



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES
Updates from the State Veterinarian's Office **Spring, 2013**

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Greetings! Our mission is to support the health of Virginia animal agriculture, and to also support Virginia accredited veterinarians as you strive to do the same for the producers you serve. With that in mind, we are providing some timely information that we thought would be helpful to you. As always, if you have any questions or suggestions on how we could better serve you or your producers, feel free to contact any of our staff members:

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STATUS OF ANIMAL DISEASE TRACEABILITY IN VIRGINIA

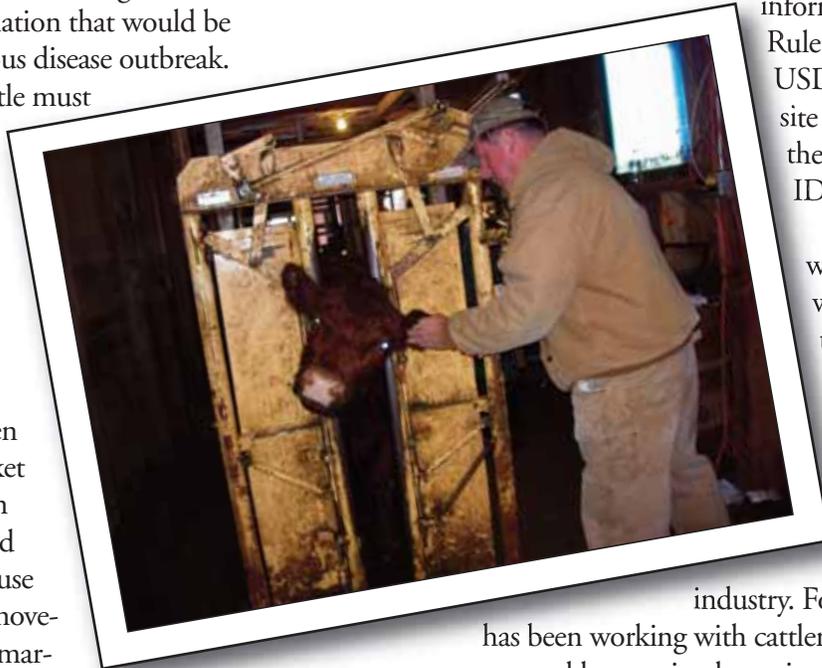
In cooperation with the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services operates a program called Animal Disease Traceability (ADT). It provides a variety of services for cattle producers in Virginia. Animal disease traceability involves recording the location of cattle as they move through commerce in order to provide the information that would be necessary to respond to a serious disease outbreak.

To make the system work, cattle must be identified with tags or other devices that are unique, and ID records (tag number, location and date) must be captured at various places, like livestock markets and slaughter plants. It is also important to capture animal movements between states even if they are not going to a market or processing facility. When an animal disease occurs, state and federal animal health officials use this information to trace the movements of cattle from farms to markets and processing facilities to identify which animals are affected – and which ones are not. The better the information, the faster and more accurate this process will be.

Cattle tags and movement records have been a part of the industry for decades, but producers use many different types of tags for herd management purposes and many of these tags do not have unique numbers. That means that hundreds of cattle in Virginia could have the same yellow ear tag with an ID number like “Y-61.” This works fine for producers keeping track of animals on their farm, but is not very helpful in finding specific animals that are part of a disease outbreak that could involve dozens of different locations across multiple states. In addition, fewer cattle are being vaccinated and tested for diseases in comparison to 10-20 years ago when diseases were more common. This means that fewer cattle in Virginia are getting identified with metal Bangs tags used for brucellosis vaccination or silver “brite” tags used for bovine tuberculosis and other tests. All cattle in Vir-

ginia need to be identified with a unique, permanent and official identification before they enter commerce.

On March 11, 2013, USDA’s Animal Disease Traceability Rule becomes effective, and will require official identification for most livestock involved in interstate movements. Initially, the rule will apply primarily to breeding age cattle and not feeder calves, but will affect all dairy cattle regardless of age and cattle moving to shows and exhibitions in other states. More



information on the ADT Rule can be found on the USDA’s Traceability web site at or by contacting the Virginia Animal ID Program.

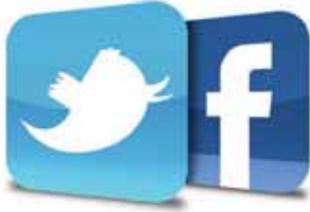
Fortunately, if we are smart about it, we can improve disease traceability in Virginia and the US without a great deal of cumbersome regulations and increased expenses for those involved in the cattle

industry. For example, VDACS

has been working with cattlemen, livestock market operators and large animal veterinarians to promote better identification and record keeping practices using e-business technologies employed in other industries. The use of electronic radio frequency identification tags (RFID) and electronic documents can substantially increase speed and accuracy in recording tag numbers at markets and processing facilities that handle large numbers of cattle. This technology may also be of interest to producers who manage relatively large herds, employ automated feeding and milking systems, or who use herd management software applications. Electronic tags are not the only acceptable form of official identification for interstate movement, but they do offer advantages in many situations. They are just one example of how VDACS is working with the cattle industry to create a smarter and more efficient animal disease traceability system in Virginia.

We will share more information about traceability in future newsletters. If you have any questions, please contact the VDACS Animal ID Program, 804.692.0600 or a state veterinarian in your area.

COMMUNICATION DURING AN ANIMAL DISEASE EMERGENCY



Agriculture is Virginia's largest industry by far. The industry has an economic impact of \$55 billion annually and provides more than 357,000 jobs in the Commonwealth. The agriculture

and forestry industries provide 10% of jobs in Virginia and contribute greatly to the Commonwealth's economy.

VDACS is the primary state agency with statutory authority pertaining to animal and animal industry issues. Our responsibilities include conducting animal disease investigations and coordinating disease control procedures. In order to accomplish this objective, communication with livestock producers, veterinarians, livestock markets and the general public is an important element of a disease response.

To disseminate information to stakeholders, VDACS will utilize social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter (both @VaAgriculture). We will update the VDACS website frequently and will utilize e-mail to share needed information also.

USEFUL ANIMAL IMPORT/EXPORT WEBSITES

Virginia Import Requirements - Health Requirements Governing the Admission of Agricultural Animals, Companion Animals, and Other Animals or Birds Into Virginia.

www.vdacs.virginia.gov/animals/admissions.shtml

States' Import Requirements as linked to by USDA - Click on selected state.

www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/animals/animal_import/animal_imports_states.shtml

States' Import Requirements as linked to by Global Vet Link - Click on selected region or state.

www.globalvetlink.com/resource-center/regulations

International Export Regulations - Click on the letter that corresponds to the county of destination.

www.aphis.usda.gov/regulations/vs/iregs/animals

THE VIRGINIA ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY SYSTEM

It is the mission of the VDACS Animal Health Laboratory System (VAHLS) to provide quality diagnostic and regulatory testing of specimens from animals, raw foods and environmental origin to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia in a timely manner and at reasonable cost. These testing services provide assistance to producers, regulatory offices, law enforcement agencies and private veterinarians in diagnosing disease problems, are a vital link in the monitoring and surveillance for both animal and human diseases of regulatory concern (e.g. Brucellosis, Tuberculosis, Salmonella, E. coli) and provide certification of animals and their products necessary for interstate and international export.

The five regional animal health laboratories (RAHLs) are located in Harrisonburg, Ivor, Lynchburg, Warrenton and Wytheville. The RAHLs each have similar missions and workloads, but differentiate some in the individual test methods offered based on client needs and program capabilities. The laboratories typically employ a staff of 4-10, mostly consisting of microbiologists and veterinarians. The RAHLs offer necropsy services, diagnostic microbiology testing, dairy microbiology testing, histopathology services, regulatory water testing, serology, parasitology and some molecular testing. (Note: The Ivor RAHL does not offer necropsy or diagnostic microbiology testing.) For a listing of the tests offered and a sample laboratory submission form, please visit the VDACS website for more detailed information.

The VAHLS's Quality System is compliant with international ISO17025 standards. A system-wide Quality Manager is based in the Richmond Office. All laboratory testing is performed with documented Standard Operating Procedures and by qualified personnel. Individual certifications required to perform specific testing are current and documented. Histopathology specimens are examined by a Veterinary Pathologist, board-certified by the American College of Veterinary Pathologists, whose services are available to all RAHLs.

VAHLS is a wide spectrum service supplier; when testing is redirected to another lab the quality system or accreditation of the external testing lab has been verified.

Harrisonburg 540.209.9130

Warrenton 540.347.6385

Ivor 757.859.6221

Wytheville 276.228.5501

Lynchburg 434.200.9988

Richmond 804.786.9202

A GUIDE FOR COMPLETING INTERSTATE CERTIFICATES OF VETERINARY INSPECTION (CVIs, HEALTH PAPERS, HEALTH CERTIFICATES)

With the publication of the federal Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) Rule and the reemergence of economically important and zoonotic diseases such as Tuberculosis, there has been growing attention among states regarding CVI compliance. accredited veterinarians are unaware of requirements for animal transport to numerous states. The following is a guide to assist Virginia veterinarians in this process.

1. Each state has a list of regulations governing the importation of animals from other states. Additionally, there are some federal regulations governing the interstate transport of animals. It is the issuing veterinarian's responsibility to be aware of these requirements and ensure they have been met. Similar to signing an incomplete or inaccurate prescription, signing or issuing an incomplete or inaccurate CVI has both legal consequences and liability issues.
 - a. Many states have up-to-date websites on which their import regulations can be found. A link to many of these is available at the following USDA website: www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/animals/animal_import/animal_imports_states.shtml
 - b. Additionally, veterinarians can always contact the state of destination and inquire about their import requirements. When doing so, it is important to do the following:
 - i. Completely describe the animals being shipped, including species, use (ie dairy or beef), breed, sex, age and purpose (ie sale, exhibition, livestock market, etc.).
 - ii. Record the requirements provided, date and the name of the person to whom you spoke. This will serve as a reference for similar shipments in the near future, and can be very useful if you are misinformed.
 - iii. A list of state veterinarian phone numbers can be found at the following USAHA website: <http://www.usaha.org/Portals/6/StateAnimalHealthOfficials.pdf>
 - c. Federal regulations are listed in the code of federal regulations and almost all pertain to disease programs such as Brucellosis and Tuberculosis. The link for these regulations is: <http://cfr.vlex.com/source/code-federal-regulations-animals-animal-products-1058>
2. Traditionally, CVIs are issued by the state in the form of paper books of certificates (four pages per certificate). While these certificates are still available, there are several resources for electronic CVIs available that are more up to date, thorough and user friendly. Virginia strongly encourages its veterinarians to move to electronic CVIs. Regardless, it is important to recognize that unlike most forms that are specifically designed by the entity collecting the information, CVIs are designed by the state of origin – the one state that is NOT dictating what information is being collected. It is therefore not uncommon for a CVI to have several boxes that will not necessarily be filled in, nor is it uncommon to not have a box for information that another state requires. Examples of this would be the requirements of the lab name and accession number for negative Coggins tests which is required by many states. In such a case, the veterinarian needs to be resourceful and create an area on the certificate for such information.
3. There are some basic requirements when filling out a CVI:
 - a. The CVI should be complete and legible.
 - b. The certificate being used must be from the state from which the animals originate. Animals originating from Virginia need to be listed on a Virginia CVI. If the animals originate from another state such as North Carolina, they must be listed on a NC CVI, and the completed certificate must be mailed to the NC state veterinarian's office for approval and processing. In order to write CVIs for any given state, the veterinarian must be both licensed and accredited in that state. Having a national accreditation number does not allow a veterinarian to perform accredited duties in a state until such state grants approval. This usually requires a state orientation.
 - c. Animals must have official ID as defined by the receiving state. If you are not sure of what a state considers official ID you should contact that state and ask. When listing official ID, be sure to indicate what type of ID is being used either at the top of the column or next to the ID.
 - i. For cattle, many states currently accept USDA metal tags, RFID tags, and registration tattoos when accompanied by the registration certificate. VIRGINIA DOES NOT ACCEPT REGISTRATION TATTOOS FOR CATTLE COMING INTO VIRGINIA, and other states may also cease to accept them in order to comply with USDA's ADT rule. If RFID or USDA metal tags are used, it is the

- veterinarian's responsibility to keep accurate and accessible distribution records for all official ID, thus having the ability to provide the name of the producer to whom a tag was given or applied up to five years after assignment.
- ii. For sheep, a scrapie flock tag, scrapie serial tag, RFID tag or registration tattoo accompanied by a copy of the registration paper is accepted by most every state. When using flock tags, be sure to list both the flock number and animal number. When using tattoos be sure to include both the right and left ears.
 - iii. For horses, official ID can generally be a microchip, lip tattoo, registration brand, digital photos or simply a complete physical description.
 - iv. For swine, a permanently applied unique group or individual ID is usually accepted, but it is best to check with the state of destination.
 - v. For camelids, a microchip or USDA or state issued metal tag is generally accepted.
- d. The true origin and destination physical address for the animal must be provided. Post office boxes and rural route numbers are not accepted. If the consignor and consignee are different than the origin and destination, they should be listed as well. The consignor can be from another state than the origin state (which determines the CVI state).
 - e. Age, breed, sex, purpose/use and reason for transport should be included. This usually determines the test and entry requirements, if any. For example, beef cows for exhibition may be exempt from testing where dairy cows for breeding may not.
 - f. All required tests, vaccinations and statements should be written on the CVI. For calthood vaccinates write the tattoo as you read it (RV3 for example). If the year number is illegible, put a dash. If the if entire tattoo is illegible except the shield, write OCV. If the herd is certified/accredited and a test is required from non-certified and accredited herds, put the herd number and anniversary date in the space provided and write "certified accredited herd exempt from testing" in the test results column.
 - g. Depending on the state of destination requirements, horses will often require a rectal temperature and the lab name and accession number for the negative Coggins in addition to the date.
 - h. If a permit number is required by the state of destination, fill out the entire CVI except your signature before calling for the permit number. After writing the permit number on the CVI, it can be signed and distributed. No requirements can be listed as pending on a signed CVI.
 - i. The owner signature is a matter of liability. The largest lawsuit awarded in veterinary medicine to date was the result of an owner not loading the correct animals on the truck as the signature indicates, and not signing the CVI.
 - j. The issue date, veterinarian's name, address and NAN (six digit national accreditation number) should be filled in before finally signing and distributing the CVI.
 - k. The state of origin and state of destination copies should be submitted to your regional VDACS office within seven days of issue.
4. Electronic CVIs and Coggins can be generated through a growing number of sources.
 - a. The USDA's Veterinary Services Process Streamlining system (VSPS) provides free electronic CVIs and Equine Infectious Anemia test charts. Some veterinarians feel that VSPS is a difficult system to access, but it is very functional with address books for your clients and animals, templates and import ability for electronic records such as those from electronic scales or RFID readers. USDA's VSPS system is limited to livestock (horses included). It can be accessed at the following link but guidance from our office is recommended: **<https://vsps.aphis.usda.gov/vsps>**
 - b. Another source is Global Vet Link which has a very good system as well and is far easier to access. There is, however, a fee associated with GVL. GVL will generate Coggins for horses and CVIs for livestock as well as companion animals and exotics. They can be found at: **<http://www.globalvetlink.com>**
 - c. Vet Sentry is a third source for electronic CVIs. It is new and very appealing with some features the others do not have. It focuses on CVIs only and is competitive in price. See **<http://www.vet-sentry.com/eCVI.html>** for more information.
 - d. Other providers may well be available now or in the near future.
 5. You can always contact your regional state veterinarian for guidance on both paper and electronic CVIs.

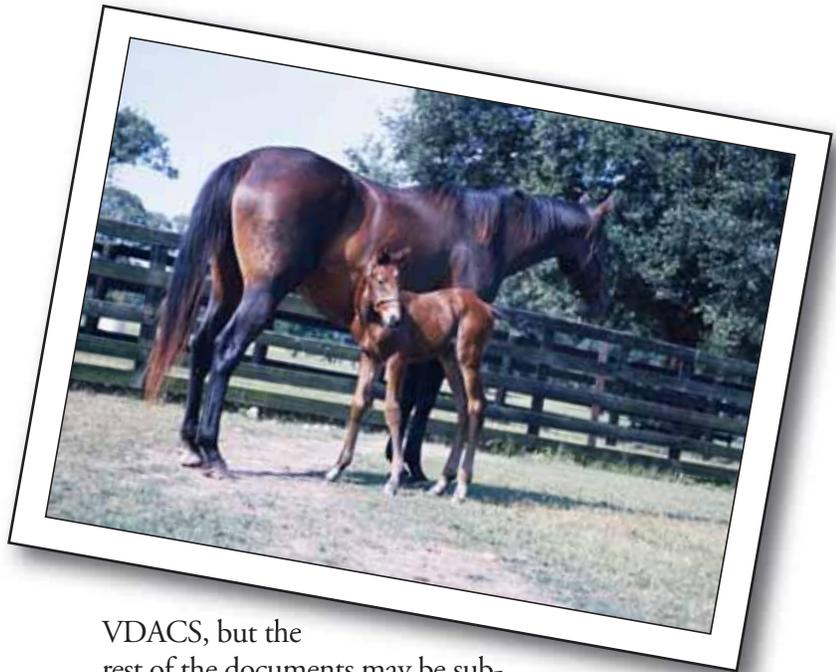
EQUINE INTERSTATE EVENT PERMIT

Many of you have inquired over the years when Virginia horse owners will be able to obtain a six month "Equine Interstate Event Permit" (EIEP) for interstate shipment within the southeastern US. VDACS recently developed the database and record system to facilitate these permits being issued. We also put significant thought and planning into how to permit for six months of movement without compromising disease risk; owner evaluations will help mitigate that risk.

Virginia now offers to horse owners the option of obtaining an EIEP allowing southeastern interstate travel for six months in lieu of multiple 30 day health certificates. The permit is recognized by the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. We have recently been notified that New York will also begin to accept such a permit; if horse owners are planning to travel there with the EIEP, at this time we recommend that they should contact New York in advance to confirm that their permit will be accepted.

The permit will be issued by either VDACS or Global Vet Link, depending on your preference. If using VDACS, the application, CVI and a copy of the digital Coggins or photos if utilized for identification should be submitted to the Office of Veterinary Services at 102 Governor Street, Richmond, VA 23219. All documents may be emailed, and if digital photos or a digital Coggins are used as the method of identification, they should be sent (being sure to include the horse owner's name and address, the examining veterinarian's name and phone number, and the horse's name and/or identification) to cvi@vdacs.virginia.gov. A permit will then be issued and mailed to either you or the owner as selected on the application. A processing fee of fifteen dollars per permit will be charged to your VDACS lab account. This is separate from any Coggins testing fees, but will appear on the same bill.

Global Vet Link also offers an electronic version of the EIEP, called the GoPass. This is an alternative option to having VDACS issue the permit, and requires that you have an electronic CVI and digital (electronic) Coggins through Global Vet Link. The application, including the signed statement attesting to being able to perform an examination of the horse, still must be submitted to



VDACS, but the rest of the documents may be submitted to Global Vet Link. The application processing fee of fifteen dollars will still be charged to your VDACS lab account.

The Virginia EIEP is a long awaited convenience for horse owners and we are pleased and excited to offer a solution that provides convenience while preserving an acceptable level of biosecurity and traceability for the Virginia horse population. Horse owners who do not want to microchip their horses or submit digital photos, perform physical exams or obtain digital Coggins have the traditional option of thirty day health certificates.

For additional information, including an instructional checklist and owner application, please see our website at: www.vdacs.virginia.gov/animals/eiep.shtml

VIRGINIA ANIMAL IMPORT REGULATIONS

Recently, Virginia's animal import regulations were revised, and while many of the requirements were unchanged, there are several changes. One new requirement affecting beef and dairy producers is the requirement that all cattle over 18 months of age be Tuberculosis test negative before being imported into Virginia, with a few exemptions.

For additional information, please refer to our website at: www.vdacs.virginia.gov/animals/admissions.shtml.

USDA ACCREDITATION UPDATE – IS IT RENEWAL TIME FOR YOU?

Is it time for you to renew your accreditation? Do you know your renewal date? If not, please feel free to contact Ms. Robin Greene at the USDA Veterinary Services office in Richmond. The phone number to the USDA VS office in Richmond is 804.343.2560 and Ms. Greene's email address is Robin.T.Greene@aphis.usda.gov.

Continuing education is required to renew your accreditation. Category 1 veterinarians need three credits of continuing education and Category 2 veterinarians require six credits. Dr. Lyn Tobias, USDA VS, presented one of the modules, which is equal to one credit, during the VVMA meeting in Roanoke on Friday March 1st. Renewals are on a three year cycle. Continuing education modules are also available on-line at: www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/vet_accreditation/training_modules.shtml

NEW TESTING IN THE REGIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORIES

Several new tests are in place or in development in the regional animal health laboratory system. A **Partial Necropsy** fee (\$50) was recently instituted for livestock cases where the necropsy is done in the field by the practitioner and samples are sent in to the RAHL for testing in various disciplines. As with a full necropsy, the fee does not include referral testing for tests not performed within the regional animal laboratory system. A commercial ELISA for antibodies to **Equine Viral Arteritis (EVA)** is being tested and validated at the Warrenton RAHL. Work is being done with the manufacturer on validation, and we hope that we can begin offering the test very soon. A Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test for *Tritrichomonas foetus* in bovines is in development at the Wytheville RAHL. For further information on these or any testing being offered in the regional lab system, please contact the RAHL nearest you.

RECENT DIAGNOSTIC CASES IN THE VIRGINIA ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY SYSTEM

Fall and winter have brought a typical variety of diagnostic cases to the regional animal health laboratories (RAHLs). In addition to the standard disease diagnoses that occur in livestock and poultry, the RAHLs also routinely examine samples from companion animals, exotics and wildlife for a variety of submitters and purposes. Sometimes these cases intersect with human health concerns. In early fall, the Warrenton RAHL discovered two separate cases of the human pathogen *Corynebacterium diphtheriae*, both from equine wounds. One horse had a pastern injury that would not heal, and the other was a fresh wound from a horse injured in the hunt field. Working with the cooperation of the Virginia Department of Health, the isolates were forwarded to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, and both isolates were determined by CDC to be toxigenic. Epidemiologists are continuing to investigate any human contacts with the equine patients to determine possible origin or risk to associated humans.

In another case that intersected with human health concerns, a dairy in the Lynchburg region having trouble



with scours submitted a calf to the local RAHL around the Christmas holiday. Over several days that holiday weekend, a Lynchburg RAHL microbiologist isolated a *Salmonella sp.* from the calf's tissues and worked to produce an identification and antimicrobial susceptibility for the producer and submitter. As it turned out, a farm employee was also suffering from gastrointestinal symptoms, and after the *Salmonella sp.*

was reported, sought medical attention and treatment for salmonellosis.

For the second year in a row, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is working to re-introduce elk into extreme southwestern Virginia. As part of the diagnostic testing and disease monitoring performed on these animals before release, any elk that die in quarantine are brought to the Wytheville RAHL for necropsy. An elk cow recently necropsied there was found to have died from trauma associated with a fracture of the 1st cervical vertebra. Despite the evidence of trauma, the tissues from the elk are being tested for potential diseases of concern, such as Chronic Wasting Disease, Tuberculosis, Brucellosis, etc. Even though elk are not routinely found in Virginia, the testing will help rule out any potential foreign animal or emerging disease that these individuals could introduce to Virginia's livestock herd.

The veterinary diagnosticians in the RAHLs also contribute regularly to law enforcement investigations into animal cruelty, abuse and neglect cases across the Commonwealth. This often necessitates appearing in local courtrooms to testify in court on these cases. Occasionally, this can result in involvement in controversial or prominent court cases. Recently a local small zoo director

in Northern Virginia was charged with illegally euthanizing a wallaby by drowning, after telling investigators she administered standard injectable euthanasia with controlled substances. The necropsy performed at the Warrenton RAHL and subsequent testing confirmed that no controlled substances were given to the wallaby, and that it had likely died from drowning. After being initially found guilty of animal abuse, the defendant later pled guilty on appeal and has since moved out of state.



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102 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219