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RE: Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV) Detection – Cochise County, AZ

Greetings Arizona livestock producers, auction market operators, and allied industry professionals,

USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) just published notification that samples collected on two different horses on two separate premises in Cochise County were confirmed positive on 10/31/2025 for Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV), New Jersey strain (VSNJV). No other horses or cattle on these premises have demonstrated clinical symptoms to date and no movement of animals off premises has occurred. These two premises are the 2025 VSV index cases for the United States.

The last outbreak of VSV in the U.S. occurred from May 2023 through January 2024 with a total of 319 premises affected in 3 states (California, Nevada, and Texas). The last confirmed case of VSV in Arizona was June 24th, 2020. Vesicular stomatitis virus circulates annually between livestock and insect vectors in southern Mexico and only occasionally results in incursion to the U.S. when climatic and ecological factors support movement of VSV-infected insect vectors northward.

Known competent vectors for transmission of VSV include black flies, sand flies, and biting midges or no-see-ums. The initial epidemiological investigations on both VSV-confirmed positive premises in Cochise County, Arizona, indicate that incursion of VSV-infected insect vectors is the likely source of infection on these premises. The susceptible livestock species are being monitored and both VSV-positive premises will remain under state quarantine until 14 days from the onset of lesions in the last affected animal on the premises.

As a reminder for our livestock producers, market operators, and allied professionals, that may be seeing livestock (cattle, horses, swine) with compatible clinical signs (extensive oral ulcerations on the tongue, lips, corner of the mouth, teats, coronary bands at the hairline of the hooves, prepuce, or vulva) please report these immediately to diseasereporting@azda.gov so that we can examine the animals, and collect samples. These cases must be investigated because these clinical signs are indistinguishable from Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD).

Also be aware as is typical whenever we get a VSV detection, receiving states of Arizona livestock will often impose limitations on Interstate Certificates of Veterinary inspection (ICVIs) validity meaning the examination of the livestock proposed for interstate movement must occur in the destination state's specified period of time. This will require better coordination between accredited veterinarians and producers on unaffected premises being cognizant that the normal 30-day validity period of ICVIs will be void. Accredited veterinarians MUST CONTACT the destination states for their individual import restrictions. As is also often the case, supplementary ICVI statements imposed by the destination state will also often be required.

The following pictures are from one of our cases in 2020 and two pictures taken by the accredited veterinarian from one of the current cases.



General recommendations include fly control through cleanliness & manure management, limiting turnout of animals (if possible) when fly activity is greatest and application of insecticides to facilities and fly repellants to animals may all be useful strategies for decreasing fly-livestock contact. Vesicular Stomatitis is a highly infectious disease affecting upwards of 90% of animals in a given population and the incubation period from the time of infection to the onset of clinical signs is about 3-9 days. Once an animal becomes infected with Vesicular Stomatitis, transmission is no longer dependent on biting flies but can occur through direct contact with nasal secretions and saliva / vesicular fluid either from animal to animal or via contamination of fomites such as common feeders, water buckets, balling guns, tack, halters, bridles and bits. Affected animals should be isolated from unaffected animals until lesions are healed.

Limited cases of human disease have been reported but occasionally Vesicular Stomatitis virus will cause an illness resembling influenza characterized by fever, muscle aches, headache, malaise, enlarged lymph nodes and conjunctivitis. Most people will recover in about 7 days. Producers handling animals with VSV should wear gloves and wash their hands after.

Best,

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