

**WYOMING LIVESTOCK BOARD (WLSB)**

**Agency 051  
Annual Report  
FY24**

**Director's name and official title:** Steve True, WLSB Director and CEO

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**Statutory References:** The agency's statutory authority was established under Chapter 85, Laws 1933. Its activities are described in:

Title 7, Chapter 2, Statute 7-2-101(a)(iv)(E)  
Title 11, Chapter 1, Statute 11-1-103  
Chapter 6, Statute 11-6-201 and 11-6-210  
Chapter 17, Statute 21-17-308  
Chapter 18, Statutes 11-18-101 through 11-18-120  
Chapter 19, Statutes 11-19-101 through 11-19-602  
Chapter 20, Statutes 11-20-101 through 11-20-409  
Chapter 21, Statutes 11-21-101 through 11-21-104  
Chapter 22, Statutes 11-22-101 through 11-22-119  
Chapter 23, Statutes 11-23-101 through 11-23-305  
Chapter 24, Statutes 11-24-101 through 11-24-115  
Chapter 26, Statute 11-26-101  
Chapter 27, Statutes 11-27-101 through 11-27-107  
Chapter 28, Statutes 11-28-101 through 11-28-108  
Chapter 29, Statutes 11-29-101 through 11-29 115  
Chapter 30, Statutes 11-30-101 through 11-30-115  
Chapter 31, Statutes 11-31-101 through 11-31-301  
Chapter 32, Statutes 11-32-101 through 11-32-104  
Chapter 37, Statutes 11-37-102 and 11-37-107  
Chapter 48, Statutes 11-48-101 and 11-48-102  
Title 31, Chapter 5, Statute 31-5-102

**Clients Served:** Livestock producers, licensed veterinarians, and general public.

**Budget Information:** BFY23-24 Agency budget was \$20,513,117 of which \$5,570,370 is general fund, \$766,483 is from federal funds, \$11,921,050 is producer-generated revenue from the Brand Recording and Inspection activities of the agency, and \$2,255,212 are pass through dollars for Predator Control Fees collected on behalf of the County Predator Boards. The agency's FY24 expenditures were \$2,558,464 of general funds, \$358,521 of federal funds, \$5,359,894 of producer-generated revenue, and \$1,011,789 to the County Predator Boards. The significant adjustments to the overall 2023-2024 budget were a result of pay raise and inflationary appropriation increase.

**Basic Facts:**

WLSB has four operational units with 17 full-time staff. The divisions include 6 in Administration, 3 in Animal Health, 2 in Law Enforcement, 6 in Brands, as well as 96 At Will Employment Contract (AWEC) Brand Inspectors. The legislature also approved 1 Federal Grant funded AWEC position in the Brucellosis division. Currently, there are 15 full-time positions in the Cheyenne Office. 1 Law Enforcement Officer operates from Laramie and 1 from Cowley. The remaining positions are distributed throughout the state to provide services to WLSB clients.

The WLSB's main functions are livestock identification/ownership verification, outreach/education, disease surveillance, prevention, and response. All units strive to prevent animal diseases and theft through education/enforcement; conducting surveillance activities which support our mission; and providing timely and appropriate response to disease reports/outbreaks and reports of missing livestock.

**Administration** provides management and support to WLSB units.

**Animal Health** has numerous functions including monitoring and responding to Wyoming reportable diseases, livestock importation, foreign animal disease investigations, epidemiologic investigations, disease prevention, mitigation, quarantine and monitoring, livestock disease tracing, emergency management and response, outreach activities/education, and development and management of cooperative agreements with federal agencies. The Unit is very proactive in maintaining rules for Brucellosis, Trichomoniasis, Scrapie, and Import Requirements with the goal of animal health protection for Wyoming's livestock.

**Brand** The Brand program is the principal means of determining and verifying livestock ownership in the state of Wyoming in order to protect livestock owners from theft or loss. It provides for recording and issuing livestock brands; renewal and or transfer of brand ownership; publishing brand books and updates; physical inspection of livestock for brands and ownership; legal transfer of title to livestock during any change of ownership; determination of ownership and or return estray livestock or the proceeds of the sale of estray livestock to their lawful owners; assisting law enforcement officers investigating violations of livestock laws; supporting disease traceability efforts and compliance with animal health requirements; and providing for collection of predatory animal control and Wyoming Beef Council fees.

**Law Enforcement** provides criminal investigations, Livestock Board Rules and Regulations enforcement, and emergency management services to the people of Wyoming. A primary function is to provide training to county Sheriffs, regarding livestock law and animal cruelty issues.

**Performance Measure #1 is Agency Computerization:****Core System:**

The Agency continues to improve in building an integrated computer system. Animal Health has implemented the use of a new module and is working toward development of an on-line/electronic import permitting system. Law Enforcement now has a subscription service module that is stand alone for Criminal Justice compliance. However, officers will have "look in" capability on both Animal Health and Brand Inspection for access to certificates needed in investigations.

Brand Inspectors are using an online/offline capable computer system to create electronic certificates. This system allows electronic reporting of inspections to the agency office, allowing for automatic entry of fees. This streamlines the auditing process to cut down on transcription and math errors and provide much improved research and data analysis for the agency and our clients. In 2019, the agency added a module

that warehouses older electronic brand certificates and documents. Each year adds more than fifty thousand records to the system and as all has images, this has been putting a strain on the system. Warehousing these older files will help the program system operate more efficiently.

### **Performance Measure #2 is Education / Outreach:**

One of the primary functions of the WLSB staff is to provide educational opportunities and outreach, and to keep the livestock industry updated on issues of importance. Toward that goal, we sponsored, participated in, or presented at numerous meetings, conference calls, webinars, and seminars during the fiscal year. These meetings included producer education meetings on avian influenza in both poultry and dairy cattle, brucellosis, trichomoniasis, scrapie, livestock ID, leptospirosis, and other relevant topics. We held two in-person trainings and several virtual trainings to certify Wyoming veterinarians to conduct official trichomoniasis testing in Wyoming. Many interagency meetings were held to coordinate efforts with the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory, Wyoming Department of Health, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, USDA APHIS, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, UW Extension, Department of Transportation, and others in response to disease issues including Brucellosis, Bighorn Sheep/domestic sheep interactions, zoonotic diseases, and emergency response. Visits were made to the four Wyoming licensed livestock auction markets during the year to assure knowledge of and compliance with WLSB animal health statutes and rules. In addition, the field veterinarian visited designated feedlots located throughout the state to perform inspections and provide education regarding livestock ID requirements, and to help management determine whether they should become state and APHIS approved tagging sites.

WLSB Animal Health Unit personnel participated in numerous intrastate and national meetings, both virtual and in person, to foster coordination with other states, USDA APHIS, and national organizations to help maintain marketability of Wyoming livestock. WLSB personnel also held or participated in meetings with Wyoming producers, veterinarians and county and state livestock event managers to share information about animal ID requirements, agency rules and interstate movement requirements, and to provide updates and information on reportable diseases such as highly pathogenic avian influenza, brucellosis, trichomoniasis, bovine tuberculosis, leptospirosis, and equine infectious anemia (Coggins).

The WLSB animal health unit met biweekly during the fiscal year to conduct business and discuss issues relevant to the livestock industry. Many meetings were participated in by WLSB staff and board members to educate and coordinate efforts with Wyoming industry and organizations, agencies, states, and national organizations to foster our livestock industry.

The WLSB held 6 Board meetings during the fiscal year to conduct business and discuss issues relevant to the livestock industry. Many meetings were participated in by WLSB staff and board members to educate and coordinate efforts with Wyoming industry and organizations, other agencies, other states, and national organizations to foster our livestock industry.

### **Statutes and Rules:**

WLSB staff are reviewing Wyoming's livestock rules and statutes. Updates include development of an electronic format for brucellosis reimbursement utilized by veterinarians, livestock markets, and state slaughter facilities, and revised import rules for livestock and pets. Updated verbiage for some of our livestock rules will be incorporated into the promulgation process during the coming year.

**Emergency Planning for Livestock:**

WLSB is participating in the United States Swine Health Improvement Plan, a platform established to safeguard, improve, and represent the health status of swine across participating farm sites, supply chains, states, and regions, supporting current and future health assurance needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century US pork industry. WLSB continues to coordinate with the Wyoming Department of Homeland Security regarding emergency response planning. We participated in several training events during the fiscal year.

WLSB joined the Western Alliance, a group of states spanning the western half of the United States working together for livestock disease prevention, management, response, and eradication. State animal health officials from the member states organized the alliance for collaborative emergency planning and livestock disease response.

Efforts are ongoing between the WY state veterinarian and other state veterinarians and livestock industry sectors (cattle, swine, sheep, and poultry) to develop continuity of business plans for each species to enable producers to move livestock in the case of a foreign animal disease event.

**Animal Health Unit:**

**FY24 Brucellosis Surveillance in Wyoming:**

Cattle in Wyoming’s Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) are required to be tested for brucellosis prior to leaving the DSA or changing ownership. Some livestock exhibitions, sales, and international movements also require negative brucellosis tests for cattle to be eligible to participate, regardless of where in Wyoming they reside. The table below includes the number of tests and source of brucellosis testing in Wyoming that occurred in FY24.

**FY24 Brucellosis Testing in Wyoming**

Test Results	DSA Ranches	Livestock Markets	Custom Slaughter	Totals
Negative Head	62085	9514	7424	79,023
Reactors	5			
Total	62090	9514	7424	79,028

Brucellosis Testing Numbers	DSA	Non-DSA	Total
Livestock Markets	9514		9514
Producer Unit/Farm/Ranch	62090		62090
Slaughter Plant	152	7272	7424
Grand Total	71756	7272	79028

The WLSB paid \$398,688.89 from state funds for brucellosis testing and vaccination, \$73,413.89 from USDA Cooperative Agreement funds for testing and vaccination, and \$12,711.50 from USDA Cooperative Agreement funds for electronic submission bonuses for a total of \$484,814.28 in payments to veterinarians, sale barns, and slaughter plant managers to conduct Brucellosis testing and adult/booster vaccination of DSA-origin cattle.

**Other Animal Health Measurables:**

The WLSB maintains a list of animal diseases, called the “Reportable Disease List,” that are required to be reported to the state veterinarian when they are identified. These diseases are important for many reasons including their impact on herd health, public health (zoonotic diseases), or economics and marketability of the Wyoming livestock industry. The table below includes the number of cases reported by disease for the reporting period.

**FY24 Incidence of Reportable Diseases in Wyoming**

<b>Reportable Disease</b>	<b>Total Number of Cases</b>	<b>Number of Species Affected</b>	<b>Type of Species Affected</b>
Anaplasmosis	5	1	Bovine
Avian Influenza Highly Pathogenic	1 Dairy Prem	1	Bovine - Dairy
Bluetongue	8	1	Bovine
Bovine Leukosis	1	1	Bovine
Brucella abortus	5	1	Bovine
Brucella ovis	29	1	Ovine
Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis	1	1	Caprine
Equine Infectious Anemia	1	1	Equine
Equine Influenza	4	1	Equine
Paratuberculosis (Johne’s Disease)	104	4	Bov, Ov, Cap, Camelid
Ovine Progressive Pneumonia	1	1	Ovine
Plague	4	1	Feline
Q Fever	5	1	Caprine
Strep equi (Strangles)	16	1	Equine
Trichomoniasis	1	1	Bovine
Tularemia	4	1	Feline
West Nile Virus	50	1	Equine

Trichomoniasis continues to be a potentially economically significant disease impacting the cattle industry in Wyoming and other western range states. This venereal disease causes reproductive loss in female cattle, resulting in lowered, un-uniform calf crops and infertility. Trichomoniasis is a reportable disease in

Wyoming and results in quarantine of infected herds with required culling of test positive bulls. One Trichomoniasis infected bull was found in the state during FY24.

### **FY24 Bulls Tested for Trichomoniasis in Wyoming**

	<b>Total Bulls Tested</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Accessions</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	10,479	10,478	1	976

### **Brand Unit – Brand Recording:**

Although FY24 was not a renewal year, we are still reissuing delinquent brands from the last renewal period. By Wyoming State Statute, people who did not renew their brands in the renewal can still renew them after they have paid a delinquent fee and the renewal fee. Since the renewal ended in FY23, 257 delinquent brands have been renewed. The majority of these were reissued in FY24. Delinquent brands can still be renewed through the rest of 2024.

In FY24 the brand recording unit averaged nearly 250 phone customers per month. The unit also researched and issued hundreds of abandoned and new brand applications. Customer service also takes the form of hundreds of brand transfers, name changes, issuing seasonal brand permits, assisting field inspectors and many other brand transactions.

Preparations for the renewal in FY25 began in the spring as we sought to have producers keep their addresses current. This was done at producer meetings, press releases and having our data reviewed electronically for any discrepancies in addresses.

Also, in FY24, the unit published the latest issue of the State Brand Book.

### **Brand Unit – Brand Inspection:**

Drought conditions continue to impact livestock inspection numbers. The summer of FY24 was a good year for moisture, but the winter and spring of the year were not. Parts of the state saw a very dry spring, which will likely affect our inspection numbers in the late summer and fall of FY25.

### **Total Brand Inspections for Calendar Year:**

**Brand Inspection:** The overall numbers for last year were very similar to the year before, with some notable differences. Total livestock numbers were 1,813,549 head in 2023. This was up 22,590 head from 2022, or 1.25%. Total cattle numbers were 1,563,183 in 2023. This was up 33,323 head, or an increase of 2.13%. Total sheep numbers were 223,997. This was down 17,360 head, or 7.19% less than the year before. This was also a record low for sheep inspected. Horses inspected were 26,106, or a 25.99% increase. We were expecting horse numbers to be up due to special events such as the National High School Finals Rodeo and the feral horse gathers on the Wind River Reservation, however, this increase was even more than expected. Total brand inspections written were down from 48,389 to 41,854. This was 13.51% less than the previous year.

Filling vacant brand inspector vacancies is still a priority, as our more experienced inspectors are retiring, and some of our younger inspectors are leaving for better paying jobs. In FY24, nine new inspectors were hired. Going into FY25, we have 4 open positions for part time inspectors still to fill. This highlights the importance of our annual trainings for brand inspectors in each of the six brand inspection districts. These were held in May and gave our inspectors a chance to be trained on new legislation, Livestock Board actions, agency policies and rules and training on emerging animal diseases from our State Veterinarians.

In 2023 the top states we send cattle to were, in order, Nebraska, Colorado, South Dakota, Montana, Kansas, Idaho, Utah, Iowa, California, Washington and Texas. We continue to meet and coordinate with our counterparts in our neighboring States. This consists of joint conferences and meetings, frequent conference calls and joint projects whenever the opportunity arises.

### **Law Enforcement Unit:**

The core functions of the Law Enforcement Unit include conducting criminal investigations of suspected violations of State/Federal laws and Wyoming Livestock Board rules; investigating reported cases of livestock theft, illegal livestock movement, illegal import/export, animal cruelty/welfare and training/educating and assisting other Wyoming law enforcement agencies.

An electronic case management system is used to track the number of reported violations, investigations and trainings. These would include Agency Assist calls, Brand Inspection and Animal Health Violations, trainings and missing and stolen livestock reports.

It is important to note, that as cooperation is gained with local agencies, some producers made reports to local agencies. We continue to strive to coordinate activities and information with other law enforcement agencies, and prosecuting attorneys. The current Investigators have worked tirelessly to restore credibility and presence to the Unit.

W.S. 11-18-120 provided a one-time appropriation to create an account for the purpose of reimbursing county Sheriffs for expenses relating to the enforcement of livestock laws and for eligible expenses relating to in-state & out-of-state livestock investigations and training. WLSB has promulgated rules to implement this statute. WLSB has developed an MOU with Sheriffs Offices, for targeted enforcement in high-risk areas. There are currently ten (10) counties with these MOU's which will continue until the end of the Fiscal 2026. These MOU's have contributed to the Livestock stops and citations written on behalf of WLSB Investigators. WLSB Investigators have performed ride along with local agencies and roadside checks for additional training opportunities

# WLSB Organizational Chart

