

Reduced dosage strain 19 brucellosis vaccine available

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Reduced-dosage Strain 19 brucellosis vaccine is now available to cattle raisers in states where it is needed to help reduce brucellosis in cattle herds.

"We handled regulatory changes making reduced dosage available on an emergency basis to encourage vaccination of last spring's calf crop, which is now the right age to vaccinate," Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland said.

"USDA veterinarians

believe reduced-dosage vaccination gives ample protection with far less chance of causing testing problems later," he said.

Bergland also said the uniform methods and rules for brucellosis eradication were changed October 1 to allow heifer calves of beef or dairy breeds to be vaccinated with reduced dosage between four and 12 months of age. The rules still call for vaccination with standard dosage at from two and six months of age for dairy calves and from two to ten

months for beef breeds, although some states have lower age limits for beef calves.

Bergland said use of reduced-dosage Strain 19 vaccine is optional for states, and some brucellosis-free or low-incidence states will not be taking advantage of its availability right away.

"States have facilities and people trained for doing viability counts and other steps needed to make reduced-dosage vaccine available to veterinarians," he said. "These special

procedures for handling will be needed until manufacturers can label vaccine for reduced dosage."

Reduced dosage was made possible by research recently completed by USDA scientists at the National Animal Disease Center, Ames, Iowa, Bergland said. Their findings show reduced dosage provides about the same protection as the standard dose but with much less chance of persistent high antibody levels that confuse blood test results.

Brucellosis, also called

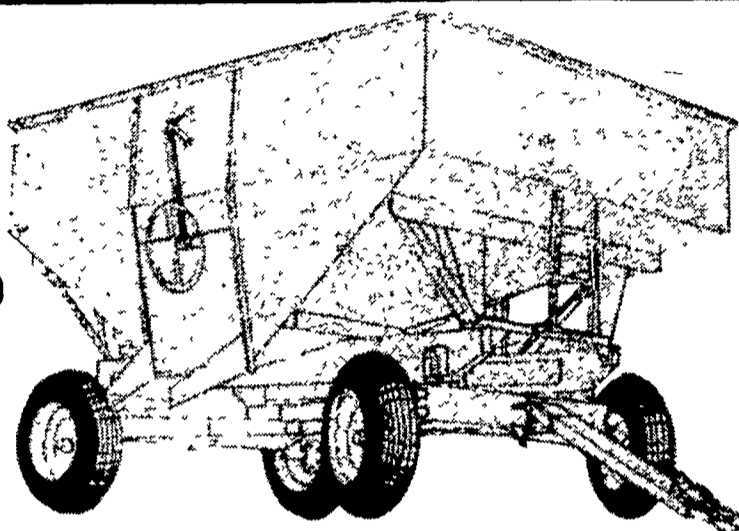
Bang's disease, is the object of a cooperative state-federal brucellosis eradication program. The goal is to protect the 99.5 percent of U.S. cattle, already free of disease while eliminating the remaining infection.

Brucellosis still costs cattle owners about \$56 million in annual losses from reduced calf crops and lower milk yields, brought on by abortion, birth of weak calves and breeding problems; Bergland said.

With no state-federal controls, losses could reach an estimated \$1 billion annually in just a few years, he said.

The regulation changes will be published in the Oct. 2 Federal Register. Comments should be sent, by December 10, to the deputy administrator, USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services, Federal Building, room 805, Hyattsville, Md., 20782. Copies of the regulation changes are also available from that address.

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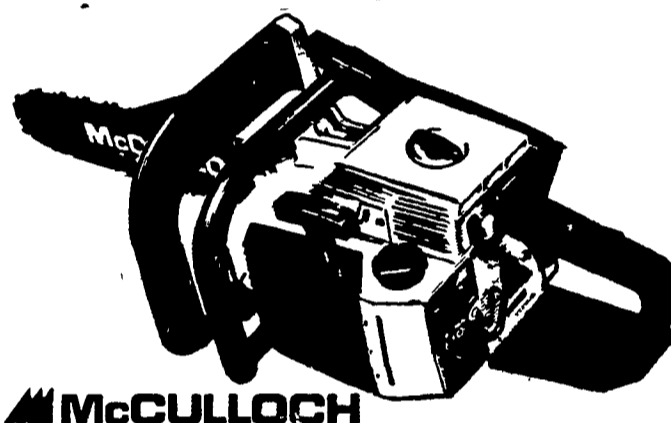
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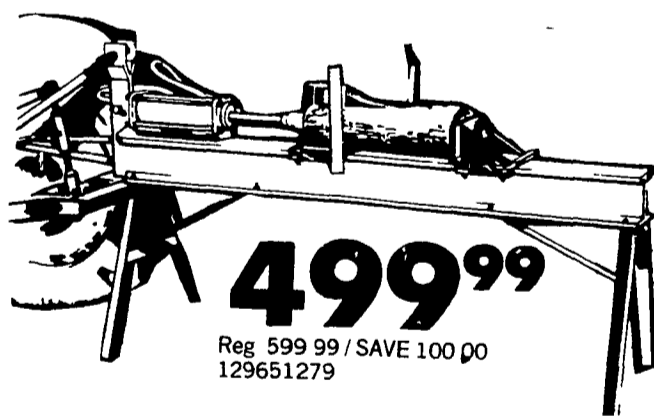
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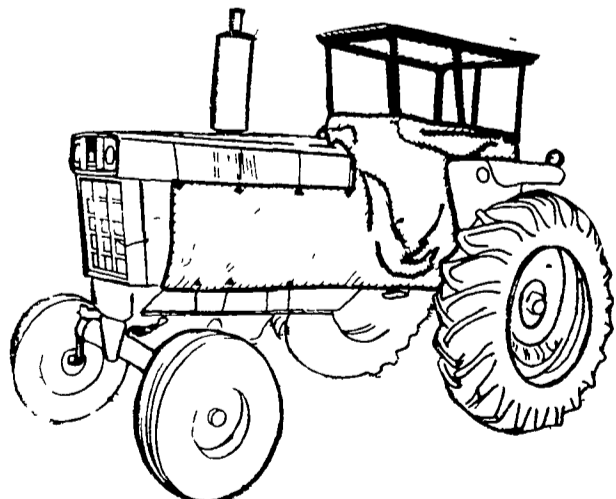


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