

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

Animal Testing and Vaccination Requirements for Producers Selling Raw Milk for Public Consumption

This document is intended to clarify the animal health requirements required of all Vermont producers (regardless of whether they are Tier 1 or Tier 2) selling raw milk directly to consumers in compliance with 6 V.S.A. section 2777 (c) (1). This information is provided for veterinarians and producers. Veterinarians who have questions about this information may contact the Agency of Agriculture at the number above. Producers who have questions should consult their herd or flock veterinarian.

General Requirements:

1. **Official Identification** - all animals in a herd that produce fluid milk that is to be sold to the public without being pasteurized must be individually officially identified. The requirement for official ID is a requirement of the federal government for all animals that undergo Tuberculosis and Brucellosis testing as these are regulatory diseases of public health significance.
2. **Health Examination** - all animals in a herd that produce fluid milk that is to be sold to the public without being processed by a licensed plant shall undergo an annual health examination by a Vermont-licensed accredited veterinarian and must be found to be in good general health and free of contagious disease. In instances where the animals are on a herd health plan with an accredited veterinarian, and that veterinarian has knowledge of the health status of the herd, the veterinarian may sign a statement attesting to the above in lieu of performing individual yearly examinations.
3. **Record Maintenance** - all raw milk producers must maintain herd examination reports, Brucellosis and Tuberculosis test results, and official rabies certificates at the site of production. VAAFAM employees shall be allowed access to the premises to review these records during reasonable hours.
4. **Rabies vaccination** - any herd or animal that produces fluid milk that will be sold to the public without pasteurization shall be vaccinated for rabies by a Vermont-licensed, accredited veterinarian with an approved vaccine product according to the manufacturer recommendations. The frequency of re-vaccination is determined by the veterinarian based on the vaccine used. NOTE: if there is no approved vaccine for the animal being vaccinated (such as a goat) the veterinarian should utilize the vaccine they consider most appropriate in a manner consistent with Extra Label Drug Use guidelines outlined in AMDUCA.

The Vermont Secretary of Agriculture reserves the right to change any testing or vaccination requirement as he or she deems appropriate based on new awareness of emerging disease threats to animal and public health. Any changes made to this protocol will be communicated to Vermont veterinarians and relayed to Rural Vermont via electronic notification.

Disease Testing Requirements:

The following test requirements apply to herds or flocks of animals from which raw milk is sold directly to consumers. Adult cattle are those that are 24 months of age or older, and adult goats/sheep are those that are 12 months of age or older. All animals in the herd/flock must be considered for testing; in instances where milk is also shipped commercially, it is not acceptable to pick an animal subgroup that will be used to produce raw milk for direct sale and only test those animals.

Brucellosis

Initial testing for herds/flocks: The herd/flock must test negative on an official blood test for Brucellosis prior to the initial sale of raw milk. This may be accomplished by either testing all adult animals in the herd/flock or by testing a random sample of all adult animals that will give a confidence level of 99% and p value of 0.05 in accordance with Table 1 below. All testing shall be performed by a Vermont-licensed, accredited veterinarian, and the producer shall bear the expense of the testing.

Maintenance testing for cattle:

- After the initial herd blood test, producers shall submit to an annual (within 13 months) Brucellosis Ring Test (BRT) conducted on a sample of milk representative of the entire milking herd. The handling of these samples shall be performed by a Vermont-licensed, accredited veterinarian or other individual approved by the Agency. As an alternative to BRT testing, annually (within 13 months) all adult animals may be retested with an official blood test as described in the “initial testing for herds/flocks” protocol above. **Please note:** herds with fewer than 25 head are more prone to false positive results on the BRT as compared to the official blood test. Positive results on the BRT test will result in a quarantine on animal movement and sale of raw milk until confirmatory official blood testing is completed on the herd.

Maintenance testing for sheep and goats:

- After the initial flock blood test, producers shall retest adult animals annually (within 13 months) with an official blood test in accordance with Table 1 below. The BRT is not a reliable surveillance test for small ruminants.

Table 1

Herd/Flock Size*	Sampling Size	Herd/Flock Size	Sampling Size	Herd/Flock Size	Sampling Size
20	20	250	25	500	82
50	41	300	77	600	83
100	59	350	79	700	84
150	67	400	80	800	85
200	22	450	81	1000	86

*For larger herds or flocks contact the Agency of Agriculture’s Dairy Office (802) 828-2433

Tuberculosis

All adult animals in the herd/flock must test negative on an official test for Tuberculosis prior to the initial sale of raw milk and then annually thereafter within 13 months of the test date anniversary. All testing shall be performed by a Vermont-licensed, accredited veterinarian, and the producer shall bear the expense of the testing.