, Central Region, Veterinary Services, APHIS. The Mounted Patrol Inspector performs technical and specialized work related to the Texas Tick Eradication Program, including inspection of animals for scabies or screwworm infestation, conducting complex investigations of possible illegal movement or smuggling of livestock, and other conditions of particular interest to APHIS programs or the State of Texas.

Duties and Responsibilities:

The incumbent makes unassisted horseback patrols through rough and remote terrain in an assigned sector of the tick quarantine zone along the Texas-Mexico border for the purpose of locating and inspecting livestock which might be carrying cattle fever ticks or other exotic ticks, scabies mites, screwworm, or other foreign animal diseases. The patrol includes trailing, apprehension, inspection, and treatment of unpredictable livestock. Determines if animals encountered are Mexico strays, native livestock of undetermined origin, or livestock smuggled from Mexico to evade inspection and/or payment of custom duty, and treats accordingly. (40% of time)

Inspects premises in and bordering the quarantine zone, and investigates additions to or losses of livestock from such herds. Makes periodic inspections of vacated premises to detect bad fences, cattle tracks, or other evidence of illegal use of the premises. Rides and checks all fences in and bordering the quarantine zone to ascertain that they are adequate to prevent intermingling of livestock and consequent exposure to fever tick carriers. Gathers substantiating facts on bad fences for the issuance of quarantine notices. Prepares detailed reports of illegal livestock movement or premises use and serves as a witness in court proceedings as necessary. (20% of time)

If livestock smuggling activities or illegal movements are suspected or observed, the incumbent will independently conduct a complex investigation of alleged violations of State and Federal laws and regulations governing interstate and international movement of livestock. In conducting investigations, the incumbent:

1. Contacts and/or interviews, including administering of oaths and preparation of affidavits, various individuals from whom information can be collected. This will include other U.S. Government agencies such as U.S. Customs and Border Patrol if illegal smuggling is involved; local Justices of the Peace or County Courts for illegal movements. Incumbent contacts the County Sheriff's office for disposition of seized animals and/or suspects who have been detained by the employee.

2. Collects physical information which may involve sign-cutting and tracking techniques, and uses this information to detect and apprehend strayed or smuggled Mexican livestock.
3. Verifies and corroborates information obtained to establish accuracy and authenticity of facts and evidence.
4. Completes investigation and forwards a report for final action.
5. Issues warning letters for quarantine violations.
6. Appears as a witness and furnishes expert testimony before local, State, and Federal courts. (20% of time)

Collects and makes tentative identification of ticks according to genus, species, stage of life cycle, sex, and sexual maturity. Evaluates and determines the possibilities of exposure to other livestock or premises and recommends courses of action to the supervisor. Forwards tick, screwworm, and scabies specimens to the State Office through the supervisor. (10% of time)

Processes livestock in accordance with regulations. Mixes, tests, and applies pesticide solutions following current recommended guidelines to insure utmost safety for personnel, livestock, and the environment. Recommends dipping notices when required and advises livestock owners of dipping locations and dates. (10% of time)

Factor 1 - Knowledge Required

Knowledge of biological and animal science and of animal health quarantine programs, activities, and regulations sufficient to:

1. Independently apply established methods and procedures in the performance of survey, control, and regulatory work.
2. Generally recognize livestock parasites and diseases of economic significance.
3. Classify ticks by genus, species, stage of life cycle, sex, and sexual maturity,
4. Suspect and report presence of Foreign Animal Diseases.

Knowledge of livestock operations and characteristics of parasitic pests (including, but not limited to, ticks, scabies mites, and screwworms) sufficient to effectively plan and oversee a control program in designated area (e.g., systematic area and quarantined pastures).

Knowledge of pesticides and treatment methods:

1. Knowledge of complex procedures associated with vat management, pesticide testing, pesticide disposal, and vat dipping methods.

2. Spraying method usually used on more manageable livestock and the ability to administer safely.

3. Issuing permits to allow movement of livestock under authority of Texas Animal Health Commission. Supervise and perform dippings and sprayings.

Knowledge of Federal and State laws, regulations, and policies, and the ability to interpret and apply such knowledge to field situations.

Knowledge of investigative procedures for collection of evidence to support issuance of quarantines, and the successful prosecution of charges of illegal movement or smuggling of livestock.

Knowledge of the livestock industry, transportation industry, livestock auctions, and public activities involving livestock sufficient to enforce quarantine laws governing movement of injurious animal pests and diseases from the systematic area. Ability to read and interpret records and reports, and skill in interviewing/interrogating owners, employees, and transportation company personnel, using tact and persuasion to obtain cooperation of livestock owners and handlers.

Knowledge of and ability to ride horseback sufficient to track, rope, and subdue wild, unpredictable livestock.

Incumbent of this position is authorized to receive training in and carry firearms for self protection against criminal operatives in the border area. The Mounted Patrol Inspector must train and qualify in their use, demonstrate the ability to show sound judgment and avoid legal action against themselves or the Government, and re-qualify annually or be reassigned to a position not requiring firearm qualifications.

Knowledge of epidemiology to determine the origin of cattle fever tick infestation, and to trace out and halt the spread of cattle fever tick from such infestations (contacts made at all areas of livestock industry during these trace out activities for the purpose of stopping the spread of cattle fever tick).

Knowledge of sign-cutting and tracking techniques to insure the success of pasture quarantines, and to detect and apprehend strayed or smuggled Mexican livestock.

Factor 2. Supervision Received

The incumbent works independently in a remote location and must plan his/her own daily work schedule. Problems, unusual conditions such as discovery of smuggled or stray cattle, or findings of disease infestations are reported to the supervisor by telephone or radio. The supervisor occasionally rides on patrol with the Mounted Patrol Inspector to observe work in progress and provide technical, procedural, and/or regulatory training. Work is evaluated based on supervisory observation and examination of records and reports.

Factor 3. Guidelines

Guidelines are both oral and written and include rules and regulations of the Texas Animal Health Commission, Federal regulations (CFR Part 72), pertinent details of the Federal-State brucellosis and screwworm directives, regulations governing interstate and international movement of livestock and poultry, and State and local operating policies which are extremely complex in their application. The guidelines do not cover all problems, situations, or circumstances encountered. The inspector must independently use considerable knowledge of the regulations and make difficult interpretations based on his/her evaluation of the evidence developed when taking the necessary action to prevent the introduction of pests and diseases.

Factor 4. Complexity

This position involves performing a variety of diverse mental and physical tasks from riding and roping, to taking biological samples, to mixing and applying pesticides, to dealing with ranchers and livestock owners, and performing complex investigations. Care must be taken in identifying evidence of disease or infestation and taking action to insure the spread of disease is curtailed or eliminated. The incumbent must be able to recognize problems or potentially dangerous situations and make appropriate decisions about whether to act independently or enlist supervisory intervention.

Factor 5. Scope and Effect

The primary purpose of this position is to patrol and inspect border areas and take action to eliminate the spread of fever ticks and other animal disease vectors. Proper identification and control of ticks is critical to the livelihood of the national livestock industry. Because of extensive public and industry contact, the incumbent serves as an agency representative and his or her successful work performance and conduct directly affect the success and credibility of the Tick Eradication Program and of APHIS in general.

Factor 6. Personal Contacts

Contacts are made with a variety of individuals, including private citizens, livestock owners and transporters, veterinarians, representatives of local and State governments, officials of other Federal government agencies (such as Customs or Immigration Inspectors, Border Patrol Agents, or Law Enforcement Officials), as well as a variety of individuals within APHIS. These contacts take place in diverse places such as auction barns, public and private locations, and the international border. Incumbents often encounter individuals or groups manifesting various degrees of hostility toward regulatory programs and/or personnel. It is imperative that the incumbent communicate tactfully with members of the livestock industry, other government officials, and Mexican nationals to explain rules and livestock handling procedures and to persuade individuals to comply with regulations and livestock management practices. A basic understanding of the Spanish language is desirable.

Factor 7. Purpose of Contacts

The purpose of contacts is to interview persons having knowledge of an alleged violation, obtain records for evidence, coordinate with other law enforcement agencies, and to exchange information and plan and coordinate work efforts. Contacts also require explaining regulations on movement and treatment of livestock and using tact and diplomacy to persuade individuals to comply with government procedures and regulations. The incumbent may also be required to present testimony in legal proceedings.

Factor 8. Physical Demands

The work demands very strenuous activity and stamina to ride horseback in rough country, apprehend and subdue wild and fractious animals, chop trail and crawl through dense brush, and lift bulky items in excess of 100 pounds.

Factor 9. Work Environment

Work is performed outdoors in extremes of weather conditions and temperatures ranging from below freezing to over 100 degrees. There is a high degree of risk associated with handling dangerously unpredictable animals, traversing hazardous and remote terrain on horseback, mixing and applying toxic pesticides, and encountering wild animals and snakes, violent individuals and armed criminals. Frequently, risk is of enough significance to warrant carrying firearms for self protection. The incumbent may also be required to travel on short notice.