



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and Plant  
Health Inspection  
Service

4700 River Road  
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## Animal Care Stakeholder Update

November 6, 2009

### Updated Guidelines for the Control of Elephant Tuberculosis (TB)

Starting on or about March 1, 2010, yearly testing for TB in elephants will include both trunk washes and the use of a licensed blood test to help identify TB exposed/positive animals. This new test was licensed in 2007, and is now incorporated into the US Animal Health Association (USAHA) Guidelines for the Control of Elephant Tuberculosis in use by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) since 1998. In October 2008, the USAHA requested that APHIS adopt the updated document.

The Chembio Diagnostic System, Inc., test (Elephant TB Stat Pak®) may eventually become available to accredited veterinarians through the parent company, but the official elephant test must be done by a certified Animal Care (AC) veterinarian. The AC veterinarian will oversee the drawing of the blood, the positive identification of the elephant, and will either run the test on the premise, or directly oversee the labeling, packing, and shipment of the samples to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) that same day. (NVSL is the only currently approved laboratory for running the test.)

Testing will begin on or about March 2010, and the first year's testing should conclude by March 2011. Yearly testing will be required, unless other frequencies are dictated by the results. After the first year, AC will reevaluate the program to determine what oversight of sample collection and test performance is needed.

Training for accredited veterinarians is under development and the procedure for this training will be posted on our web site in the near future.

The Animal Care website provides the complete text of the Guidelines for the Control of Elephant Tuberculosis. These documents can be found at [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_welfare/downloads/elephant/elephant\\_tb.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/downloads/elephant/elephant_tb.pdf). This new tool in our fight against TB in elephants will provide more accurate screening for possible infections and exposures, as well as make it possible to identify exposure earlier.



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We appreciate your support and cooperation as we work together to improve the health and well being of the elephants of the national herd.



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Animal Care