



## NEWS RELEASE

**Texas Animal Health Commission**

*"Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893"*

Dee Ellis, DVM, MPA • Executive Director

P.O. Box 12966 • Austin, Texas 78711 • (800) 550-8242 <http://www.tahc.texas.gov>

For more information contact the Communications Dept. at 512-719-0728 or at [callie.mcenulty@tahc.texas.gov](mailto:callie.mcenulty@tahc.texas.gov)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 19, 2015

# First Case of Vesicular Stomatitis Detected in Three Horses in Pecos County

AUSTIN – Vesicular stomatitis (VS) has been detected in three horses at a Pecos County premises located approximately 30 miles north of Fort Stockton, Texas. The animals were tested after the owner observed blistering and swelling on the animals' tongues and lips, and contacted their veterinary practitioner. Testing at the USDA National Veterinary Services lab in Ames, Iowa confirmed the New Jersey serotype of virus in the affected horses.

Vesicular stomatitis primarily affects horses and cattle causing blisters or sores on the tongue, lips, muzzle, nose, hooves and/or teats. Because of the contagious nature of VS and its resemblance to other diseases such as foot and mouth disease (FMD), the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) urges livestock owners and caretakers to report these symptoms to their veterinarian or the TAHC immediately. Although the lesions may be painful, most animals recover well with supportive care.

VS can be transmitted by direct contact with infected animals, contaminated objects (fomites), or by insect vectors such as sand flies and black flies. The disease usually occurs in warm months of the year when insect vectors are active. VS may also affect people causing a mild flu-like illness with symptoms of fever, weakness, and muscle aches.

The newly identified infected horses are currently under quarantine by the TAHC. Affected and exposed horses will be monitored by TAHC or USDA personnel until all lesions have healed and a decision is made to release the quarantine (a minimum of 14 days).

"If you suspect your animal(s) have VS, you should notify your veterinarian immediately," said Dr. Dee Ellis, Texas' State Veterinarian and TAHC Executive Director. "Texas had its largest VS outbreak in history last year, and we must remain vigilant in protecting our livestock industry in 2015."

The first case of VS this year was found in New Mexico on April 29, 2015. Since then, VS cases have also been confirmed in Arizona and Utah.

Some states and other countries may restrict movement of, or impose additional requirements for susceptible species moving from states with active cases of VS. It is important for shippers or haulers of livestock to contact states of destination well in advance of scheduled movements to determine their entry requirements. For international export information, the USDA Veterinary Services office in Austin, Texas should be contacted.

For more information about VS visit [http://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure\\_VS.pdf](http://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_VS.pdf)

The USDA APHIS-VS fact sheet about VS is available as well at [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal\\_health/content/printable\\_version/fs\\_vesicular\\_stomatitis\\_2012.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/content/printable_version/fs_vesicular_stomatitis_2012.pdf)

###