



For Immediate Release
September 8, 2020

Anthrax Confirmed in an Armstrong County Bull

AUSTIN, TX – Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) officials received confirmation of anthrax in one bull on an Armstrong County premises on September 4, 2020. This is the second Texas county to have a confirmation; anthrax was confirmed in Briscoe County in August.

The Armstrong County premises is located in the southwest portion of the county and has been quarantined. The TAHC will continue to closely monitor the situation alongside the Texas Department of State Health Services and the private veterinarian.

“Due to the nature of anthrax, TAHC rules require proper disposal of the affected carcass and vaccination of other cattle on the premises prior to release of the quarantine,” said Dr. Susan Rollo, TAHC State Epidemiologist. “Producers are encouraged to remain vigilant and consult with their local veterinary practitioner if they suspect their animals are exposed to anthrax or are interested in vaccinating their livestock. The vaccine is dependable and proven to protect livestock from the disease.”

It is common to see an increase in anthrax cases after periods of wet, cool weather, followed by hot, dry conditions. At that time, animals ingest the anthrax bacteria when they consume contaminated grass and hay or inhale the spores. Outbreaks usually end when cooler weather arrives.

Anthrax is a bacterial disease caused by *Bacillus anthracis*, which is a naturally occurring organism with worldwide distribution, including certain parts of Texas. Anthrax cases in Texas are most often found in portions of Crockett, Val Verde, Sutton, Edwards, Kinney and Maverick counties. An effective vaccine for livestock is available and is commonly used in areas that have anthrax. To be effective, it must be used before the animal is exposed to the bacteria.

After exposure to anthrax, it usually takes three to seven days for animals to show symptoms of anthrax. Once symptoms begin, death will usually occur within 48 hours. Acute fever followed by rapid death with bleeding from body openings are all common signs of anthrax in livestock. Owners of livestock and animals displaying symptoms consistent with anthrax or experiencing death of animals should contact a private veterinary practitioner or a TAHC official.

Producers are encouraged to follow basic sanitation precautions when handling affected livestock or carcasses. It is recommended to wear protective gloves, long sleeve shirts and to wash thoroughly afterward to prevent accidental spread of the bacteria to people. For more information on how anthrax affects humans please visit <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/idcu/disease/anthrax/information/faqs/>.

For more information about Anthrax, visit https://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCFactsheet_Anthrax.pdf, or contact your local [TAHC region office](#), or visit <http://www.tahc.texas.gov>.

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