

Cow with Rabies Identified in Bureau County

On Jan. 13, 2005, the Illinois Department of Agriculture laboratory in Galesburg reported that a cow from Bureau County tested positive for rabies. The cow had experienced onset on Jan. 6 of fever that progressed to weakness, head pressing, in-coordination and paralysis. On January 12 the cow was submitted to the laboratory for testing.

The Bureau County Health Department was notified and began an investigation to determine individuals with a need for rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). At least five individuals, including three veterinarians, are receiving rabies PEP and others are being evaluated for exposure. All three veterinarians were pre-exposure vaccinated and will only require a series of two rabies vaccinations for rabies PEP.

Samples of the brain tissue are being sent to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention so that the strain of rabies virus affecting this animal can be established. Animals in contact with the rabid animal will be managed appropriately by local animal control and the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

This cow is the second domestic animal identified as rabid in the past month in the north central area of the state. The other rabid animal was a horse identified in neighboring LaSalle County. Two cases in a short time period has raised concerns about rabies in skunks in this area of the state. Counties in the northern one-third of the state* should consider enhancing their skunk surveillance by increasing the numbers of skunks tested for rabies.

Rabies vaccinated dogs and cats that may have been bitten by wild animals possibly carrying rabies should be revaccinated immediately and confined for 30 days. Unvaccinated dogs and cats bitten by wild animals that may carry rabies should be euthanized. An alternative is to rabies vaccinate them after a bite and immediately place them under strict confinement for six months. If the animal is normal at five months of confinement, the animal should be revaccinated and remain in confinement an additional 30 days.

Dog and cat owners should be warned about the potential risk of rabies and urged to watch their pets for behavior changes or other signs of rabies. Veterinarians should report rabies exposed pets to local animal control and verify with them the location of confinement for the exposed pet.

**The counties in the northern one-third of the state include: Boone, Bureau, Carroll, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Henry, Jo Daviess, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, Lee, Livingston, Marshall, McHenry, Ogle, Putnam, Rock Island, Stark, Stephenson, Whiteside, Will, and Winnebago.*

Independent Advisory Panel to Review ProHeart 6

An independent advisory panel, tasked with reviewing and evaluating ProHeart 6 data, has been scheduled to convene Monday, January 31, 2005 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The meeting will be held in the DoubleTree Hotel in Rockville, MD.

The panel will thoroughly examine and assess product data presented by Fort Dodge Animal Health and scientific experts, as well as representatives from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM). Fort Dodge will promptly communicate the committee's recommendations to veterinarians, other animal health professionals and consumers.

For more information about hearing procedures, please visit click [here](#).

Seminar for Alternative Therapies in Veterinary Medicine

The 7th Annual Seminar for Alternative Therapies in Veterinary Medicine will be held at the College of Veterinary Medicine on Saturday, February 5, 2005. This is your opportunity to hear the latest from 3 outstanding speakers, and earn 7 hours of continuing education credit.

The registration fee includes the program, parking, continental breakfast, lunch, breaks, and handout materials. Some sponsors will have booths in our commercial exhibits room.

The following lectures will be presented:

"Healing Animals with Homeopathy and Flower Essences - Principles of Health that Apply to Any Form of Medicine", Christina Chambreau, DVM

"Keys to Being Successful and Happy in a Holistic Practice", Christina Chambreau, DVM

"Practical Applications for Small Animal Veterinary Acupuncture", Deborah Mitchell, DVM

"Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) for Veterinarians", Ellen Paul Kuchenbrod, DVM

"Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Food Therapy for Veterinarians", Deborah Mitchell, DVM

Please register by January 21st to avoid a late fee. If you register online at www.cvm.uiuc.edu/ope/altmed.html you receive a \$10 discount.

Hurry! Register Online for the ISVMA Spring Seminar Before the Spaces are Filled

The Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association (ISVMA) is proud to offer an excellent continuing education seminar designed to develop vital communication skills essential for each member of your practice team. Nationally acclaimed consultant Karyn Gavzer will present: **"It's Not What You Say; It's How You Say It – Tips and Strategies for Effective Client Communications."**

For more information on this tremendous program or to register please visit:

www.isvma.org/springseminars.htm

On the registration form, non-veterinarian staff should register at the **MEMBER PRICE if the veterinarians in the practice are members.**

*There are only 150 spaces available at each of three regional locations for this very popular and useful program.

About the Photo in This Issue

The **muskox** (*Ovibos moschatus*) is called omingmak meaning "the animal with skin like a beard" by Inupiaq-speaking Eskimos, a reference to the long guard hair that hangs nearly to the ground. Taxonomists now classify muskoxen with the sheep and goats. The closest living relative of the muskox is the takin, a large goat-like animal which is found in the Himalayas. Muskoxen as a species have changed little since the ice age and are perfectly adapted to live in their harsh arctic environment.

The muskox is a stocky, long-haired animal with a slight shoulder hump and a very short tail. Both sexes have horns, but the horns of bulls are larger and heavier than those of cows. The horns of bulls develop large bases which nearly span the entire forehead. The pelage consists of a long, coarse, outer layer and a short, fine underhair. Coloration of the Greenland muskox, the race found in Alaska, is generally dark brown with creamy-colored hair on the saddle, forehead, and legs. Muskoxen have cloven hooves, all four of which are the same size.

Mature bulls are about 5 feet high (1.5 m) at the shoulder and weigh 600 to 800 pounds (273-364 kg). Cows are smaller, averaging approximately 4 feet (1.2 m) in height and weighing 400 to 500 pounds (182-227 kg). The name "muskox" is misleading because the animals have no musky odor.

Battles between bull muskoxen during the rut are spectacular and violent contests. After a period of aggressive display, the bulls charge at top speed from distances of 50 yards (46 m) or more and collide squarely on the horn bosses. The sound of the tremendous impact can be heard from a mile away on a calm day. After a clash, the bulls back away from each other swinging their heads from side to side and repeat the sequence until one bull turns and runs. A battle may include 20 clashes. Analysis of motion-picture footage has determined that the force generated in a clash between muskox bulls is equivalent to that of an automobile ramming a concrete wall at 17 mph (27 km/h). Bull muskoxen have heavily armored skulls to protect them from the shock of impact. Four inches of horn and three inches of bone lie directly over the brain in the area of contact.

History in Alaska: The return of muskoxen to Alaska is an important success story in wildlife conservation. The original Alaska muskoxen disappeared in the mid- or late 1800s as they had much earlier in Europe and Asia. Overhunting likely contributed to their demise, at least in some areas. By the 1920s, muskox distribution was reduced to arctic Canada and East Greenland where a high take by whalers, hide hunters, and natives continued. Concern over the impending extinction of the species worldwide led to a move to restore a protected population to Alaska. In 1930, 34 muskoxen captured in East Greenland were brought to Fairbanks. In 1935 and 1936, all survivors and their calves were transported from Fairbanks to Nunivak Island and released. Muskoxen thrived on Nunivak Island and increased from 31 in 1936 to an estimated 750 by 1968.

Muskoxen from Nunivak Island were intended to provide stock for relocating animals to formerly occupied ranges. Nunivak Island muskoxen have been transplanted to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Cape Thompson, the Seward Peninsula, Nelson Island, and to Wrangel Island and the Taimyr Peninsula in Russia. Additional animals have been donated to zoos and other institutions.

Most of the transplanted animals quickly adapted to their new surroundings and increased. Further transplants may be considered in the future. However, dispersal from previously translocated herds will be the primary method by which future range expansion occurs.

Population: In 1990, approximately 2,220 free-ranging muskoxen resided in Alaska: 500 on Nunivak Island, 220 on Nelson Island, 500 in northern Alaska, 130 in northwestern Alaska, 700 on the Seward Peninsula, 150 on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, with an additional 105 animals in captivity in domestic herds, research herds, and the Alaska Zoo in Anchorage. The Nunivak Island and Nelson Island populations have been stabilized by hunting; the other wild populations are expected to continue to increase and to expand their range.

The two bulls shown in this photograph were engaged in a battle that I witnessed near Teller, Alaska in May 2001. I was particularly fond of this photo because it captures the intensity of the collision between the animals.



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