

Brucellosis status changes in several states

WASHINGTON, D.C. — One county each in Arkansas, Florida and Idaho and six South Dakota counties have regained certified-free status in the cooperative state-federal brucellosis eradication program, according to an official of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

At the same time, however, four Georgia counties and two Texas counties have slipped from certified-free to modified-certified status, said Paul Becton, director of brucellosis eradication for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Those regaining certified-free status were: Drew county, Ark.; Gadsden county, Fla.; Lincoln county, Idaho; and Corson, Custer, Dewey, McPherson, Meade and Spink counties, S.D. Dropping to

modified certified were: Banks, Echols, Rabun, and Stephens counties, Ga.; and Gray and Reagan counties, Texas.

Becton said 2,054 counties—65 percent of the 3,153 U.S. counties—are certified free of cattle brucellosis. This number includes all counties in 31 entire states plus the Virgin Islands. There are 1,093 counties in 19 states—plus Puerto Rico in the modified-certified status.

Four Florida counties (Charlotte, Hardee, Highlands and Okeechobee) and two Louisiana parishes (Cameron and Lafourche) are still listed as noncertified along with Yellowstone National Park.

To be certified brucellosis-free, a county must have no infection at the time of certification or

recertification and a herd infection rate of less than one percent during the previous 18 months. A modified-certified county has a herd infection rate of less than five percent. More than five percent is noncertified. Counties lose status if infection rates are too high or if

certain disease controls are lacking.

Brucellosis, or Bang's disease or contagious abortion, is an easily-spread disease of cattle, swine and other animals that can be transmitted to humans. It can cause serious losses for cattle producers in terms of aborted calves and

breeding problems. Human brucellosis, or undulant fever, is uncommon today, but still poses an occupational hazard for livestock producers and others who come in contact with infected animals. Raw or unpasteurized milk is also a source of human infection.



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