



**pennsylvania**

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF ANIMAL HEALTH AND DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

November 30, 2017

Dear Pennsylvania raw milk producers:

We wanted to alert you to recent reports of several cases of brucellosis in humans that have been linked by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to consumption of raw dairy products in the Southern and Mid-Atlantic states. In these unusual cases, the Brucella isolated is identical to the strain of bacteria used in the RB 51 vaccine. The news release from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention noted that, "the only way to avoid this potential exposure to RB 51 is to drink pasteurized milk."

The vaccine – which does contain a live, but modified Brucella bacteria – must be administered to young heifers by a veterinarian. In recent cases of RB 51, the raw milk associated with human infection has come from vaccinated Jersey cattle.

Brucella is a zoonotic bacterium and considered a Dangerous Transmissible Disease in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA), under authority of the Milk Sanitation Law, the Food Act, and the Domestic Animal Law, will take steps to contain and eradicate Brucella infections if they are identified.

Out of an abundance of a caution, we are asking that raw milk producers consult with their veterinarian **concerning Brucella** vaccination programs. PDA recommends that producers who sell raw milk stop immunizing their cattle for Brucella. This is especially important if the herd contains Jersey cattle.

If you have any questions, please contact us at the number below. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Wolfgang, Director  
Bureau of Animal Health & Diagnostic Services

Sincerely,

Dr. Lydia Johnson, Director  
Bureau of Food Safety & Laboratory Services