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Sheep and Goat Disease

Last Modified:



APHIS protects U.S. sheep and goats from several significant diseases. The National Scrapie Eradication Program is our main focus. We also address other foreign, zoonotic, or emerging diseases when needed and monitor and promote sheep and goat health and productivity.

[Brucellosis](#)

Brucellosis (also known as contagious abortion or Bang's disease) is a costly disease of livestock and wildlife.

Mycoplasma Ovipneumoniae

Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae is a bacterium found in the nasal cavity and sinuses of domestic sheep and goats, as well as bighorn sheep and mountain goats.

Scrapie

Scrapie is a fatal, degenerative disease that affects the central nervous system of sheep and goats. It is classified as a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy.

Vesicular Stomatitis

Vesicular stomatitis is a contagious disease of livestock, mainly affecting horses and cattle. Occasionally, this disease can infect swine, sheep, goats, llamas, alpacas, and even people.

Educate, Report, and Submit

You can help by officially identifying your sheep and goats, submitting samples from mature dead sheep and goats for scrapie testing, and implementing a biosecurity plan that includes scrapie-resistant genetics.

[Learn more about scrapie prevention and testing](#)

Disease Prevention and Management

- [National Animal Health Monitoring System Goat Studies](#)
- [National Animal Health Monitoring System Sheep Studies](#)
- [National Scrapie Eradication Program](#)
- [Biosecurity for Sheep and Goat Producers](#)
- [Sheep and Goat Identification](#)

Zoonotic Sheep and Goat Diseases

Some sheep and goat diseases are zoonotic, meaning they can spread to humans. People can contract zoonotic diseases through direct contact with infected animals, consuming contaminated food or water, or inhaling disease particles. Flies, ticks, mosquitoes, and other pests can also spread diseases from animals to people.

Below is a condensed list of zoonotic sheep and goat diseases. They are grouped by common routes for **human** infection. Many of these diseases, whether in animals or people, are reportable to State and Federal authorities. Contact your [State veterinarian](#) or your [State/local health department](#) for information about disease reporting requirements in animals or people.

Spread To Humans Through Handling Sheep and Goats

- Anthrax
- Brucellosis
- Contagious ecthyma
- Mange, scabies
- Ringworm
- Tularemia
- Vesicular stomatitis
- Chlamydiosis
- Leptospirosis

Spread to Humans Through Consuming Contaminated Food or Water

- Anthrax (can also be contracted through breathing)
- Brucellosis
- Campylobacteriosis
- Chlamydiosis
- Cryptosporidiosis
- *Escherichia coli*
- Listeriosis
- Q Fever (can also be contracted through breathing)
- Salmonella
- Sarcocystosis
- Toxoplasmosis

- Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever (can also be contracted through skin contact)

Spread to Humans Through Bites (Fleas, Ticks, Mosquitoes)

- Louping ill
- Rift Valley fever
- Rabies (people can also be exposed to the virus if saliva, brain, or spinal cord fluids of an infected animal enters cuts or breaks in the skin or mucous membranes)

Spread to Humans Through Pests

- Screwworm

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