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Washington State Department of Agriculture  
**News Release**

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## **WSDA and AB Livestock reach settlement, sign compliance agreement**

**OLYMPIA** – The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) and AB Livestock have reached a settlement after an investigation into the importation of 402 Canadian cattle into Washington.

AB Livestock, which operates the El Oro feedlot in Moses Lake, Washington, has agreed to pay a penalty of \$20,000 and to reimburse WSDA \$15,000 for costs associated with the investigation. The firm will also enter into a compliance agreement with the department.

WSDA alleged that AB Livestock violated Washington animal import regulations when the firm brought 402 head of Canadian cattle to Washington rangeland in May 2009, rather than the restricted feedlot listed on the import documents. The firm disputes the finding, but agreed to a financial penalty and additional WSDA oversight in order to settle the matter and demonstrate a new model for cooperation.

Beginning in August 2009, AB Livestock worked closely with WSDA to round up and quarantine the animals. WSDA tested the 398 surviving animals and found no evidence of contagious animal diseases in the herd. As is typical with herds grazing in rugged country, three animals died on the rangeland and one animal has not been recovered and is presumed to be dead.

“WSDA sets entry requirements based on risk in order to protect the resident animals of the state,” said Dr. Leonard Eldridge, Washington state veterinarian. “With the full cooperation of AB Livestock during the course of this investigation, we were able to collect these animals in a timely manner and determine that no Washington cattle were exposed to any contagious disease.”

“We made every effort to correct and resolve this issue with WSDA as soon as possible. AB Livestock is dedicated to raising the highest quality cattle. Keeping the cattle supply safe is critically important to our success,” says Scott Lindsay, president of AB Livestock.

In addition to the financial settlement, AB Livestock has agreed to participate in a cooperative compliance agreement that will increase WSDA oversight of the firm's cattle feeding operations as a model for future industry participation. WSDA will perform frequent record checks on animals received at feedlots in Washington and occasional unannounced feedlot inspections to verify the proper receipt of cattle shipments.

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