



DECISION TREE FOR LIVESTOCK EXPOSED TO RABIES



Exposure Definition:
any situation where saliva or central nervous system tissue from a rabid animal, a high-risk animal*, or a low-risk animal behaving abnormally** did or could have had direct contact with the mucus membranes or a break in the skin of a domestic animal.

Close proximity where contact cannot be ruled out is considered an exposure.



Fits Exposure Definition?

NO



No Further Action

YES



Report horse and livestock exposures to your local health department



Exposing Animal Available for Testing?

YES

NO



Negative



Positive



No Further Action



Livestock Currently Vaccinated?

YES

NO



Receive a rabies vaccine booster as soon as possible.

Confine in a way that is routine for that species. Observe for signs of rabies for 45 days***



Immediate slaughter, OR confine in a way that is routine for that species and observe for signs of rabies***

The local health department determines the length of confinement and determines the response to livestock with expired vaccines.

Responses may vary and may include rabies vaccination of the exposed animal, herd or flock.



Suspect rabid animals include:

- *High risk species like raccoons, foxes, skunks, bats and large rodents such as groundhogs and beavers.
- **Low risk species like rabbits and small rodents if acting ill or abnormally.
- Opossums if found dead, acting ill or aggressively.

Any suspect rabid animal that is not available for testing should be presumed positive.



Insert QR Code
[Virginia Guidelines for Rabies Prevention and Control](#)



***If livestock species under observation become sick or develop abnormal behavior, the local health department should be notified immediately and the animal(s) should be examined by a veterinarian. The local health department will then determine the course of action.