State and Local

Scientists complete initial test of vaccine

By Kimberly Green

Scientists in Texas A&M's College of Vetinary Medicine have completed initial testg of a new vaccine that promises to protect itle from brucellosis, a virus that causes a 4 million annual production loss in Texas. The infection causes spontanious abor-ons, calf deaths, calves with low birth ights and reduced milk production.

Currently, cattlemen are having to rely on e USDA Strain 19 vaccine to try and prent outbreaks of the disease in their herds. his particular vaccine is the cause of much ustration in the effort to control and eradate brucellosis because it can produce antidies that lead to false-positive tests.

Brucellosis, also known as Bang's disease, is ontagious disease of livestock caused by the cteria Brucella and no sure way exists to dect infected cattle by their appearance.

The disease is spread when cattle eat the acentas of calves after they are born, an acn common among cows that are protective terinary pathologist with the Texas Agriltural Experiment Station.

Undulant fever, or human brucellosis, has en linked to the bacterium through contact th an infected cow or by the consumption unpasteurized milk or milk products from

Texas has almost one-third of the known ucella-infected herds in the United States Brucellosis costs the United States \$168 illion annually in estimated production

losses, herd quarantines and regulatory pro-

As a consequence of the false results produced by Strain 19, a herd may be quarantined and movement of cattle in and out of that herd is restricted.

Exposed cattle must be kept under quarantine until they have passed two consecutive negative tests over a period of at least 120 days, but can be sold to slaughter or to an approved quarantined feedlot or quarantined

Brucellosis tests are mandatory at livestock auction barns and positive test results often lower the value of animals for sale.

Recent surveys indicate that because of the threat of brucellosis, more than 17.7 million cattle were blood tested and 8.8 million were vaccinated against brucellosis in the United

Although the number of vaccinated ani-

mals has increased in recent years, a large population of unvaccinated animals still exist. Many Central Texas counties have high brucellosis infection rates. As of January only their herds' young, said Dr. Garry Adams, three counties near Waco — Bosque, Coryell and Mills counties — had no quarantined herds, said Clark Bolt of the Texas Animal Health Commission in Austin.

Both Limestone and Robertson counties had 15 quarantined herds each and Freestone County had 13 quarantined herds. Navarro County had 11 such herds and Milam County

Other counties and their quarantined herd numbers are Leon with eight, Falls with five, Bell and Hill with four, McLennan with three and Hamilton and Lampasas with one each.

Only 1,012 herds across the state, or 0.71 percent of all 145,000 herds, are quarantined, Bolt said. The infected herd numbers have dropped 40 percent during the past five

The Texas Animal Health Commisssion is conducting an intensified search for brucellosis infection in 14 highly contaminated counties along the Gulf Coast, Bolt said.

Jackson County is one of the counties with the highest rate of infections with 41 quaran-

Adams, head of the nine-member Texas Agricultural Experiment Station research team that developed the new vaccine, said the results of laboratory tests in cattle that began two years ago are "preliminary but quite promising.

The new vaccine does not have a name, but is composed of dead Brucella abortus, a mutation of the brucellosis virus, Adams said.

Initial tests on 174 University-owned cattle still leave some aspects of the vaccine's performance unclear. The scientists aren't sure yet how long protection lasts and it may provide a lower rate of protection than the Strain 19

The new vaccine's advantages over Strain 19 are a longer shelf life, availability to male as well as female cattle, no potential infection risk for humans, availability to any aged animal over 5 months old and a potential for ranchers to inject it as well as veterinarians.

The scientists on the research team hope the new vaccine's advantages will encourage more ranchers to use it. Only 48 percent of all heifers in the state currently receive the Strain 19 vaccine, Adams said.

About 70 percent of the cattle population needs to be vaccinated to have a significant impact against brucellosis, he said.

Adams said full-scale production of the vaccine is still some time away and field use won't begin until evaluation by the USDA has been completed. The research group has applied for a patent and is negotiating with pharmaceutical companies for further devel-

No vaccine is 100 percent effective in preventing infection, but research indicated that 65 to 70 percent of the animals vaccinated with Strain 19 have adequate immunity against the organisms causing the disease. Field experience indicates that in the fully vaccinated herd immunity may exceed 90

Vaccination is just one tool for eradicating and controlling brucellosis. Additional prac-

- Knowledge of the brucellosis status of any cattle purchased.
- Isolate and test cattle before placing
- them with present herd.
- Keep fences in good repair. • Avoid the use of community pastures.
- Test all animals that abort or are slow
- Follow good sanitation practices.
- Consult regularly with local veterinarian on herd health plans.

Adams stressed that Strain 19, the new vaccine or any vaccine is not the cure by itself.

"One prevention measure by itself rarely will solve the problem," Adams said. "It will take the use of all of those tools to have the best individual program for the rancher.

Prosecutors present case of mercy killing

DALLAS (AP) — Prosecutors on Wednesday were presenting to a Dallas County grand jury the case of an 87-year-old man who told police he fatally shot his wife in her hospital room after she begged him to end

Walter Jose Cottrell was charged with murder in the July 5 death of 89-year-old Frances Cottrell.

Cottrell's case was on Wednesday's grand jury docket, Patricia Harding with the Dallas County District Attorney's office said.

Mrs. Cottrell died in her bed in the Laboure Care Center of the St. Paul Medical Center complex, where she had been since surgery on May

A subsequent stroke left her partially paralyzed.

The woman "had been in severe pain for quite some time . . . and had been begging (her husband) to kill her, because her condition was getting worse and worse," a police re-

Armed with an antique .38-caliber Smith & Wesson revolver, Cottrell had walked into his wife's hospital room, put the weapon on the left side of her head and fired one shot, said police.

Convicted killer denies UT student slaying

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — A conted killer who was scheduled to next week for the 1983 abducon-slaying of a University of Texas bed insisted Wednesday he was not sponsible for the killing and ald not be executed.

I'm not a troublemaking-type son," Tommy Jackson, 31, said dnesday. "Things have haped in my life that were out of my trol. I've been a victim of circum-

ackson faced an Aug. 19 execufor the shooting death of Rosal Robison, 24, of Terre Haute,

Ind. Robison, an engineering student at the University of Texas, was found in a Williamston County gravel pile more than a month after she disappeared. She had been shot once in the head.

Jackson was arrested driving her car. A co-defendant, James Otis Clary, received a life sentence stemming from the woman's slaying and

testified against Jackson. "I'm not going to say he committed it," Jackson said of Clary. 'I'm going to say I did not. He plea bargained and he got a life sen-

Jackson, who was on parole for burglary when he was arrested for the Robison killing, also served 31

On Tuesday, State District Judge ohn Carter in Georgetown granted lackson a stay until at least Oct. 3 so newly appointed attorneys could prepare post-conviction appeals motions, attorney Hugh Lowe said.

Wednesday on death row.

Jackson said he knew the victim socially and ran into her the night months of a 10-year federal sentence for a 1977 bank robbery in Thorn-automated bank teller machine in she disappeared when she was at an Austin. He said the woman had loaned him her car.

The Texas Department of Corrections account of Jackson's trial, however, indicates Robison was abducted from the university campus and was taken to the bank, where she was forced to withdraw money Jackson, however, was not aware of the stay when interviewed taken to a rural area and fatally shot. from the machine. Then she was

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Wednesday: Lippman Jam.

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Friday: Texas Twisters. Cover

Saturday: Sneaky Pete and the Neon Madmen. Cover \$3. Wednesday: Sneaky Pete.

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