

# Department of Disease Control

## Weekly Disease Forecast No.169\_Brucellosis (22 – 28 July 2018)

From the national disease surveillance system, the Department of Disease Control revealed a range of 1 to 13 brucellosis patients (no deaths) per year during the past 4 years (2014 – 2017). Last year (2017), there were 9 incidents with 13 cases.

Since the beginning of this year until present (17 July 2018), there have been 12 incidents with 12 cases in Nakhonratchasima, Nakhonsawan, Saraburi, Uthaithani, Sakonnakhon and Ratchaburi provinces.

Investigations during 2017 – 2018 found common risk factors to be: 1) consumption of raw goat milk, 2) having direct contact with animals' aborted fetuses, reproductive tissues (e.g. placentas), and carcasses with bare hands and no protective gear, and 3) keeping livestock close to housing premises.



This weekly disease forecast has projected that due to the continue occurrence since the beginning of this year, brucellosis infection is likely to continue.

Brucellosis is a bacterial zoonotic disease mainly affecting goats, sheep, cattle, swine, and dogs. The infection is transmitted to humans directly through skin wounds or scratches that is in contact with infected animals' aborted fetuses, and reproductive tissues, placentas, blood, amniotic fluid or urine. Transmission can also occur indirectly by ingestion of animal products particularly raw milk. Inhalation of *Brucella* organisms among people who work in the livestock sector is not common. Human-to-human transmission is very rare.

The Department of Disease Control recommends preventive measures: 1) do not consume raw milk, i.e. drink only pasteurized or boiled milk, 2) farm workers should use rubber gloves, as well as rubber boots, especially when contacting aborted fetuses, and reproductive tissues, and 3) livestock animals must be kept away from human housing premises.

Brucellosis symptoms include fever, chills, headaches, sweats (more during the night), muscle aches, joint pains, back pain, weight loss, and physical weakness. Brucellosis may also cause long lasting symptoms including recurrent fevers, joint pain, and fatigue that might persist for months or over a year. Seeking medical care and informing the history of animal exposure or consumption of raw milk will help with the rapid disease diagnosis.

The most rational approach for preventing human brucellosis is by pasteurization of animal milk and by control and elimination of the infection in farm animals. This can be done by quarantine of new animal flocks. If there is animal death or abortion, owners must notify the District Livestock Officers to test for the disease. Animals with positive test result must be culled.

For queries or additional information, please call DDC hotline 1422.

