



**Pete Ricketts**  
Governor

# State of Nebraska

**Department of Agriculture**  
**Greg Ibach**  
Director  
P.O. Box 94947  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4947  
(402) 471-2341  
Fax: (402) 471-6876  
www.nda.nebraska.gov

## **NEWS RELEASE** **For Immediate Release**



**Sept. 17, 2015**  
**www.nda.nebraska.gov**

**Contact: Steve Roth**  
**(402) 471-6861**

\*\*\*\*\*

### **NDA CONFIRMS ADDITIONAL VESICULAR STOMATITIS CASES IN HORSES**

*Horse, Cattle Owners Advised to Take Precautions*

LINCOLN – The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) this week has confirmed additional cases of Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) in Panhandle horses. State Veterinarian Dr. Dennis Hughes said NDA has confirmed a total of five cases, including the case from last week. Four of those cases are in Scotts Bluff County and one is in Sioux County. Five additional cases are being investigated with test results pending, including four in Scotts Bluff County and a fifth in Lincoln County.

Hughes said the additional cases are not unexpected, based on transmission patterns in other states where the disease is present, and he is encouraging horse and cattle owners to take precautions, particularly with animals that may be comingling with other animals at events over the next several months.

“We just want owners to be aware of the cases and consider taking precautions, especially now that we know the disease is spreading in Nebraska,” Hughes said. “The primary way the virus is transmitted is from biting insects or midges, so consider treatments to reduce flies and mosquitos in quarters where animals are housed. We also want owners to be cognizant of the fact that VS also can be spread by nose-to-nose contact between animals.”

VS is a viral disease which primarily affects horses and cattle, but can also affect sheep, goats and swine. It causes blister-like lesions to form in the mouth and on the dental pad, tongue, lips, nostrils, hooves and teats. As a result of the lesions, infected animals may refuse to eat and drink, which leads to severe weight loss.

**-MORE-**

NDA has quarantined the livestock on all affected farms.

“The virus itself usually runs its course in five to seven days, and it can take up to an additional seven days for that infected animal to recover from the symptoms,” said Hughes.

Hughes said Colorado, Wyoming and South Dakota all have VS cases at this time, and several of the Wyoming cases are near the Nebraska Panhandle border.

“The case we are investigating in Lincoln County involved a horse that recently had been in a competition in Wyoming,” Hughes said.

Hughes said that due to last week’s confirmed VS finding, he and officials for the Aksarben Horse Show, scheduled for this weekend at the Lancaster Event Center in Lincoln, and the Aksarben Stock Show and Rodeo, scheduled for Sept. 24-27, in Omaha, have agreed to put in place new requirements for horse and cattle exhibitors. Horses arriving at the shows from anywhere within Nebraska will need to have seen a veterinarian within 48 hours. The 48-hour rule also will apply to any cattle coming to the show from the Nebraska Panhandle counties.

Hughes is encouraging the managers of other livestock exhibitions and events to consider similar requirements.

“Unfortunately, until cold weather moves in, VS will be a threat,” Hughes said. Freezing temperatures kill the insects that spread the virus.

For more information on VS, visit: <http://www.nda.nebraska.gov/animal/diseases/vs/index.html>.

###