

# Anthrax Sample Submission



Anthrax is a reportable disease under the federal Health of Animals Act and the Manitoba Animal Diseases Act and Regulations. Veterinarians who suspect a case of anthrax must contact the Animal Health and Welfare Branch at **204-945-7684**. The branch is responsible for reporting confirmed anthrax cases to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Manitoba Public Health and other stakeholders.

## Carcass Containment

- Do not move the carcass or conduct a necropsy.
- Take measures to keep scavengers away from the carcass. Covering it with a tarp weighed down by rocks should be sufficient.
- See Useful Links on our website for more information, [manitoba.ca/agriculture/vds](http://manitoba.ca/agriculture/vds)

## Specimen Collection and Submission

- The required sample is whole blood. Use a needle and syringe to collect blood from the jugular vein and place the blood in a standard serum tube (red-top tube). The tube does not need to be more than one-third to one-half full; it should not be filled to the stopper.
- Use a styrofoam tube box or adequate packing material to protect the tube during transit and place it in a secondary container such as a cardboard box. Ice packs should be used in hot weather.
- Place the submission form in a plastic bag taped to the outside of the box. Paperwork should never be in close contact with the sample.
- Required information on the submission form includes: name of the referring veterinarian and clinic, owner's full name, owner address (legal land location) and/or the Premises Identification Number. Anthrax suspect should be clearly indicated on the submission form.
- Submission forms can be obtained from the Veterinary Diagnostic Services (VDS) website.
- If, for any reason, a blood sample is not obtainable, alternative sampling should be discussed with VDS.
- Do not submit anthrax-suspect carcasses to VDS under any circumstances.

## Anthrax Testing

The blood sample is used to make a smear stained with polychrome methylene blue, and a subsample is used for PCR testing. If the blood is fresh enough, the smear may permit a presumptive positive diagnosis. The definitive test is the PCR assay that detects *Bacillus anthracis* DNA. The costs of anthrax testing will be covered by the Animal Health and Welfare Branch. VDS will report test results to the branch and the referring veterinarian.

## Positive Anthrax Cases

In the event that samples test positive for *Bacillus anthracis*, the branch will oversee carcass disposal and will coordinate control measures with the referring veterinarian, owner and relevant government agencies.