



# Animal Health Update

UTAH DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

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**Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Dairy Cattle:** The same influenza virus that has been causing poultry losses in the United States since 2022 was [diagnosed in dairy cattle](#) in Texas and Kansas in March 2024. This virus causes decreased milk production and feed intake in lactating dairy cattle. The disease has since spread to 33 herds in nine states. To identify the extent of disease spread and to protect the dairy population, lactating dairy cattle moving across state lines [must be tested](#) for HPAI unless they are going to slaughter.



## News Briefs:

- **Federal Rule on Electronic Identification:** In the next few weeks, the USDA will publish their final rule on [“Use of Electronic Identification Eartags as Official Identification in Cattle and Bison.”](#) This rule requires that official identification applied after the effective date be visually and electronically readable (i.e. RFID tags). There are also some changes in record-keeping requirements. Producers can contact the Animal Health Program at [statevet@utah.gov](mailto:statevet@utah.gov) to request RFID tags. [Premises Identification Numbers](#) can be requested on the UDAF website. RFID readers will soon be available again for veterinarians interested in the cost-share program.
- **Tularemia:** [Tularemia](#) has been diagnosed in wild beavers in [three Utah counties](#). Tularemia is a bacterial disease of rabbits and other rodents that [can also affect people](#), and is spread through tick or deerfly bites, direct contact with infected animals, contaminated water, or undercooked meat from an infected animal. Anyone who sees dead rabbits, beavers, or rodents should report it to the nearest [DWR office](#).
- **Changes to Utah Veterinary Loan Repayment Program:** The legislature made [two changes](#) to the state loan repayment program for veterinarians. First, the payment will be made annually instead of at the end of five years. Second, veterinarians who do at least 30% livestock medicine are eligible for the program, regardless of location in the state. An [application](#) is available on the UDAF website.
- **Trichomoniasis:** All Utah bulls over 12 months of age (except bison bulls and dairy bulls kept in confinement) must be tested annually for [trichomoniasis](#) between October 1 and May 15. Failure to test bulls before May 15 or before exposure to female cattle can result in citations.
- **VetCVI:** UDAF is offering the free program [VetCVI](#) to veterinarians for health certificates, brucellosis vaccination charts, and TB test charts. User guides and [videos](#) are available on our website.
- **Ovine Progressive Pneumonia (OPP):** OPP is an economically important [disease of sheep](#) that is caused by the same virus as CAE in goats. It causes pneumonia, arthritis, and neurologic signs. Control of this disease can improve flock productivity by increasing lamb growth and numbers and reduced culling due to disease.
- **Horse Racing:** The [Utah Horse Racing Commission](#)-sanctioned races will be held May 4-5, and May 19 at Weber Downs in Ogden.

