



# Arizona Department of Agriculture

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## ***MEDIA ADVISORY FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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### **Agriculture Department Discovers Bovine Tuberculosis**

Phoenix, AZ - The Arizona Department of Agriculture announced today a single heifer in a Pinal County dairy feeding operation has tested positive for bovine tuberculosis (bovine TB).

“The dairy feeding operation has been placed under quarantine,” announced State Veterinarian Dr. Rick Willer.

While this heifer did not produce milk for human consumption, it must be noted milk or dairy products from a bovine tuberculosis exposed or infected cow present no danger to humans because of the required and enforced pasteurization process. Similarly, meat from an exposed or infected animal which is cooked properly - to an internal temperature of 160 degrees - presents no danger to humans.

Dr. Willer explains that, since there is no treatment for cattle infected with bovine tuberculosis, exposed cattle must be either tested or humanely euthanized. Since the time from an animal’s exposure to testing positive could be several months, eradication of the disease by relying on testing involves multiple tests conducted over many months.

Arizona has been declared free of bovine tuberculosis since 1978. Free status was temporarily suspended due to an incident in 1979 but was reinstated in 1981 after prompt elimination of the disease. With appearance of the disease in the Pinal County herd, unless Arizona is able to eliminate the affected herd within 90 days and confirm there has been no spread of the disease, Arizona may lose its free status.

The State Veterinarian and Arizona Department of Agriculture veterinary staff are working closely with United States Department of Agriculture officials to put into place the best course of action to eliminate the disease.

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