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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LANSING

MITCH IRWIN
DIRECTOR

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Dear Michigan Cattle Producer:

The Michigan cattle industry has been working on the eradication of bovine tuberculosis (TB) from this state since it was first identified in a free-ranging white-tailed deer in northeastern lower Michigan in 1995. Since that time, the disease has been identified in 40 cattle herds, two privately owned cervid herds, free-ranging white-tailed deer, and other wildlife species within the current Modified Accredited Zone (MAZ) of Michigan. The current eradication program has resulted in confinement of the disease to the MAZ, significant decrease in the apparent prevalence of TB in the wildlife population, and the reinstatement of TB Free Status in the Upper Peninsula and Modified Accredited Advance Zone (MAAZ) status in the majority of lower Michigan.

Recent changes in the national TB eradication program require that the current zoning order, which contains identification, testing, and permitting requirements in relation to TB, needs to be updated. As these changes and other modifications to the TB eradication program are implemented, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has indicated that it would consider reinstating TB Free Status for the current MAAZ area of lower Michigan. Achieving this status not only benefits the cattle industry through lowered costs and easing of restrictions on movement, but will also allow more resources to be focused on the area of Michigan that still has the disease present.

The following is a summary of the proposed changes:

1. Electronic identification ear tags will be required for movements of cattle from farms.
2. Certificates of movement will be required for cattle from herds in the MAAZ or TB Free Zones, prior to being moved to other zones within Michigan (only if moving to another zone; not if moving within an MAAZ or TB Free Zone).
3. The testing age for sexually intact cattle moving from an MAAZ will be 6 months of age and older. Cattle moving in approved feeder or slaughter channels or to a Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) approved slaughter facility will remain exempt from testing.
4. These changes will be effective March 1, 2007.

In addition, the current TB surveillance program that requires testing of 750 cattle herds in the MAAZ, and 25 herds in the TB Free Zone, will continue for one more year.

The Michigan Department of Agriculture has scheduled informational sessions to discuss these changes. The dates, times, and locations are printed on the back of this letter.

Respectfully,

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State Veterinarian and Division Director
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SLH:MVK/jyd