



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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Contact: Mike Louisell (360) 902-1813

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, Washington 98504-2560
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State Veterinarian's Office seeks input on proposed animal health rules

Public hearings set for Mount Vernon and Moses Lake

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is taking comments on proposals to update animal health regulations in two areas: the importation of livestock into the state and livestock brand inspections. The revisions are designed to protect animals and the public from communicable animal diseases and prevent livestock theft.

WSDA will hold a public hearing on the changes at two locations:

- Mount Vernon: 5 p.m. June 12, WSU Mount Vernon Northwestern Washington Research & Extension Center, 16650 State Route 536.
- Moses Lake: 5 p.m. June 14, Moses Lake Fire Department, 701 E Third Ave.

“We’ve worked with industry, a livestock advisory board and members of the public to craft clear rules that protect the people and animals of the state,” said Dr. Leonard Eldridge, state veterinarian.

The rules correct out-dated information and update requirements for bringing animals into the state. State law requires that animals receive a clean bill of health from a veterinarian before entering the state. Most livestock also must meet specific vaccination or testing requirements.

“This rule applies only to animals coming into Washington,” Eldridge said. “Livestock moving within the state may be transported without animal health documentation unless there is a change of ownership.”

Under current law, managers of some livestock shows or fairs may require certain animal health documentation. If a major animal disease emergency occurs, state law also allows WSDA to require animal health documentation during in-state transport of livestock.

WSDA’s proposed update of livestock brand inspection rules would revise fees and other requirements to match legislative changes made in 2006. It also clarifies the special sales permit process.

As a theft prevention measure, cattle and horses are inspected for brands or other proof of ownership at public livestock markets and slaughter plants and prior to moving out of state. WSDA maintains the official recordings of nearly 7,000 livestock brands.

Persons may comment in writing or orally at the hearings. Written comments may be mailed to Dannie McQueen, Administrative Regulations, 1111 Washington St. SE, Olympia, WA 98504-2560; sent by e-mail to WSDARulesComments@agr.wa.gov; or by FAX to (360) 902-2092. Written material must be received no later than 5 p.m. on June 15.

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