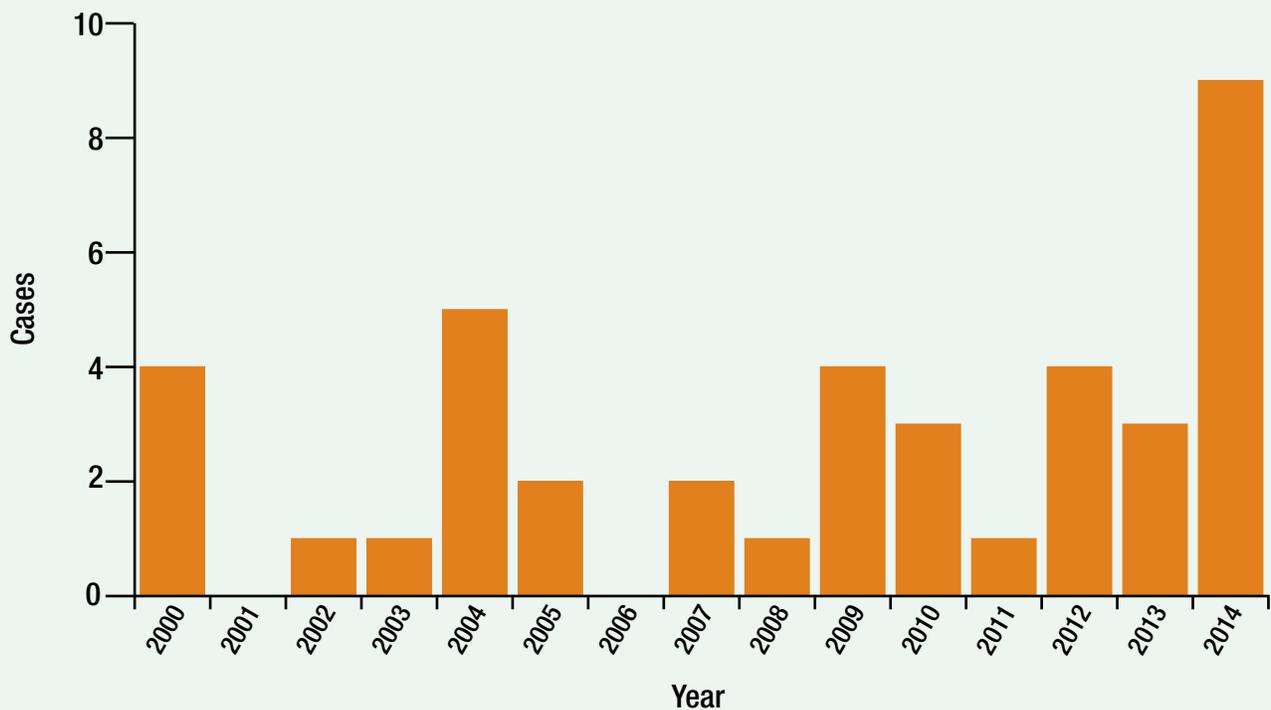


Q fever

Q fever is a bacterial infection caused by *Coxiella burnetii*. It can result in acute or chronic illness in humans, and is usually acquired through inhalation of barnyard dust contaminated with bacteria from the placentas, body fluids or excreta from infected animals. The primary reservoirs are cattle, sheep and goats. Infection may also result from consumption of unpasteurized milk. Acute Q fever can be accompanied by a host of symptoms, including high fever, severe headache, malaise, myalgia, chills, sweats, nausea, vomiting, dry cough, diarrhea, abdominal pain and chest pain. Most people recover from acute Q fever, but some (<5%) develop chronic illness, which often manifests as endocarditis. Chronic infection can be treated with long courses of antibiotics. Outbreaks in the U.S. have been the result of occupational exposure to infected livestock.

Q fever reports are rare in Oregon; in 2014 nine acute cases were reported. This increase in cases was due in part to a small outbreak associated with a farm.

Q fever by year: Oregon, 2000–2014



Prevention

- Barns and laboratories housing potentially infected animals should have restricted access, and holding facilities for sheep should be located away from populated areas.
- Appropriately dispose of placenta, birth products, fetal membranes and aborted fetuses at facilities housing sheep and goats.
- Use only pasteurized milk and milk products.
- Quarantine imported animals.