**One Health News Bits**

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[**States warn of Lyme disease risks during spring, summer**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cSwxBXzCwNBZeZxRCidalECicNHQcx?format=standard)

With Lyme disease cases increasing steadily in various states, officials are urging residents to take steps to prevent infection from the illness, which usually peaks between late spring and the onset of summer. In Massachusetts, officials are considering reducing the deer population to remove some of the hosts for Lyme ticks, in a bid to control the spread of the disease in the state.

[**N.D. veterinarian advises cattle owner to vaccinate against anthrax**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cSwxBXzCwNBZeZxTCidalECicNSXQN?format=standard)

Livestock farmers should vaccinate their cattle against anthrax now, before the animals are turned out into the pasture, North Dakota State University Extension Service veterinarian Charlie Stoltenow. Cases of the disease have been found in all parts of the state, and the bacteria spores that cause it can live in the soil for decades and travel farther with the water from heavy rainfall and floods.

[**Course gives veterinary students a taste of doctoring in a disaster**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cSwxBXzCwNBZeZyfCidalECicNdvVM?format=standard)

The Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University recently hosted its first disaster animal rescue course, designed to give veterinary students hands-on practice in responding to animals emergencies engendered by floods, disease outbreaks and other disasters. University instructors collaborated with representatives from AVMA's Veterinary Medical Assistance Team and other groups in designing the course.

[**Chemicals show up in dogs' blood at higher levels than humans'**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cSAnBXzCwNBZhdzqCidalECicNWbxm?format=standard)

Toxic flame-retardant chemicals showed up in the blood of 17 pet dogs at concentrations up to 10 times as high as those found in humans, according to research published in the journal Environmental Science & Technology. Researchers suggest that pets may act as "biosentinels" for humans who live with them in the same home. "Even though they've been around for quite awhile, we don't know too much about these compounds' toxicological effects on humans or animals," said research scientist Marta Venier.

[**Bovine TB identified in a California dairy cow**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cSAnBXzCwNBZhdzrCidalECicNhTJP?format=standard)

A cow from a dairy herd in San Bernardino County, Calif., was found to have bovine tuberculosis during a routine inspection at a slaughterhouse, according to federal and state agriculture officials. Officials say that testing of additional animals from that cow's herd has revealed that others also have the disease, which was last detected in the state in 2009

[**Study identifies link between human leprosy and armadillos**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cTbMBXzCwNBZjverCidalECicNBBjC?format=standard)

U.S. researchers have discovered using genetic sequencing that armadillos infected with leprosy and some human patients diagnosed with the illness share a common strain of a leprosy-causing bacteria. The finding provides the strongest evidence to date that armadillos could transmit the illness to humans, according to the study. Armadillos can be found in 10 U.S. states, and are the only animals other than humans that have been shown to be carriers of leprosy.

[**Costliest food pathogens are found in meat, study finds**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cTbMBXzCwNBZjveuCidalECicNGgxA?format=standard)

Half of the foodborne pathogens that prove the most costly to society in terms of health care costs, lost productivity, chronic illness and death are found in poultry, pork and other meats, according to a new study from the University of Florida's Emerging Pathogens Institute. Campylobacter in poultry and toxoplasma in pork are the top two, costing society $1.3 billion and $1.2 billion a year.

[**Several states consider laws to prevent undercover farm films**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cTbMBXzCwNBZjveHCidalECicNRoNS?format=standard)

Agricultural interests in several states have pushed for proposed legislation to prevent animal rights groups such as Mercy for Animals from creating and distributing secretly taped footage of conditions on farms and food production facilities. Both houses of the Iowa Legislature have approved such a measure, and similar bills are under consideration in Minnesota and Florida.

[**Michigan farmers grapple with bovine TB**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cTevBXzCwNBZljptCidalECicNeWkT?format=standard)

The number of bovine tuberculosis cases in Michigan's northeastern region has increased to 52 this spring and threatens to put some area farmers out of business. Officials with the TB Eradication Program are collaborating with farmers to find ways to prevent the illness, which experts say is mostly transmitted directly from free-ranging deer to cattle through nose-to-nose contact but also indirectly through affected feed and water.

[**Study: Move to cage-free raises risk of contamination**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cTevBXzCwNBZljpuCidalECicNpupS?format=standard)

Moving egg-laying hens from cages to alternative cage-free housing increases the risk of salmonella contamination in the birds and the eggs, according to a study from European researchers. The findings contradict earlier studies that found that shifting to cage-free operations lowered the contamination risk.

[**Tainted Pork Is Latest Food Safety Scandal In China**](http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2011/04/29/135839397/tainted-pork-is-latest-food-safety-scandal-in-china?ps=sh_sthdl)

And in recent months the additive has earned notoriety in China after a string of people got sick from eating pork products full of it. Hundreds took ill in one incident in March, and this week, 286 people [sought medical help](http://europe.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-04/29/content_12418290.htm) in Hunan province after eating pork contaminated with ractopamine, a chemical very similar to clenbuterol.

[**Federal funds to assist Mich. farmers with bovine TB prevention**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cThjBXzCwNBZnrtACidalECicNHfrA?format=standard)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is offering funding in the amount of $500,000 to help livestock producers in 11 Michigan counties halt the spread of bovine tuberculosis. Producers have until May 31 to apply for the grant money, which will help pay for their preventative measures to keep wild deer, which carry the disease, away from their farm animals and out of the water and feed they use for their livestock.

[**Growing pet populations feed the need for scooping services**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cThjBXzCwNBZnrtKCidalECicNtSRb?format=standard)

The U.S. pet dog population has tripled since 1960, bringing three times the animal waste along with it. About 500 small local companies and three national pooper-scooper franchises are capitalizing on consumers' desire to have someone else clean up after their dogs. Many of the companies highlight the public health benefits of having the waste properly removed, to keep it from spreading parasites to humans and other animals and prevent it from washing into water bodies and feeding algae blooms that kill fish.

[**FMD study: Infection window is briefer than previously thought**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cTubBXzCwNBZpPAxCidalECicNWKOD?format=standard)

U.K. researchers have found that cattle infected with foot-and-mouth disease are only infectious for roughly 1.7 days, which is about half as long as previously believed. The findings, which will appear in the journal Science, suggest that producers might have time to separate infected animals before they spread the virus to others in a herd, and possibly keep many uninfected animals from being destroyed.

[**Therapy dog helps ease stress in patients undergoing MRI**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cTubBXzCwNBZpPAGCidalECicNIOcL?format=standard)

Patients at a hospital in Long Branch, N.J., who interacted with a therapy dog for 15 minutes prior to an MRI scan reported feeling less stressed during the test compared with those who waited for 15 minutes in a quiet room, according to this article. The therapeutic effects of interacting with an animal prior to the diagnostic procedure may aid in keeping patients calm for longer and improve the quality of MRI tests, radiologists said.

[**Wis. health officials report increased risk of contracting Lyme disease**](http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/cTubBXzCwNBZpPAHCidalECicNPciA?format=standard)

The number of Lyme disease cases in Wisconsin rose from 2,587 in 2009 to 3,495 last year, driven by an uptick in deer ticks that carry the illness, warns state health officer Dr. Henry Anderson, who advises people on ways to avoid contracting the illness. Pet owners also are advised to consult a veterinarian about available vaccines and topical treatments to protect their animals from tick bites