



Ministry of
Agriculture

2016-09-29

To our valued clients,

To better ensure that we are able to provide a consistent standard of diagnostic service, including the management of case information, **effective October 3, 2016** the Animal Health Centre (AHC) will be implementing three important changes.

- 1) **We will only accession animals and samples submitted with the current official AHC submission forms**, which can be accessed via our website www.gov.bc.ca/animalhealthcentre. Non-official (e.g., clinic-specific) forms, prior versions of AHC forms, and species inappropriate forms (e.g., using the Mammalian form for an Avian submission) will no longer be accepted. It is now our laboratory policy that samples and animals will not be processed until the correct paperwork is received. If the correct paperwork is not received within 24 hours for fresh fish, horses, and cattle, then the animal will be disposed of without necropsy or testing. All other animals and samples will be held for 5 business days prior to disposal. Please understand that any delay may compromise the diagnostic integrity of the specimen.
- 2) **All submission forms now have mandatory fields (e.g., owner information, species, etc.). If the mandatory fields are not completed, then the animal or sample will be held until this information is received.** If the information is not received then the animal/sample will be disposed of as per the aforementioned guidelines.

If the form we receive is incomplete or incorrect, then our front office staff will contact you to solicit the needed paperwork/information. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the submitter to ensure that the correct paperwork/information is submitted to the AHC in a timely manner. This policy will ensure that we are able to provide the highest and most consistent standard of diagnostic service.

- 3) **For our clients submitting samples from calves, I have the great pleasure of introducing our first “testing package”.** The package will be for fecal samples from scouring calves less than 2 weeks of age (excluding necropsy cases). It will include the following tests: culture and sensitivity, which includes *Salmonella sp.* culture, polymerase chain reaction (PCR)-based typing of *E. coli* to detect enterotoxigenic and enteropathogenic strains, smear for *Cryptosporidium spp.*, and PCR for rotavirus and coronavirus. The cost of the package will be \$110.00, which represents a 36% savings over ordering these tests individually. You can order the package by indicating “Calf Scours Package” in the “Other” section under “Services Requested” in the Mammalian Submission Form. By introducing the package, we hope to make it easier for veterinarians to

select the best tests for this condition. Additionally, standardizing testing will make it easier for us to collate and compare data regarding calf scours within and among years – information that can then be fed back to stakeholders.

If you have any questions or concerns about these new policies and practices, please contact me during regular office hours at 1-800-661-9903 or 604-556-3003 or via email at Chelsea.Himsworth@gov.bc.ca.

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