

New Year marks beginning of new brucellosis rating

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A new state rating system for brucellosis control went into effect on Jan. 1.

The new system could cause a state to lose its rating if an outbreak of brucellosis in cattle is not promptly contained and eliminated.

Brucellosis, or Bang's disease, is an infectious disease of cattle and other animals that can be transmitted to humans as undulant fever. The disease poses a serious economic threat to cattle producers through reduced calf crops and lower milk yields, according to Paul Becton, director of the National Brucellosis Eradication Program for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

"A new state rating system was requested by a blue-ribbon Brucellosis Technical Commission in 1978 and will help control brucellosis," Becton said.

Under the new rating system, cattle could be shipped freely across state lines if a state is rated "free" of the disease. Other state ratings of Class A, B or C — based on the amount of infection and

state disease surveillance system — would require cattle to have blood tests for brucellosis before they could be shipped between states.

Presently, ratings are made on a county-by-county basis within states. The new rating plan would have either one rating for an entire state, or in some cases, two area classifications per state.

The U.S. Animal Health Association, representing state animal health agencies and major livestock industry groups, initially recommended Jan. 1, 1981, as the beginning date for reclassification. This was delayed until 1982, however, to allow states more time to meet the stricter standards.

"Class A" states would have herd infection rates of 0.25 percent or less. "Class B" states would have herd infection rates of 1.5 percent or less. "Class C" states would be those with herd infection rates in excess of 1.5 percent or 15 herds per 1,000, Becton said.

A spokesman for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture reported that the reclassification caused no upset

with PDA.

However, Dr. Max VanBuskirk, Jr., chief of PDA's Bureau of Animal Industry, reported that PDA is more concerned that federal regulations do not restrict inter-state movement of vaccinated animals from infected

herds. Such movement is prohibited by PDA.

Slaughter sampling is one surveillance tool PDA could employ to detect infected animals that cross the state line, noted VanBuskirk. However, he stressed that

PDA lacks the personnel to sample the high number of carcasses required for effective testing.

"As long as the new federal reclassification remains," said VanBuskirk, "PDA has to watch unscrupulous dealers."

Forest Service seeks public opinions

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Public comments are needed to help update plans for the future management of the nation's natural resources, R. Max Peterson, chief of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, said recently.

Peterson said the public comments will be used in preparing the 1985 Resources Planning Act program, the third overall plan for the long range management of the 190-million-acre national forest system, as well as Forest Service research and cooperative assistance activities.

Public comments are being solicited on national goals for

timber, range, water, wilderness, recreation, minerals and energy, fish and wildlife, rural communities and human resources, international forestry and resource protection.

"We are requesting that the public study a number of alternative goals and help us formulate one national goal for each of 10 resource opportunity areas," Peterson said.

"Just as in the 1980 program, public involvement will continue to be a key ingredient in the resources planning process. Every American benefits in some way from the management of our forest and rangelands, and we welcome

their thoughts on how this important work should be conducted."

Peterson said the Resources Planning Act of 1974 requires the Forest Service to prepare an assessment of the nation's renewable natural resources every 10 years and a program for Forest Service activities every five years.

Peterson said the public comments on national goals are being sought through a publication called "Alternative Goals—1985 RPA Program." Copies are available from all Forest Service offices. The public comment period will end on March 15, 1982.

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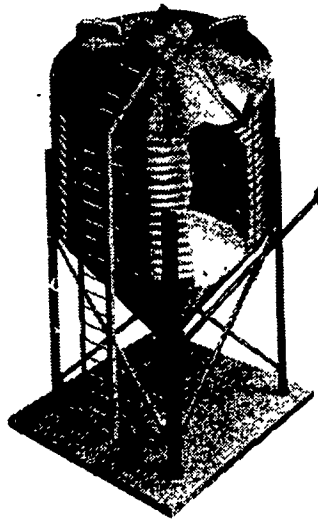
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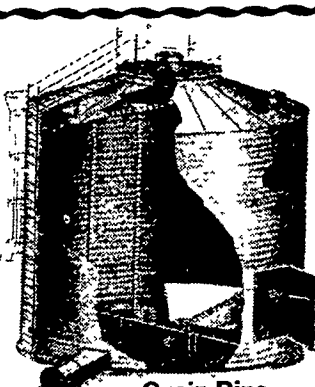
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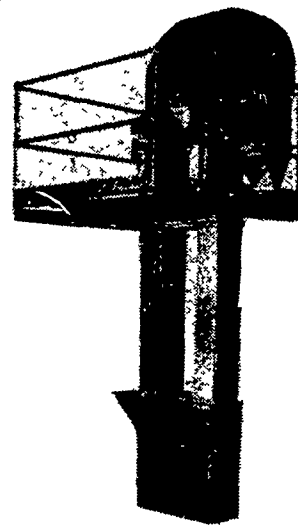
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