

## **United States Feeder Cattle Imports - September, 2004**

New rules around importing feeder cattle from the United States were implemented April 1, 2004. Testing and treatment requirements for anaplasmosis and bluetongue are no longer required for feeder cattle imported from the U.S. New scientific information and Canadian controls at feedlots lower the risk of bluetongue and anaplasmosis spread from imported animals to Canadian livestock and wildlife.

Anaplasmosis and bluetongue are livestock diseases and have no impact on human health. These diseases are most commonly found in warm climates that support the specific insects that act as a vector to spread the diseases. As an added precaution, the new import rules require Canadian feedlots that import U.S. cattle to maintain risk mitigation measures, which include segregation of imported feeder cattle from breeding stock, identification and movement restrictions.

Feeder cattle originating from 39 states considered to have a low incidence of bluetongue can now be imported year round to approved feedlots without testing. Feeder cattle from the remaining 11 states (see end of document for listing), which are considered to have a high incidence of bluetongue, are also not required to be tested provided they have resided for at least 60 days prior to import in a low incidence state. Testing, however is still an option and should they be found free of bluetongue, the 60-day period will be waived. Historically these southern states have not exported significant numbers of feeder cattle to Canada .

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### **Summary**

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) and the U.S. National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) have been working together for many years to achieve this change in Canadian policy. Historically U.S. feeder cattle imported into Canada during the summer months from all U.S. states had to be tested for anaplasmosis and bluetongue. The cost of the tests made these cattle less competitive in the marketplace and U.S. cattle producers viewed the testing requirements as an artificial trade barrier not based on science. This change in rules will further enhance cattle trade between Canada and the United States .

### **Disease Information**

**Anaplasmosis** or "tick fever" is a disease of domestic and wild ruminants, including cattle, sheep, goats and deer. The disease is caused by a microorganism that invades red blood cells and is transmitted through blood of infected animals. Most often spread by ticks, which transfer the disease causing microorganism from infected to susceptible animals. Anaplasmosis is currently not found in Canada but has been introduced several times by infected cattle imported from the U.S. , but these outbreaks have been quickly eradicated. The severity of clinical signs varies considerably, depending on the species and age of the infected animal. Adult cattle, particularly those older than three years of age, are usually the most severely affected, with symptoms such as fever, anemia, weakness, respiratory distress, and, in some cases, death.

**Bluetongue** is a viral disease of domestic and wild ruminants that can be transmitted by insects. The severity of the disease varies among different species. Sheep are one of the most severely affected species, with symptoms that may include fever, erosive lesions in the mouth and

gastrointestinal tract, lameness, abortion, severe weight loss and pneumonia. Cattle, although more frequently infected than sheep, generally have an inapparent infection or milder form of the disease. Canada is currently free of bluetongue. Historically, the Okanagan valley of B.C is the only area of Canada where occasional incursions of bluetongue have occurred, the latest being 1999.

**U.S. States Designated High Incidence for Bluetongue:**

Alabama , Arizona , Arkansas , California , Florida , Georgia , Louisiana , Mississippi , Nevada , South Carolina , Texas