

 **NEWS RELEASE**

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
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USDA CHANGES CALIFORNIA'S BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS STATUS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 23, 2008--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is reclassifying California as modified accredited advanced for bovine tuberculosis (TB). This action is necessary to reduce the likelihood of the spread of the disease within the United States.

APHIS had listed California as an accredited-free state for bovine TB. An epidemiological investigation of a TB-positive cow found through slaughter surveillance in December 2007 resulted in the confirmation of an affected dairy herd. The investigation continued, and officials recently identified two additional affected dairy herds. The finding of a second affected herd within a 48-month period means that California no longer meets the requirements for accredited-free status.

APHIS is reclassifying the state as modified accredited advanced. As a result of this action, cattle or bison being moved interstate from anywhere in California will now have to meet the testing requirements that apply to animals from modified accredited advanced states or zones. However, intact heifers still can be shipped interstate if moved directly to a feedlot or in feeder channels. Also, the movement of spayed heifers and steers, cattle from a TB-accredited free herd and cattle or bison less than 6 months of age, can continue.

Bovine TB is a contagious and infectious disease caused by *Mycobacterium bovis*. It affects cattle, bison, deer, elk, goats and other warm-blooded species and can be fatal. The disease can be transmitted to humans through direct contact with infected animals or consumption of raw milk. It is not transmitted through pasteurized milk. If a producer suspects TB in their herd, they should isolate the animal immediately and contact their veterinarian for a proper diagnosis.

Notice of this interim rule was published in the Sept. 18 *Federal Register* and became effective upon publication.

Consideration will be given to comments received on or before Nov. 17. Send two copies of postal or commercial delivery comments to Docket No. APHIS-2008-0067, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. If you wish to submit a comment using the Internet go to the Federal eRulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=APHIS-2008-0067>; then click on "Add Comments." This will also allow you to view public comments and related materials available electronically.

Comments received are posted on the Regulations.gov Web site and also can be viewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. To facilitate entry into the comment reading room, please call (202) 690-2817.

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