

# Illinois Department of Agriculture Animal Disease Laboratory

## Laboratory Notes

September 1, 2014

### Meet the Staff

Kirstin Dohrer is the laboratory's quality assurance manager. Kirstin was hired in



January of 2014 to fill a position that had remained open for some time. It is her job to keep our quality system current and compliant with State and AAVLD requirements, and monitor its implementation throughout the laboratory. She has a B.S. in Biology, and worked in molecular biology research at a couple of Big 10 Schools for almost 25 years prior to joining the laboratory. Outside of work, Kirstin enjoys camping/hiking/wildlife watching, gardening, reading, and researching her family history. She shares home with her partner Rob, his children, and several four-legged hairballs.

### New tests

The laboratory has two new tests that have been introduced since the last newsletter. A multiplex PCR test that will detect all three of the primary porcine enteric coronaviral diseases of swine (porcine epidemic diarrhea, transmissible gastroenteritis of swine, and swine deltacoronavirus infection) is now available at the lab. Suitable samples are rectal swabs, intestinal contents, or fecal material from pigs in the early stages of the disease. Intestine from dead pigs can also be used. The test costs \$35 per sample and right now is run as needed. Federal requirements prevent us from testing samples for PED without

a premises ID number for the involved farm. For information on obtaining a premises ID, please have your producers visit the IDOA website (<http://www.agr.state.il.us/premiseid/>) or contact the office of the state veterinarian.

An indirect fluorescent antibody test to detect antibodies against PED in swine serum is also available. The test will be set up daily on an as needed basis. The test will cost \$8 per sample.

### PED Update

The USDA has announced some new rules concerning swine enteric coronavirus diseases (another acronym-SECD) to include porcine epidemic diarrhea (PED) and porcine delta coronavirus (PDCoV) infections. A federal order now requires practitioners, producers, and laboratory personnel to report incidences of SECD to their state veterinarian's office or to the office of the Federal Assistant District Director. In order to test for SECD infections, USDA *requires* a premise ID for the premises of the producer. [For information on obtaining a premises ID, please see the IDOA website (<http://www.agr.state.il.us/premiseid/>) or contact the office of the state veterinarian.] Confirmed positive herds will be required to develop and submit a Herd Monitoring and Management Plan. If the disease meets the clinical standards for SECD, a federal subsidy may be available for initial testing and monitoring of the herd.

### Trichomoniasis Found

Laboratory testing has detected

venereal trichomoniasis in two bulls in Illinois. The herd was experiencing abortions and bred cows returning to heat. The cows in the herd were imported from another state. Preputial washings from both herd bulls were tested by culture and microscopic examination and both were determined to have organisms typical of flagellates. The identity of the parasite was confirmed by polymerase chain-reaction testing at our laboratory.

According to the Merck Veterinary Manual, *Trichomonas foetus* is found in the genital tracts of cattle. When cows are bred naturally by an infected bull, 30%–90% become infected, suggesting that strain differences exist. Variation in breed susceptibility to trichomoniasis may also exist. Bulls of all ages can remain infected indefinitely, but this is less likely in younger males. In contrast, most cows are free of infection within 3 months after breeding. However, immunity is not long lasting and re-infection does occur. Transmission can also occur when the semen from infected bulls is used for artificial insemination. No treatments are uniformly effective in curing infected animals.

### Cremation Services Available

Cremation services are available for pets for which postmortem examinations have been performed as well as animals submitted solely for cremation. The animals are cremated and the ashes ground and placed in cardboard mailing containers to be returned to the owners. The weight limit for cremations is

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200 pounds.

Small pets, generally those under 50 pounds, may be cremated at the same time as other small pets. These animals are arranged in the crematorium in such a manner that commingling of ashes between pets is minimized and the ashes returned to owners are those of their particular pet.

Cremations cost \$75 for pets up to 75 pounds and for heavier pets, the cost is \$1 per pound.

### CWD Testing

We generally experience an increase in testing for chronic wasting disease (CWD) from captive herds in the fall. It is important that the test samples are correct and in testable condition in order to allow us to maintain surveillance on these captive herds. There is information about CWD testing and sampling on the internet. The sampling procedure is similar to that for bovine spongiform encephalopathy, requiring the intact obex from the brainstem and the medial retropharyngeal lymph nodes. We perform the immunohistochemistry test, so the samples should be fixed in 10% neutral-buffered formalin.

When you or a client wishes to submit a head intact, the head should be kept refrigerated or on wet ice and transported as soon as possible. Heads that are frozen or degenerated can be tested IF the obex is identifiable, but the brain and cord quickly lose definition when frozen and thawed or autolyzed.

For more information on testing regulations and sampling procedures see our website at <http://www.agr.state.il.us/AnimalHW/cwd/submit.html> or contact the lab or state veterinarian's office.

### Laboratory forms

The cost of shipping today is skyrocketing. Some packages we receive have \$50.00 or more in shipping costs alone. This, plus the time it took you to procure the samples makes today's laboratory submissions very expensive, even before laboratory costs are accrued. Please take just a few extra minutes and fill out the submission form carefully and completely. Remember that we are blind; the only information we have about the situation is what you tell us. Imagine how difficult it would be to diagnose a problem if you didn't even know the signalment (species, age, breed, sex, etc.) of the animal. Remember, the job's not finished until the paperwork is done!

### Shipping labels still available

The laboratory still provides UPS shipping labels upon request that are of sufficient value to submit most diagnostic samples. Contact Terri Howard at 309 344 2451 to request the labels.

### Address changes

Please let the staff at the laboratory know when you change practices or if your address, phone number, FAX number, or email address changes. We can't keep up with the changes unless you are proactive.

### Laboratory Calendar

Please be aware that, along with all other state agencies, the diagnostic laboratory is closed on the following days.

New Year's Day  
Martin Luther King Day  
Lincoln's Birthday  
President's Day  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day

Labor Day

Columbus Day

General Election Day

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving and the day after  
Christmas Day

As always, submissions can be left at the lab on holidays by placing them in the night depository on the northeast side of the building, which has outside access to our walk-in cooler. This night depository door is always available should you or a client desire to deliver submissions after hours, on weekends, or on holidays.

### Questions and Guidance

Laboratory personnel are always happy to provide guidance on sample collection, preparation, and submission. Don't hesitate to call (309 344-2451) for information or advice.

### Forms on Website

If you haven't visited our website lately, please do so. The Agriculture website has been overhauled and updated with lots of helpful information. The form for serology submissions, which was updated in March, commodity requests, and our standard submission form are all there in fillable formats. Also on the website is our Animal Disease Laboratory Tests and Fees schedule which will give you an idea of turn-around time, sample(s) to submit, and cost per test. Go to <http://www.agr.state.il.us/AnimalHW/labs/index.html>. Remember that numbered commodity items (tags or certificates) and tuberculin must be assigned to an individual licensed accredited veterinarian rather than just to a practice.