

NEWS COLUMNS

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Consider Anthrax Livestock Vaccinations

Soon it will time for turnout to summer pastures for livestock producers. Some cattle, sheep and horses have already been moved to grass. With this in mind producers are strongly encouraged to vaccinate for anthrax along with other herd vaccination considerations. The first case of the disease for 07 was already diagnosed in South Dakota 2 weeks ago.

In 2005 more than 160 cattle herds in South Dakota and North Dakota lost animals due to the disease, many of the cases occurred where there had previously been no history of the disease. Anthrax spores can remain in soil profiles for decades. Conditions such as severe drought or excessive pasture flooding can trigger the occurrence of the disease which normally occurs in the summer months from May through September. Anthrax is normally fatal to the first animals that are infected as they are often in remote areas away from human contact for extended periods. When death loss due to anthrax is suspected producers should not disturb the carcass and should contact a veterinarian immediately. Suspect animals can be successfully treated for the disease however prevention is the best advice as there is a highly effective vaccine.

Although most anthrax labels include swine, the vaccine is probably most widely used for cattle, sheep and horses. It is also labeled for goats and is inexpensive and safe. Cost per dose ranges from .75-\$1.00 and up. It is advised to vaccinate at least 1 month prior to peak anthrax season which in the Dakotas is late June-late August. Protective immunity can develop within eight to ten days. Immunity from vaccination can last six months to a year.

When you consider calves at \$300-400, cows at \$1000-1200 and other classes of livestock at far higher values, one dollar for a dose of insurance is very cheap. Most producers have to work livestock this time of year anyway. One additional vaccination only takes seconds.

For more information on anthrax disease and vaccination contact your local veterinarian. Other sources of information include the SD Animal Industry Board at 605-773-3321 or SDSU Extension Veterinarian, Russ Daly at 605-688-6589. Online information is available at <http://vetsci.sdstate.edu/VETEXT/>. Click on the link to SDSU Extension Extra 11010, "Frequently Asked Questions: Anthrax."

Historical Spring Frost Dates in Lincoln County are as Follows:

Percent probability of 30° F occurring after date shown.

April 27-50%

May 7th-30%

May 15th-10%