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MEMO

To: Cattle Producers, Veterinarians, and Fair Organizers
From: Amar Patil, DVM, MVSc, PhD Dipl. ACVM, Director, Division of Animal Health/State Veterinarian
Date: April 27, 2024

RE: USDA Federal Order on testing and reporting Influenza A in cattle

A Federal Order established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) was recently announced. The order identifies specific requirements related to the emerging disease issue of Influenza A (H5N1) in cattle. With the goal of protecting the nation's livestock industry, USDA has implemented required Influenza A testing on lactating cows prior to interstate movement. Additionally, the Federal Order requires laboratories and state veterinarians to report Influenza A detections in livestock to USDA APHIS. The mandates described in the Federal Order are effective on Monday, April 29, 2024, and apply to all states, including New Jersey.

Listed below are particularly important aspects of the Federal Order and USDA guidance.

Mandatory Testing for Interstate Movement of Dairy Cattle

- Prior to interstate movement, non-clinical lactating dairy cows are required to receive a negative test for Influenza A virus at an approved National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratory in addition to meeting the importing state's testing requirements and a certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI).
- Non-clinical lactating dairy cows moving interstate direct to slaughter do not require influenza A testing but require a certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI).
- Non-clinical lactating dairy cows moving interstate through auction markets in New Jersey to out of state slaughter do not require influenza A testing but require a certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI).
- Non-clinical lactating dairy cows moving interstate to auction market in another state require influenza A testing and a certificate of veterinary inspection.
- Nonlactating dairy cattle, including bull calves, dry cows, and heifers; and beef cattle are exempt from Influenza A testing for interstate movement.
- Movement tests are valid for seven (7) days from the date of sample collection.
- For imported cattle attending a New Jersey Fair/Show, Influenza A testing is required for lactating dairy cattle in addition to meeting requirements in the 2024 fair and show letter.

- Owners of herds in which dairy cattle test positive for interstate movement will be required to provide epidemiological information, including animal movement tracing.
- Sick cattle are not eligible for movement. Dairy cattle herds that have tested positive for influenza A must wait 30 days and retested negative to be eligible for movement.

Mandatory Reporting

- Laboratories and state veterinarians must report positive Influenza A detection diagnostic results in livestock to USDA APHIS.

Influenza A Testing at NJDA Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory (NAHLN Laboratory)

New Jersey dairy producers in need of pre-movement testing should contact their attending veterinarian to arrange for sample collection. Sample collection and testing must occur no more than seven (7) days prior to interstate movement. The test sample required from lactating dairy cattle is milk/udder secretions from each quarter per individual cow. Ensure each quarter is sampled, as there have been reports of only one quarter having the virus. Milk from each quarter is then combined into one sample for submission to the laboratory. A total volume of 3-10 ml of milk per animal should be submitted. Milk is best submitted in sterile containers without any additives on ice. A thorough review of testing guidance has been published by USDA ([Testing Guidance for Labs for Influenza A in Livestock](#)).

The NJDA Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory (AHDL) is a USDA-approved National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratory to perform Influenza A testing in cattle and is ready to test samples. Samples submitted to the NJDA AHDL will be tested by real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assay for influenza A. Testing at the NJDA AHDL will be completed at no cost to the producers/veterinarians. The NJDA AHDL General Submission form should be used to request testing: [Animal Health Diagnostic Lab | Submission Forms \(nj.gov\)](#). NJDA AHDL Contact information: Phone (609) 406-6999, E-mail jerseyvetlab@ag.nj.gov.

As a reminder, livestock showing clinical signs consistent with Influenza A in cattle (decreased appetite, drop in milk production, thickened milk, abnormal feces, and fever) should be reported to a veterinarian and the NJDA Division of Animal Health (DAH) at 609-671-6400. Currently, there are no detections or suspect cases in New Jersey and producers are urged to reinforce good biosecurity practices on their farm. Influenza A testing for interstate dairy cattle movement is an additional requirement to the preexisting livestock importation regulations in New Jersey, [N.J.A.C. 2:3 Livestock and Poultry Importation](#). Persons moving dairy cattle are reminded that these requirements are in addition to the official identification, certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI), and testing requirements conventionally required for cattle movement. Please consult the receiving state to confirm all other interstate movement requirements prior to affecting an animal's movement.

The Federal Order intends to improve understanding of the disease through required reporting and mitigate disease spread with the implementation of mandatory testing prior to interstate movement. The Federal Order is available online at [dairy-federal-order.pdf \(usda.gov\)](#). This Federal Order is subject to change and testing requirements may apply to other classes of dairy cattle based on scientific factors concerning the virus and its evolving risk profile. USDA has created a guidance document entitled [APHIS Requirements and Recommendations for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza \(HPAI\) H5N1 Virus in Livestock For State Animal Health Officials, Accredited Veterinarians and Producers](#). The USDA website [HPAI Detections in Livestock](#) provides additional guidance and the latest information. NJDA will continue to monitor this developing situation and communicate with industry stakeholders as necessary.