

Anthrax Disease in Cattle Is a Thing of the Past - - Almost

Small-fry cowboys may be disappointed to learn that Maryland's folklore never included the romance of cattle trails in the Old West.

And modern-day writers of television Westerns probably aren't aware that even real-life seasoned cowboys on cattle drives often had to turn their heads the other way to avoid the ugly sight and stench of rotting carcasses resulting from wildfire epidemics of killer diseases like blackleg and anthrax.

Except where conservationists have preserved short stretches, the cattle trails have long disappeared. And the dreaded cattle-killer epidemics have been considered so well under control that vaccines for them are even somewhat difficult to obtain.

But, guess what? Anthrax is still around. And a one-farm outbreak of it has occurred twice in the last 3½ years in an unlikely spot like Maryland's Eastern Shore — far removed from the legendary cattle trails.

According to Dr. Robert C. Hammond, University of Maryland Extension veterinarian, anthrax was diagnosed by a local veterinarian recently in a Kent County dairy herd. The diagnosis was confirmed by State Board of Agriculture animal health laboratories at both Centreville and College Park.

The case was reported to the Maryland State Department of Health, and milk from the affected herd was prevented from going into market channels for human consumption during a three-week period.

Anthrax in animals is a form of septicemia — or blood poisoning — causing an acute infectious fever and malignant skin carbuncle. Dr. Hammond commented in a recent interview it is often fatal, but animals can be saved with antibiotics, if therapy is begun in time.

Anthrax can also be transmitted to man. One form of the malady in humans is wool sorter's disease, which affects the lungs, producing a fatal form of pneumonia.

How did anthrax get to Maryland — and particularly the Eastern Shore? Dr. Hammond believes the answer is found in the nature of the organisms which produce the disease.

These rod-shaped bacteria form spores which can live in the soil for hundreds of years. When conditions of humidity, temperature and ground moisture are right, they become active. One theory holds that anthrax-producing spores are associated with low spots in a pasture where vegetation dies and becomes rotted.

The anthrax spores were probably transported to Maryland in bone meal used for fertilizer.

July 5 Is Trading Date For Egg Clearinghouse

The Board of Directors of Egg Clearinghouse, Inc. met June 2 at Avalon, New Jersey. The Board announced the official opening of the St. Louis Office on June 7.

Membership applications are being accepted for approval at this time.

Trading will officially begin July 5.

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prior to the advent of modern chemical fertilizers. Bone meal and tankage are still used by gardeners and livestock feeders, but modern heat treatment temperatures used nowadays are high enough to kill the organisms.

The original Kent County outbreak in September 1967 was associated with excavation in an old site following a barn fire, Dr. Hammond noted.

U.S. Department of Agriculture veterinarians are spotted in

strategic locations around the country to maintain constant vigilance. These exotic disease specialists have the mission of keeping isolated outbreaks of old-time killer diseases — like the anthrax outbreak in Kent County — from ever again reaching epidemic proportions.

The federal veterinarian charged with such surveillance for Maryland and surrounding states is located at the USDA's Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville.

4-H Calendar

Saturday, June 12

Nebraska 4-H'ers visit Lancaster County

Monday, June 14

12:30 p.m. — Merry Maids 4-H Club, Martin Meylin Junior High School

Camp Kanesatake, June 14-18

Tuesday, June 15

9 a.m. — Bergstrasse 4-H Club meeting

7 p.m. — Garden Spot Community 4-H Club meeting, Girvin's Greenhouse, 17 W Main St., Leola, and J. Donald Myer's farm, 410 Willow Road

7:30 p.m. — 4-H Guernsey Club, Clark Coates farm, Nottingham RD2

8 p.m. — 4-H County Council meeting, Farm and Home Center.

Elizabethtown — Donegal 4-H Club, home of Harold Ney.

Wednesday, June 16

10 a.m. — 4-H Strawberry Exhibit and Roundup, Farm and Home Center

Landsville 4-H Sewing Club meeting

Ayrshire, Jersey, Brown Swiss meeting, James Martin farm, Stevens RD1

Thursday, June 17

1 p.m. — 4-H Tractor tour of New Holland Division, meet at Farm and Home Center

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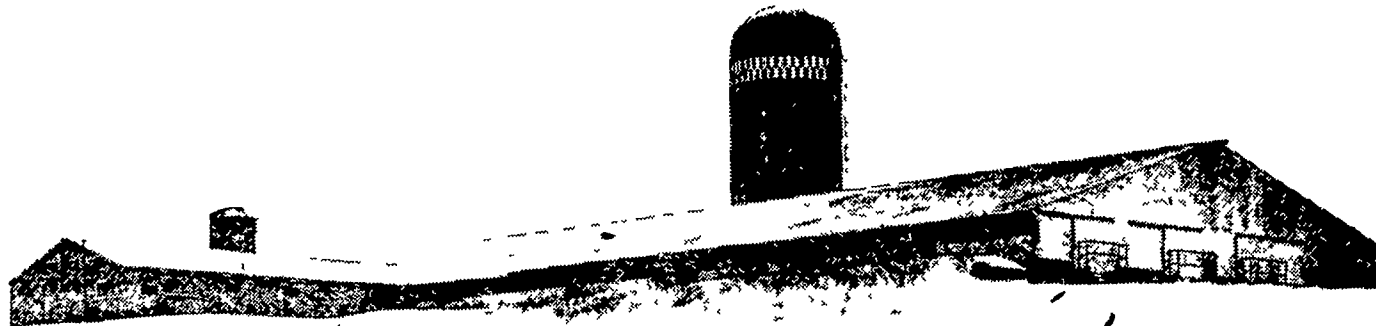
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