



Brucellosis Vaccination Update

OCTOBER 18, 2023

During the 2023 legislative session, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 57 which removes the statutory requirements for Brucellosis Vaccination of cattle in Oregon. This bill was signed into law on June 6, 2023, and will be effective January 1, 2024. Until that time, the Brucellosis regulations in Oregon remain unchanged.

Below are several common questions that the Oregon Department of Agriculture has received regarding the implementation of Senate Bill 57 and the removal of Brucellosis vaccination regulations in Oregon.

IF THE LAW WAS PASSED, DO CATTLE STILL NEED TO BE VACCINATED?

SB 57 does not take effect until January 1, 2024, so until that time, the existing laws remain in effect. Cattle being imported into Oregon or sold within Oregon will still be subject to statutory requirements to be vaccinated against Brucellosis until the effective date of the law. ODA does not require brucellosis testing for any imported cattle.

DO CATTLE PRODUCERS STILL NEED TO VACCINATE THEIR HEIFERS THIS FALL?

While the requirement that all female cattle be vaccinated for Brucellosis is still in effect until January 1, 2024, unless cattle are sold or transported across state lines, replacement heifers do not have to be vaccinated until they are 12 months of age. Heifers that were born during the Winter or Spring of 2023 will not reach that age until after SB 57 takes effect on January 1, 2024. For those heifers, the decision is up to the individual producer, in consultation with their veterinarian, whether they should vaccinate replacement heifers this year.

WILL OREGON PRODUCERS STILL BE ABLE TO VACCINATE FOR BRUCELLOSIS?

Yes. While Senate Bill 57 removed the requirements for Brucellosis vaccination, it did not affect the ability to vaccinate. After January 1, 2024, the decision of whether to vaccinate cattle will be left up to individual producers in consultation with their veterinarian.

WHAT IF A PRODUCER SHIPS CATTLE TO OTHER STATES?

While Oregon will be removing the Brucellosis vaccination requirement, there are a handful of states that still require vaccination. Those states include Washington, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana (within the Designated Surveillance Area), Nevada, California (dairy cattle only), and Utah. While most states allow unvaccinated female cattle to enter a restricted feedlot, if a producer will be shipping cattle to any of these states outside of restricted slaughter channels, it may still be necessary to vaccinate some, if not all, heifers.

IF A PRODUCER VACCINATES, DOES IT STILL NEED TO BE DONE BY A VET?

Yes. While the vaccine is no longer required, if the vaccine is administered, it must still be done by a veterinarian, and the animal must have official identification, an official brucellosis tattoo, and the veterinarian must still report the vaccination on a Brucellosis Vaccination Report to the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

While separate from SB 57, the United States Department of Agriculture has indicated that they intend to change the official identification devices that are allowed in cattle. If this occurs, it will end the use of metal clip “Bangs” tags in cattle, and instead require an RFID tag be used for cattle vaccinated after (and if) that change becomes effective. As a result of this proposed change, the Oregon Department of Agriculture will no longer be distributing to veterinarians orange RFID tags that are limited to use only for brucellosis vaccination (once current supply is depleted), but instead will distribute white RFID tags that can be used by veterinarians any time official identification is required. ODA will continue distributing metal “bangs” tags until the current supply is depleted, or the proposed ADT changes go into effect, whichever comes first.