...Anthrax in Texas

(Continued from previous page) If personnel have been exposed and develop any of these symptoms, they must seek medical attention immediately.

Gastro-intestinal anthrax from consuming undercooked meat from an infected animal. This type of anthrax is extremely rare. symptoms Typical include gastro-intestinal distress (stomach ache/cramping, etc.).

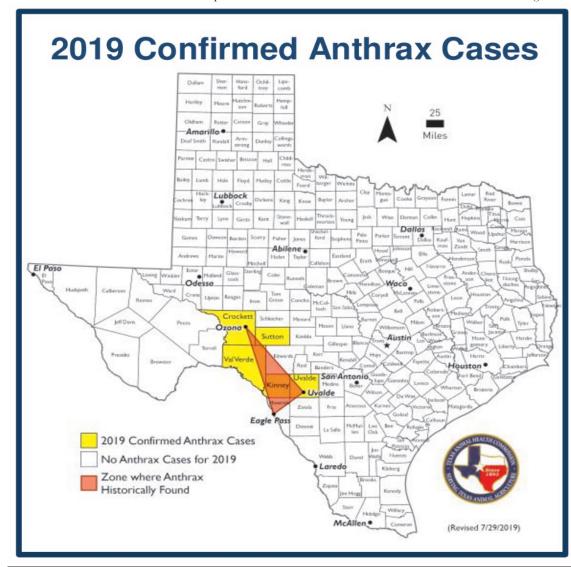
Anthrax bacteria reside in the soil in many regions of Texas, but epizootics are more frequent in the counties mentioned above. During the warm summer months, when there are rapid changes in climatic conditions (alternating periods of rain and drought), spores of the bacterium can be found at the soil surface and on low-level vegetation where they are readily available for ingestion by livestock/wildlife. incubation period is between 1 and 10 days. After the onset of clinical signs, livestock/wildlife die very rapidly, in as little as 3-4 hours. Clinical signs include depression, lethargy, and staggering; animals may try to get to water. Live animals often are not found. The first indication of an outbreak on an individual property typically is

when carcasses are located. Often, the carcass will appear to be from an otherwise healthylooking animal (no signs of prolonged illness).

An outbreak can occur because the bacteria can surface, contaminating soil and grass after periods of wet, cool weather, followed by hot, dry conditions. During these conditions, animals ingest the anthrax bacteria when they consume contaminated grass and hay, or by inhaling the spores. The spores are odorless, colorless and tasteless. Outbreaks will usually end when cooler weather arrives and then bacteria will become dormant.

The Texas Animal Health Commission has regulations for the disposal of infected carcasses and disinfection of contaminated areas. Those regulations require that the owners and/or caretakers burn each carcass until they are thoroughly consumed to prevent further contamination of the soil with the organism. Burning carcasses is the only method to ensure that the anthrax bacteria will be killed. Due to environmental concerns, heavy oils or tires to burn carcasses should not be used! Fuels permitted by the Commission Texas Environmental Quality (TCEQ) include gasoline, diesel or wood. Care should be taken to keep fires from burning out of control. In counties under a burn ban, burning MUST be coordinated with local fire barn, the carcass, bedding, authorities prior to carcass manure, other contaminated disposal.

If the animal was housed in a material and surrounding soil



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