



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

VETERINARY SERVICES MEMORANDUM NO. 550.7

Animal and Plant  
Health Inspection  
Service

**TO:** Veterinary Services Management Team (VSMT)

Veterinary Services

**FROM:** John R. Clifford <sup>For</sup>  
Deputy Administrator  
Veterinary Services

DEC 19 2008

Washington, DC  
20250

**SUBJECT:** Notification Procedures When *Boophilus* (Fever) Ticks Are Found on Cattle from Mexico Presented at Land Border Ports

I. PURPOSE

This memorandum provides instructions to VS personnel for appropriate notification procedures when *Boophilus* ticks are found on cattle (any domesticated species in the genus *Bos*) presented for importation to the United States at Mexico/United States land border ports.

II. GENERAL

Cattle from Mexico must arrive free of ticks on inspection at the border ports, in accordance with the provisions of title 9 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (9 CFR), part 93.427. Cattle free from evidence of communicable disease and tick infestation are eligible for entry into the United States, subject to other provisions of 9 CFR 93.426. Cattle affected with or exposed to a communicable disease, or infested with fever or other ticks, will be refused entry. Exceptions are noted in 9 CFR 93.427(b)(2).

Any cattle found with ticks at the Mexican/United States border are refused entry, dipped, and quarantined (typically at the Mexican port) for 10 to 14 days before they are presented again for importation into the United States. This memorandum defines the mechanism for notifying VS personnel and Mexican authorities when port officials find ticks on consignments of feeder cattle.

NOTE: The finding of *Boophilus* ticks on cattle originating from northern Sonora or northern Chihuahua States will carry additional consequences since VS currently considers those areas free of *Boophilus* ticks.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. VS port personnel

The VS port Veterinary Medical Officer (VMO) will follow appropriate procedures for cattle inspection as outlined in a separate VS Memorandum for



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cattle fever tick inspections. When the VMO identifies *Boophilus* ticks, he or she will do the following:

1. Immediately notify both the Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación (SAGARPA) contact person for the port of embarkation in Mexico and the VS Area Veterinarian in Charge (AVIC) by phone or e-mail with the following information:
  - a. Consignment (lot designation, if applicable) of cattle;
  - b. Date of inspection;
  - c. Number of cattle in the consignment (lot);
  - d. Herd and Mexican State of origin;
  - e. Importer's/owner's name and address;
  - f. Exporter's name and address; and
  - g. SAGARPA veterinarian who issued the tick dip certificate.
2. Obtain hard copies of all documents that were presented with the consignment, i.e., Certification of Herd of Origin with the Annex, Zoosanitario de Exportación, tuberculosis test charts, tick dip certificates, and any additional documents presented with the consignment, and forward these copies to the AVIC.

### B. AVIC (or acting AVIC):

1. Immediately notify the National Center for Import and Export (NCIE) by e-mail or fax when a report (VS form 5-38) is submitted by a VMO for suspected or confirmed *Boophilus* ticks; and
2. Forward copies of all export documents to the Western Regional Office (WRO) via overnight courier. For each case and within 2 business days of receipt, the WRO will e-mail scanned hard copies received from the field and prepare and submit a spreadsheet containing the information in Section III.A.1, to NCIE's Animals, Organisms and Vectors, Select Agents (AOVSA) Director.

### C. NCIE:

1. Promptly notify the Director of APHIS' International Services (IS) office in Mexico City by phone or by e-mail of all tentative identification of *Boophilus* ticks on cattle exported from northern Sonora or northern Chihuahua States. All other findings of *Boophilus* ticks from other parts of Mexico will be reported weekly.
2. Forward scanned copies of the export documents accompanying the consignment of cattle to the Director of the IS office in Mexico City.
3. Follow up with the Director of the IS office in Mexico City and SAGARPA's Director of Animal Health about what actions were taken.

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### D. Director of the IS office in Mexico City:

1. Promptly notify SAGARPA's Director of Animal Health by phone of all tentative and confirmed identifications of *Boophilus* ticks from cattle originating from northern Sonora or northern Chihuahua states. All other findings of *Boophilus* ticks will be reported weekly.
2. Forward relevant e-mails regarding ticks found at the ports that have been tentatively or positively identified as *Boophilus* to the SAGARPA's Director of Animal Health as received.
3. Send scanned copies of the export documents accompanying the affected consignment of cattle to the SAGARPA's Director of Animal Health.

### E. State/Federal (S/F) laboratory submissions:

1. The approved laboratories for tick submissions from VS land border ports with Mexico are the S/F laboratory in Austin, Texas, and the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa.
2. VS port personnel will follow the submission instructions of the VS Memorandum for Cattle Fever Tick Inspections.
3. The approved laboratories will verify identification of ticks submitted from the ports. The laboratories will send identification reports to the relevant Area Office and State Veterinarians of all the ticks identified as *Boophilus*.
4. VS Port staff will send tick specimens collected at Texas ports of entry to the S/F laboratory in Austin, Texas. Port staff will send specimens collected at the New Mexico and Arizona ports of entry to NVSL.
5. The Austin S/F laboratory will submit all tick samples tentatively identified as *Boophilus* species to NVSL for confirmation.

### F. NVSL:

1. NVSL will immediately report confirmation of *Boophilus* ticks from cattle exported from northern Sonora and/or northern Chihuahua States in writing to the VS port VMO and the AVIC.
2. NVSL will submit a monthly report of all *Boophilus* ticks identified from submissions of cattle presented for entry at the Mexican border ports to the WRO, the AVIC of the submitting State, and the NCIE AOVSA Director.

## IV. CONSIGNMENTS REFUSED ENTRY

### A. When VS port officials reject a consignment of cattle offered for importation from Mexico after finding ticks, they will handle the consignment as follows:

1. The rejected consignment will be dipped and quarantined in Mexico and re-inspected in 10 to 14 days. If the rejected consignment is found free of ticks

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at the second VS inspection, the consignment will be dipped and cleared for export if all other VS import requirements have been met.

2. If a consignment that was refused entry, dipped, and quarantined is found to have ticks when presented for inspection a second time, the consignment will be refused entry and will be considered ineligible for future importation. VS will also ask SAGARPA to brand these animals per Section IV.B.6.

B. If the same consignment of cattle is refused entry a second time for ticks, or if any two different consignments are refused entry for ticks, the VS port VMO will, in addition to the actions required in Section IV.A, do the following:

1. Place the name of the exporter of the consignment on a "restricted exporter list."
2. Place the name of the SAGARPA veterinarian who issued the "dip and freedom from ticks" certificate on a "restricted SAGARPA veterinarian list."
3. Fill out VS Form 17-30.
4. Submit these "restricted lists" to the AVIC, who will submit it to the WRO and NCIE. The WRO will forward a copy of any restricted lists to all United States-Mexico land border ports with instructions that the exporters and SAGARPA veterinarians on that list will be subjected to the restrictions outlined in this Memorandum if a total of three violations occur.
5. Inform the exporter in writing (see Attachment A) of the following:
  - a. A cattle consignment offered for importation a second time by the exporter was found infested with ticks at the time of VS port inspection and was refused entry, and this consignment is permanently ineligible for importation to the United States.
  - b. Any subsequent consignments that are found to have ticks on the second VS inspection will be refused entry and will no longer be eligible for importation to the United States.
  - c. If a total of three consignments from the same exporter are refused entry due to the presence of ticks, the third consignment, and any consignment within a period of 1 year from the date of the third consignment, will be refused entry if found to have ticks on the first VS port inspection and will be permanently ineligible for importation. VS will also ask SAGARPA to brand these animals per Section IV.B.6.
6. The VS port VMO will ask the SAGARPA contact person to arrange for cattle from any consignment refused entry per Section IV.A.2 or IV.B.5.c to be branded with the CN (Consumo Nacional) brand. This brand will make the cattle permanently ineligible for importation to the United States.
7. Ask the SAGARPA contact person to notify the SAGARPA veterinarian who issued the "dip and freedom of ticks" certificate associated with a third shipment of tick-infested cattle that his or her name will be forwarded to SAGARPA through the specified channels as outlined in Section IV.C.

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- C. The WRO will notify NCIE. The NCIE AOVSA Director will officially notify SAGARPA of the actions taken and provide a list of the SAGARPA veterinarian(s) who issued the "dip and freedom of ticks" certificates for cattle that were refused entry. NCIE will follow up with SAGARPA regarding actions taken against veterinarians issuing fraudulent dip certificates.
- D. The Director of the IS office in Mexico City will notify SAGARPA in writing that an approved veterinarian issued multiple "dip and freedom from ticks" certificates for consignments of cattle that were found to have *Boophilus* ticks. This letter should request a summary of the actions taken by SAGARPA to address these violations.

V. CONTACT INFORMATION

A. AVICs

Texas

Phone (512) 383-2400

New Mexico

Phone (505) 761-3160

Arizona

Phone (480) 491-1002

B. Western Regional Office

Phone (970) 494-7389

C. NCIE

Phone (301) 734-8364

D. International Services

Phone 011-5255-1997-1511

E. State-Federal Laboratories

State-Federal Laboratory  
4501 Springdale Rd, Suite B  
Austin, TX 78723  
Phone (512) 933-0441

USDA, APHIS, VS, NVSL  
1800 Dayton Road (Packages)  
Ames, IA 50010  
Phone (515) 663-7918

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F. SAGARPA contact information:

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Attachment

Attachment A

Format for Letter to Exporter

Date:

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

We are hereby notifying you that on \_\_\_\_\_, a consignment of cattle was presented a second time in your name as exporter to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Services (VS) port personnel at the port of \_\_\_\_\_ for importation to the United States. This consignment was found infested with ticks. The consignment has been refused entry to the United States in accordance with title 9 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, section 93.427, and is no longer eligible for importation to the United States.

We are also informing you that your name is being placed on a restricted list. After you have been sent two notifications regarding cattle that have been refused entry because of ticks found by VS, any additional cattle consignments from your company that are refused entry by VS on the first inspection will not be considered eligible for U.S. entry for a period of 1 year.

We will also solicit the assistance of the Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación (SAGARPA) to brand all animals refused entry to the United States in accordance with this policy with the "Consumo Nacional" (CN) brand, which will make the cattle permanently ineligible for importation to the United States.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Port Veterinarian (Printed name of port veterinarian)  
VS, APHIS, USDA



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