



Wisconsin State Veterinarian Issues Special Order To Control Canine Brucellosis

Release Date: September 19, 2016

Media Contact: [Bill Cosh](#), Comm. Director, 608-224-5020

MADISON – To protect both canine and human health in Wisconsin from the bacteria that causes canine brucellosis, Dr. Paul McGraw, state veterinarian at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has issued a special order requiring that dogs that are not spayed or neutered all non-neutered or spayed dogs and are bought or obtained at an auction outside the state cannot be imported without meeting new requirements.

“Canine brucellosis is on the rise in Wisconsin threatening the health of both dogs and their owners,” McGraw said. A significant source of infected dogs are out-of-state dog auctions, where the large-scale sale and movement of untested or known positive dogs often occurs.

The special order prohibits the importing of a sexually intact dog into Wisconsin that has been bought or obtained from an auction outside the state unless the dog has been issued an import permit from the Department and has documented proof of a negative brucellosis test within 30 days before import.

Canine brucellosis is caused by a bacterium called *Brucella canis*. The bacteria cause reproductive failure in dogs, particularly those kept in kennels for breeding purposes, but can also cause a variety of other health problems that develop later in life. The disease is found worldwide, but in the United States is most frequently found in dogs from southern states.

“Thousands of dogs are transported into Wisconsin from other states annually, in some cases bringing the bacteria into previously uninfected facilities,” McGraw says. The disease is usually spread through contact with infected birthing tissues and fluids, but can also be transmitted by contaminated objects such as bedding, equipment, clothing or shoes. It can also be found in the milk, blood and semen of infected dogs.

Humans can become infected by direct contact or aerosol exposure to infected animals fluids. In humans, the symptoms of *Brucella* infection include fever, headache, weakness, chills and weight loss, and can result in significant health issues if not properly diagnosed and treated. Dog handlers who experience these symptoms should contact their healthcare provider.

Dog breeders and dealers are encouraged to work with a veterinarian to develop protocols for testing new animals and quarantining new animals added to their facility. Dog owners should monitor their dogs for signs of the disease and contact a veterinarian if present.

DATCP has developed a wide variety of information that is free and available at datcp.wi.gov. # # #