

Bovine Tuberculosis (TB)

Questions and Answers

How can we find out more about bovine TB and the investigation?

- Information about bovine TB and the most current information about the investigation can be found on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) website at inspection.gc.ca/tb.
- The CFIA is providing regular updates through their website.

What is Agriculture and Forestry's (AF's) role in the investigation?

- Bovine TB is a federally reportable disease, so the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is leading the investigation.
- The Province is working closely with the CFIA and providing support where possible. Information is available on the Agriculture and Forestry website at agriculture.alberta.ca/tb.
- AF is also in close contact with the cattle industry, to learn more about how this is affecting producers and to identify areas where the Province can help.

What actions is Agriculture and Forestry taking to support the investigation?

- This is an important priority, and AF has set up an incident command structure as part of the response.
- AF continues to work with the CFIA to help in a number of ways, including by providing veterinary support for the investigation. AF is in contact with the CFIA every day.
- AF has offered to assist the CFIA in other ways if it's requested.
- Other Alberta government ministries are also participating in the response to bovine TB, including Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services.

What is the Provincial government doing to support producers?

Is there financial support available?

- This is a difficult time for the producers involved. They are facing challenges and costs because of the CFIA quarantines in place.
- AF has formed a recovery team to look at all the options available to provide financial assistance to farmers.

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- The Canada and Alberta governments are working together and have committed to making AgriRecovery funding available in this case.
- For producers affected by the CFIA investigation and quarantines, there is also an existing suite of financial programs that may provide support. These programs include:
 - the Advance Payment Program;
 - the Feeder Association Loan Guarantee Program;
 - AgriStability interim payments; and
 - CFIA compensation for animals ordered destroyed.
- Information about the programs is available on our website at agriculture.alberta.ca/tb.
- AF continues to monitor the situation closely to ensure producers are supported through this difficult situation.

What water supply options and support are available for producers with quarantined cattle?

- Agriculture and Forestry (AF) has provided information about water supply options and support available for producers affected by the quarantine. These options include private or commercial water hauling, pumping water from existing water supplies, or enhancing their water storage or well systems.
- AF's water specialists and Alberta Environment and Parks' water approval staff are available to help answer producer questions and guide them in assessing their need and the options.
- For water supply issues, there is also support available through Growing Forward 2's [On-Farm Water Management program](#).
- Financial support for water concerns is part of the overall response considered by government.

How is Agriculture and Forestry (AF) communicating with producers about the situation?

- AF continues to be in regular contact with cattle and beef industry groups, as well as with individual producers.
- Information about the situation is posted on the AF website at agriculture.alberta.ca/tb, with links to the CFIA and other key information.
- AF worked with Alberta's Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) on an [information sheet](#) about the financial support options available to affected producers. Staff at AFSC are ready to help answer producer questions and provide them with guidance in accessing these programs.

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Will trade/export be affected?

- No market disruptions are anticipated. Isolated cases of bovine TB are periodically reported in Alberta and other jurisdictions.
- Alberta and Canada have comprehensive animal health and food safety systems in place, and a well-deserved reputation for providing high-quality, safe beef.
- The Alberta government fully supports our producers and continues to work with the federal government and trade partners to assure them of the quality and safety of Alberta beef.

What is the risk of TB from wildlife? What is the Province doing about the risk?

- Alberta Environment and Parks and AF are working closely with the CFIA to help with the evaluation of risk and discussion of any possible actions.
- Current risk evaluation indicates very low risk that elk in Canadian Forces Base Suffield (CFB Suffield) are infected with bovine TB, and a very low risk that elk could be the source of infection in cattle.
- Environment and Parks is also proceeding this fall with a hunter education and awareness campaign. If there are any hunted wild elk identified with abnormal findings in the target tissues or in the heads submitted for chronic wasting disease testing, samples from those elk will be collected for further examination. Ongoing evaluation of this process and any findings will be forwarded to the CFIA for consideration in their investigation and ongoing risk assessments.

Are there health risks for farmers and their families from bovine TB?

- The findings of bovine TB in Alberta and Saskatchewan do not pose a threat to public health. This is due to the extremely low prevalence of the disease in Canada.
- Although human cases of bovine TB are rare, extended close contact with an animal with active respiratory TB and consuming unpasteurized milk and/or milk products from an infected cow may put humans at greater risk of acquiring the bacteria.
- For information about bovine TB, including risk of human exposure, visit inspection.gc.ca/tb and click on “[Bovine TB Fact Sheet](#)” in the additional information section.