



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson Urges USDA to Maintain New Mexico's TB Free Status

SANTA FE – Today Governor Bill Richardson and New Mexico's Congressional delegation urged the US Department of Agriculture to maintain the State's status as a Tuberculosis Free state. In a letter to USDA Secretary Mike Johanns, Governor Richardson requested that dairy cattle in eastern New Mexico recently found to be infected with bovine TB be treated as a single herd. Bovine TB is a bacterial disease that affects primarily the upper respiratory tract of cattle.

"I have requested federal funding to compensate for the loss of infected cattle in Curry County and subsequent testing," said Governor Bill Richardson. "This funding is necessary to save our cattle industry from suffering economic hardships valued in the millions."

Although located at two neighboring facilities, the cattle are under common ownership and supervision, and under current regulation are considered a single herd. Also under that regulation, if the herd can be depopulated and an investigation is completed within 90 days New Mexico can retain its TB-Free status. This herd exceeds 10,000 heads of cattle and is valued at approximately \$24 million dollars.

New Mexico gained TB-Free Status in 2005 as a result of a successful regionalization plan approved by USDA which set up the Split-State status presently in place.

"We are aggressively addressing the issue and continue to manage our Split-State status through control of movement and continuation of the tuberculosis eradication

requirements and therefore we can preserve the integrity of our state's TB-Free Status," said Governor Bill Richardson.

New Mexico's Congressional delegation sent a separate letter to USDA Secretary Mike Johanns today, requesting his review of the State's TB-Free status.

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