

MOUNT CARGILL BOVINE TB UPDATE #2

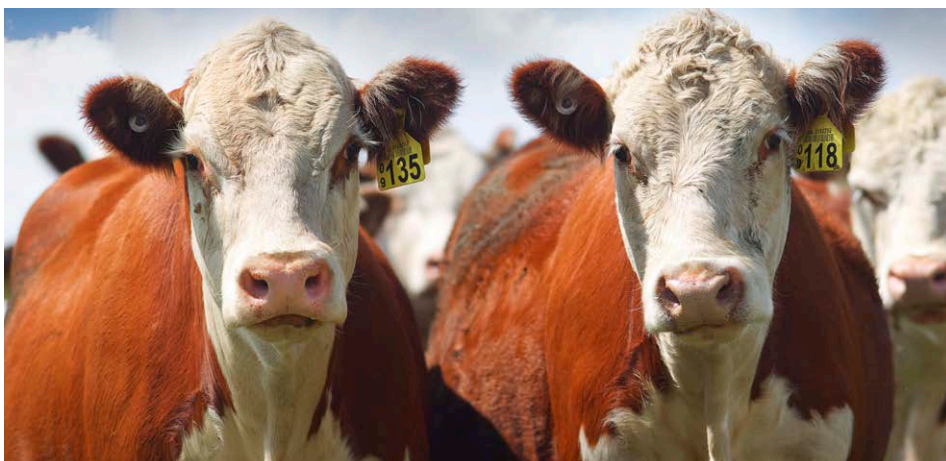
SEPTEMBER 2016

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN MOUNT CARGILL

Work has been progressing well in response to the Mount Cargill TB situation. Outlined below is a summary of key activities and next steps for managing the infection and our ongoing plans to support farmers in the area.

FERRET SURVEY

As TB has been found in possums within the Mount Cargill area, further surveillance work was needed to determine the spread of the disease in local wildlife. OSPRI's TBfree programme conducts ferret surveys as a way of monitoring the disease status in vector (carriers of the disease) populations. Ferrets scavenge TB infected possums and can become infected with the disease. This makes ferrets extremely important indicators of whether TB is present in an area. These surveys took place across the wider Waitati / Mount Cargill area during May, and the animals recovered have been sent for laboratory investigation. Further Laboratory testing (whole genomic sequencing)



is still underway to help understand where the infections originated from.

INFECTED HERDS

In May, TB testing has identified another infected herd outside the possum survey area. This brings the total to five infected herds in the area.

Since then, one of the herds has tested clear of the disease however, the remaining infected herds are subject to an on-going intensive TB testing programme and movement control until they are considered to be free of the disease. Because TB has been identified in local wildlife, neighbouring herds in the wider

Mount Cargill area and area north of Dunedin through to Waitati have had their test history reviewed and if necessary testing schedule set and stock movement restrictions imposed.

HERD REGISTRATIONS

A casing project involving helicopter surveillance of the wider area was successfully completed in June and resulted in a number of unregistered cattle herds being identified. Staff are working with these herd owners to help them understand their responsibilities and register their herds.

BLUESKIN A&P SHOW

Sunday 10th April saw OSPRI staff at Bland Park, Waitati for the Blueskin A&P Show. Staff were busy all day talking to landowners and locals about what was going on and what they could be doing to help. At the request of a landowner, a public meeting was held on the 31st May at the Valley Church in North East Valley. The focus of the meeting was to give a further update on the work being undertaken but more importantly to discuss the implications and the future.

RESEARCH

In July a research project was undertaken by Landcare Research to ascertain population densities in the wider Mount Cargill area. The survey has provided TBfree with valuable information about possum populations and is helping us to make an informed decision about the best ways to eradicate bovine TB from the area.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

OSPRI will use a combination on herd TB testing, controls on animal movement, survey and control of wild animals (mainly possums) to control and ultimately eradicate TB from the Mt Cargill area.

POSSUM CONTROL AND SURVEYS

A further possum control/survey operation is planned to commence in September 2016. The aim of this operation is to further reduce the possum population in the area, and



some of the animals will undergo post-mortem examination to identify whether TB is present in the population outside of the area surveyed last year. Traps and toxins will be used in this operation. As a land occupier, you will be consulted if control is to be undertaken on your property. Further operations are being planned for the 2016/17 year, and notification of these will be given in the future.

HERD MONITORING

Monitoring of all herds in the wider Mount Cargill area will continue. A particular focus will be monitoring direct to slaughter herds to ensure herd owners are complying with requirements.

ASSISTANCE NEEDED

OSPRI continues to need support from the local community regarding the spread of Tb in the wider Mount Cargill area. If you capture a possum that looks unwell or is behaving strangely, or with obvious sores in areas such as its armpit, we would appreciate if you do the following:

- Note or GPS the location the animal was found;
- 'Triple bag' the animal if able (inside three plastic bags and watch out for the claws). Wipe the outside of the bag with sanitizer.
- If handling a potentially infected animal, please wear gloves, and thoroughly wash and then disinfect your hands immediately afterwards (i.e. using an alcohol based hand sanitiser) and/or;
- Contact TBfree staff on (022) 183 1042 who will instruct you further and organise collection of the animal(s).

PIG HUNTING RISKS

This healthy pastime carries risks that could spread bovine TB. One big risk is the inadvertent spread of disease by hunters disposing of heads, skins and offal.



Good hunters and farmers know the safest ways to dispose of offal and carcasses that could be TB-infected. Using offal pits, burying or burning what you can't use is safe and sensible. Dumping offal away from where a pig is killed enables scavenging possums and other wildlife to spread TB.

Likewise, the transfer and release of pigs from one location to another heightens the risk of spreading disease. Please stick with safe disposal practices and visit ospri.co.nz for further guidance and factsheets on safe carcass disposal and identifying TB while hunting to help stop the spread of TB.

THANK YOU

OSPRI would again like to thank the wider Mount Cargill community for their ongoing support and understanding and for contributing to the TBfree New Zealand programme.



FURTHER INFORMATION

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