
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

ESB 5204

Brief Description: Enforcing animal health laws.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, Schoesler, Shin, Hatfield, Jacobsen and Morton; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Authorizes specific actions by the Department of Agriculture and modifies certain timelines related to the monitoring, investigation, and enforcement of animal health laws and rules.

Hearing Date: 3/21/07

Staff: Meg Van Schoorl (786-7105).

Background:

Under the state's animal health statutes, the Director of the Department of Agriculture (Department) is required to supervise prevention of the spread and the suppression of infectious, contagious, communicable, or dangerous diseases affecting animals within, in transit through, and imported into the state. The Department's Animal Health program monitors the movement of animals across state lines by reviewing health certificates which are required for most animals entering the state and issuing or denying required permits. The program also sets requirements for reporting and controlling certain diseases, conducts tests and inspections to detect specific diseases, and engages in emergency management planning to enable trace-back and disease control.

Summary of Bill:

The Director of the Department (Director) is authorized to establish inspection points, stop vehicles transporting animals on public roads, and inspect them to check for accompanying valid health certificates, permits or other documents required under animal health statutes or rules. The

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vehicles must stop at any posted inspection point. The emphasis on such stops will be on livestock being brought in from outside the state. The Director or appointed officers are also authorized to stop a vehicle on a public road at other than a posted inspection point if there is reasonable cause to believe the animals are being transported in violation of animal health laws or rules. The Director is authorized to issue notices of and enforce class 1 civil infractions if a person stopped while transporting animals is not carrying valid animal health documents.

It is lawful to bring into the state without first obtaining an official health certificate or veterinary inspection certificate those livestock destined for immediate slaughter specifically at a federally inspected slaughter facility where federal disease control standards are applied.

Animals that are imported into the state for immediate slaughter must be slaughtered or delivered to a slaughter establishment within three days after entry, not within seven days as in current law.

A hold order issued by the Director due to concerns about disease, documents, or the well-being of animals is in effect for 14 days rather than seven and expires either when released by the Director or no later than midnight on the fourteenth day.

A person violating the animal health statutes or rules may be assessed a civil penalty of \$1,000 or less per violation. The revenues must be deposited in the State General Fund.

It is unlawful to intentionally falsely apply, alter, or remove an official animal health or identification tag, permanent mark, or other device.

Livestock dealers must carry animal identification and animal health documents as required by the animal health and livestock identification statutes and rules.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.