1. What is the Designated Surveillance Area (DSA)?
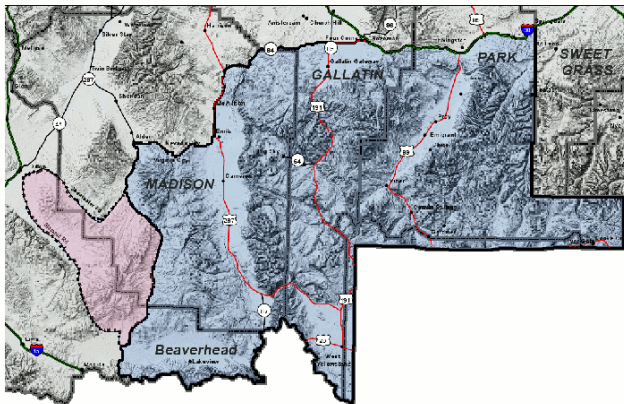
The DSA is a disease surveillance area in southwestern Montana where brucellosis-positive elk are known or suspected to exist. In this area, co-mingling of elk and livestock, and livestock exposure to tissue containing Brucella, is possible. This area has been defined by the Montana Department of Livestock (MDOL) after extensive consultation with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). Input from FWP includes data on distribution, movement patterns and numbers, and brucellosis testing results compiled during routine and capture elk surveys, research, hunter check stations and other management actions.

2. What are the recent changes to the DSA?

The Montana Board of Livestock (BOL) recently adopted two significant changes to the DSA Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM):

1. A boundary change to encompass an area southeast of Dillon where brucellosis exposed elk were recently found (*highlighted in salmon on the map below*)

2. An official individual identification requirement on all sexually intact cattle and domestic bison prior to leaving the DSA.

3. Where can I find the most recent Brucellosis information and the ARM regarding the DSA requirements?

Brucellosis information and a copy of DSA-associated rules as adopted by the BOL can be found on our website at www.liv.mt.gov under Brucellosis Updates. For additional information or questions please contact Dr. Eric Liska at 406/444-3374 (eliska@mt.gov) or Amy Dault at 406/444-9622 (adault@mt.gov), or call the Department of Livestock at 406/444-2043.

4. Where can I find a boundary description of the DSA in Montana?

The new boundary now includes the area south of Sweetwater Road and northeast of Blacktail Road southeast of Dillon. A complete boundary description can be found in the Rule. Both the Rule and a map can be found on the DOL website (www.liv.mt.gov) under Brucellosis Updates.

5. Why do I need to identify sexually intact cattle leaving the DSA?

All sexually intact cattle and domestic bison leaving the DSA must now be identified with official individual identification.

This rule was adopted to aid in the traceability of livestock disease. Additionally, the rule makes Montana regulations consistent with several states that have already placed identification requirements on DSA cattle. Colorado, Nebraska and South Dakota require all sexually intact cattle and domestic bison, regardless of age, that have been within the DSAs of Montana, Idaho or Wyoming at any time to be officially and individually identified.

6. What identification devices can I use to meet these requirements?

Montana livestock producers and veterinarians have several options of USDA-APHIS approved official identification tags, which include:

A. The orange metal brucellosis vaccination tag (OCV, "bangs" tag)

B. An orange official RFID tag (sometimes used instead of the metal orange tag for OCV)

C. A white or yellow official RFID tag beginning with the numbers "840"

D. The silver, USDA-APHIS metal "Brite" tag.

Age and source 900 series tags are also allowed at this time; however, these tags will likely be phased out according to the recently published federal traceability regulations.

7. If my herd is located outside of the DSA, are there any identification requirements?

Not at this time. However, the USDA recently published proposed federal traceability requirements for identification of some beef cattle and domestic bison for interstate movement. If adopted as written the proposed rule would initially exclude beef cattle less than 18 months of age as well as steers and spayed heifers but would eventually phase in all classes of cattle and bison. These federal regulations are currently out for public comment and are expected to come into effect in 2012.

8. Where can I obtain identification tags for use in my cattle?

Your veterinarian will apply orange brucellosis vaccination tags (metal or RFID) at the time of brucellosis vaccination of your heifer calves.

USDA-APHIS silver tags, for identification of bulls or heifers not calfhood vaccinated, can be obtained at no cost by calling the USDA-APHIS office at 406/449-2220, or by contacting MDOL. Allow up to four weeks for delivery following order. For purchase of 840 series RFID tags, it is generally the least expensive to order directly from manufacturers such as Allflex, Temple Tag, Y-tex, Zee tags, and others.

A limited number of RFID tags are available at no cost through MDOL for DSA producers that sign up for a Premise Identification Number.

9. What requirements will my veterinarian need to follow to write an official health certificate on my cattle?

Montana requires that all sexually intact cattle and domestic bison (regardless of age) are identified with official individual identification **prior** to leaving the DSA (some variances may be granted in a herd plan). Some surrounding states have additional requirements that must be noted on the Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI, "Health Certificate").

Contact your veterinarian or the animal health official in the state of destination for details.

10. What is a herd plan and what are the benefits of having one?

A herd plan is an agreement between livestock producers and MDOL that outlines specific measures producers can take to reduce the risk of transmission of brucellosis to animals in their herd.

Additionally, herd plans outline surveillance protocols, vaccination schedules and any variances to requirements.

For further information regarding the development of a herd plan, contact the MDOL.

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Designated Surveillance Area (DSA)

General Information and Recent Changes to Boundary and Identification Requirements

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