ANTHRAX OF HOGS

Anthrax is an acute infectious disease caused by a spore forming aerobic bacterium that is capable of living long periods of time in the soil or in animal tissues.

All mammals are more or less susceptible to anthrax but the meat eating animals and hogs are less susceptible than are sheep, cattle and horses.

In hogs, infection with the anthrax bacillus is usually through the tonsils and occurs while the hog is eating flesh from an animal that has died from anthrax.

The outstanding sign of anthrax in the pig is a swelling in the region of the throat. This swelling may become so severe that the animal dies of asphyxiation. At other times the main lesions may be found in the intestine or there may be a septicemia with a generalized tissue reddening.

Post mortem examination by dissection, and examination of tissues and organs, of an animal dying of suspected anthrax is not recommended.

Animals dying of anthrax usually bleed from the nostrils or anus. A small amount of this blood can be absorbed on a small piece of cloth or cotton attached to a match or other applicator and the specimen placed in a box or bottle and packed so there is no danger of the package breaking and sent to a diagnostic laboratory. Label the package “ANTHRAX SUSPECT” to prevent possible infection of laboratory workers.

Control of anthrax in North Dakota is handled by the Livestock Sanitary Board and is based on a vaccination and sanitation program.

Animals in the early stages of the disease can be treated with antibiotics with favorable results.

In all cases of suspected anthrax, or anthrax, the carcasses should be buried at least 6 feet under ground and covered with quicklime, or completely burned using oil to insure complete incineration.