

OVMEB SB-1539 Rule Advisory Committee Public Meeting	July 27, 2026,	12PM-2PM
	Join Zoom Meeting https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89084865277?pwd=bu2xoIScDFPDSlx5vL0oCwgj4dLvOR.1	
	Meeting ID: 890 8486 5277 Passcode: 8wTVeg	
	Phone 971-673-0224 Fax 971-673-0226	
Oregon Veterinary Medical Examining Board		www.oregon.gov/ovmeb

Convene Public Session

Initial RAC Meeting Agenda — SB 1539 Rulemaking

- 1. Call to Order:** Public Session is scheduled to start at 12PM and will continue until the end of business. Executive Session (closed to the public) will follow, continuing until the end of business. We will then reconvene in Public Session for all public discussions and material review, continuing until the end of business.
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Executive Session:** OVMEB SB-1539 RAC will enter into Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(f), to consider exempt public records (legal advice). Representatives of the news media and designated staff will be allowed to attend the Executive Session. All other members of the audience are asked to leave the room. Representatives of the news media are specifically directed not to report on any of the deliberations during the Executive Session except to state the general subject of the session as previously announced. No decision will be made in Executive Session. At the end of the Executive Session, we will return to open session and welcome the audience back into the room.
- 4. Return to Public Session**
- 5. Roll Call**

SB 1539 Rulemaking Project Overview

Purpose:

The Oregon Veterinary Medical Examining Board (OVMEB) is implementing Senate Bill 1539, which authorizes trained individuals to perform pregnancy verification in cattle without a veterinary license, under Board-defined circumstances. The Board formed a Rules Advisory Committee (RAC) to assist in developing safe, practical, and enforceable rules.

Background:

SB 1539 grants OVMEB the authority to clarify when unlicensed pregnancy verification is permissible. Rules must protect animal welfare, safeguard public health, set boundaries for lay practice, and comply with Oregon's Veterinary Practice Act and Administrative Procedures Act.

Stakeholder Engagement:

The Board consulted legislative sponsors, large-animal industry leaders, rural veterinarians, and public health veterinarians. Their perspectives ensure balanced rulemaking reflecting real-world needs and risks.

Mission Statement:

Develop clear, evidence-based rules that protect animal and public health, support Oregon agriculture, and ensure any authorized lay practice is performed safely and within defined limits.

Scope of RAC Work:

- Define training requirements for pregnancy verification.
- Establish limits and supervision requirements for unlicensed practice.
- Identify animal health and biosecurity safeguards.
- Recommend rule language for OAR 875.

Scale & Impact:

The project affects cattle producers, veterinarians, educators, ranchers, and public health officials statewide. The work has high visibility due to its connection to food supply safety and veterinary workforce needs.

Timeline:

Final recommendations due in October, with adoption planned before year-end.

Expected Outcomes:

Rules that are legally sound, enforceable, aligned with legislative intent, protective of animal and public health, and workable for Oregon's agricultural sector.

RAC Participants (Alphabetical by Last Name)

Earl Aalseth, DVM – Dairy Cattle, Training
Rawley Bigsby – Wallowa County Commissioner; Rancher
Gail Colbern, DVM, MS, DACT – OVMA President
Emilio DeBess, DVM – OHA, Public Health (non-voting)
Scott Duggan – OSU, Education & Training
Rodney Ferry, DVM – Lakeview, Food Animal
Rusty Inglis – Oregon Farm Bureau Chair; Rancher
Ryan Krabill – Oregon Farm Bureau

Adrienne Lulay – Linn-Benton CC, Animal Reproduction Education
Ryan Scholz, DVM – ODA State Veterinarian (non-voting)
Erik Steen – Oregon Cattlemen’s Association
Ben Wustenberg, DVM – Newberg, Food Animal

Meeting Agenda – July 27, 2024

Facilitator: Peter J. Burns, OVMEB Executive Director

Welcome & Meeting Purpose (10–15 min)

- Introductions
 - Overview of SB 1539 (bill text provided and read to the group)
 - Meeting Purpose:
 - Identify operational and safety factors relevant to **allowed circumstances**
 - Discuss types of training and competency that may be **recognized**.
 - Discuss boundaries of safe, lawful practice by unlicensed individuals
-

Housekeeping & Meeting Operations (10 min)

- **OVMEB Director designated as meeting facilitator and primary contact**
 - **RAC structure and expectations**
 - Advisory role; consensus-seeking; respectful participation
 - Members’ responsibilities for review and constructive input
 - **Meeting best-practice protocols**
 - Speak one at a time; avoid interruptions
 - Use facilitator’s queueing method (hand raise or chat signal)
 - Keep comments focused and solution-oriented
 - Assume good faith, remain collaborative, and support forward progress
 - **Meeting logistics**
 - Notes, action items, and drafts will be circulated after each meeting
 - Public comment and observation procedures will follow Oregon rulemaking standards
-

1. Boundaries of Board Authority (Clarification Section)

- OVMEB may **only** specify “circumstances” of practice
- OVMEB may **not**:
 - license
 - certify
 - issue permits
 - require exams

- enforce continuing education requirements
 - collect fees related to pregnancy-testing activity
 - RAC recommendations must stay fully within statutory limits
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2. Allowed Circumstances Discussion (30–45 min)

Goal: Identify circumstances under which unlicensed persons may perform pregnancy verification.

Key discussion areas:

- Scope of work:
 - Pregnancy Verification only: Palpation, Ultrasound, Blood Tests, Other
 - Limitations:
 - No diagnosis beyond pregnancy status
 - No treatment or procedures
 - Documentation or recordkeeping:
 - Individual documentation of training
-

3. Training Standards & Competency (30–45 min)

Discussion Points:

- Training Criteria:
 - Hours of training
 - Classroom (Formal palpation/ultrasound courses)
 - Practical
 - Online/Virtual

Additional training

- Work with experienced independent provider
- Veterinary Hands-on mentorship

Decisions Needed:

- Minimum number of supervised palpations (if any)
 - Training/Course Documentation (course completion, supervised internship, etc.)
-

4. Next Steps & Closing (5–10 min)

- Summary of key decisions and assignments
- Establish timeline for initial draft rule text

- Confirm date and focus of next meeting
 - Adjourn
-

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS:

- **New Mexico Rule Example**
- **Training Program Examples**
- **RAC Participants Feedback**

- SB-1539 Public Testimony Summary: Supporting and Opposing

New Mexico Rule Example

N.M. Admin. Code § 16.25.8.9 - INSTRUCTION, EXAMINATIONS, AND LICENSING

- . To obtain a bovine AI and bovine PD permit, an applicant must:
 - (1) Complete bovine AI and bovine PD instruction given by the bovine AI and PD examiner or through another institution approved by the board. To request board approval for a particular bovine AI and PD course of instruction, an applicant must provide to the **board a course outline or description, including number of instructional contact hours** and sponsoring group or organization. At its next meeting, the board will make its determination whether the instruction or course is adequate and if approval will be granted.
 - (2) Pass **bovine AI and PD written and proficiency examinations prepared and administered by the board or its appointed agent(s)**. The purpose of the examination(s) is to determine the knowledge and proficiency of each applicant.
 - (3) Be recommended by the board appointed examiner as qualified for the bovine AI and PD permit(s).
 - B. Upon the examiner's recommendation, the board may issue a bovine AI and bovine PD permit.
 - C. Each bovine AI and PD permit applicant **has one year** in which to apply to the board for a permit after passing the proficiency examination(s). If the applicant does not apply for a permit within one year, applicant must retake the appropriate examination(s).
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Training Program Examples:



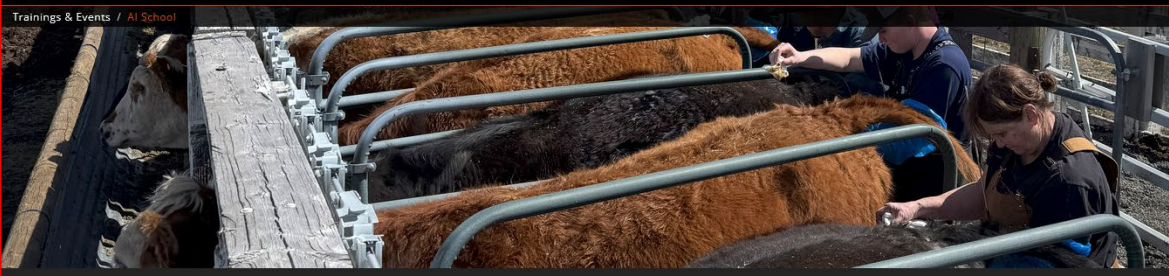
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This three-day cattle reproduction workshop combines classroom instruction with hands-on training. Participants learn bovine reproductive anatomy and physiology, artificial insemination, estrus synchronization, and gestational nutrition, and receive intensive lab practice in AI and semen handling. Upon completion, attendees earn AI certification through Select Sires Member Cooperative. Boots and coveralls are required for cow-handling activities.



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Palpation & Ultrasound

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Schleining Genetics is now offering courses to provide producers with the necessary tools to aid in better management of their herds through training in pregnancy detection. These skills are very important and necessary for individuals to make educated culling and financial decisions. This knowledge is a huge benefit for producers in many aspects of their operations including: culling non pregnant females, determining which heifer or cow is the mother when confusion occurs, determining when calving will occur, knowing which females are bred late, as well as many other factors.

We offer a comprehensive course beginning with lecture regarding palpation of the female reproductive tract and then progress into proper technique and staging of pregnancies. The course is approximately 80 percent hands-on practice, and the remaining 20 percent is corresponding lecture. We firmly believe that the key to developing proficiency in any new skill is lots of practice. Knowing that many producers can't justify the economics of owning an ultrasound machine, we are firm in making sure we teach palpation first. We do offer an optional portion at the end of the course for instruction in ultrasound with ample opportunity to practice with ultrasonography as well.




BOVINE REPRODUCTIVE ULTRASOUND TRAINING

Ultrasound technology for reproductive management in cattle continues to improve rapidly. This training, a partnership between The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture and E.J. Medical Imaging, will provide you with classroom instruction for using ultrasound to enhance the reproductive performance of your cow herd. This course is eligible for 10 hours of CE credits for veterinarians.

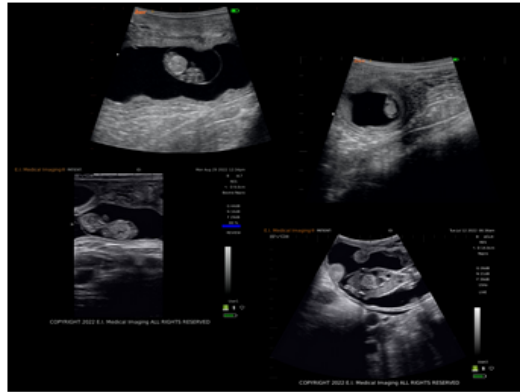
Registration Information

This training opportunity for July 29-30, 2026 is limited to 10 participants. Cost to enroll is \$1,000.00 per person.

REGISTRATION

For more information, or if registration is full and you would like to be on the wait-list, please contact please contact [Ashley Savage](#).

> Middle Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center at Spring Hill
1000 Main Entrance Drive
Spring Hill, TN 37174
P: 931-486-2129



Agenda

Tentative Schedule- Topics may change order to the discretion of the instructor

Wednesday, July 29, 2026 (Central Time Zone)

- 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM: Check in; description of the facilities; introductions; review agenda
- 8:30 AM – 9:15 AM: Principles of ultrasound and evaluation of the female reproductive tract
- 9:15 AM – 10:00 AM: Pregnancy diagnosis
- 10:00 AM – 10:45 AM: Fetal aging
- 10:45 AM – 11:30 AM: Fetal Sexing



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Cattle Pregnancy Determination Clinic



University of Idaho Nancy M. Cummings Research, Extension and Education Center

[Pregnancy Testing in Beef Cattle](#)

Other research and Training topics include:

- Gender selected semen in commercial herds
- Estrus synchronization programs
- Interaction of feed efficiency and productivity
- Impact of crossbred bulls on commercial herds
- Genomic analysis of heifers

Additional projects are being conducted in collaboration with [Rinker Rock Creek Ranch](#).

RAC Participants Feedback:

1. Dr. Rodney Ferry, DVM – Lakeview Animal Hospital

Key Themes:

- **Restrict lay pregnancy verification to non-invasive tests.** Dr. Ferry recommends that unlicensed individuals be allowed only to perform **PAG blood or milk tests**, which pose no physical risk to cattle.
 - **Certification program under veterinary oversight.** For palpation or ultrasound, individuals must be **licensed and supervised by a veterinarian**, similar to a CVT or equine dentistry certificate model.
 - **Competency requires extensive hands-on experience.** In Dr. Ferry's experience, proficiency develops only after **1,000–10,000 supervised palpations**, far exceeding what short (2–4 day) courses provide.
 - **Veterinary oversight protects VCPR, public health, and herd-level medicine.** Keeping veterinarians involved maintains access to medications, preserves food safety, and supports the rural veterinary workforce.
 - **Economic and operational benefits.** A certified lay workforce could increase access and lower costs, but only within firm veterinary-supervised boundaries.
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2. Dr. Gail Colbern, DVM, MS, DACT – OVMA President

Key Themes:

- **Public health risk is significant.** Many causes of infertility or abortion are **zoonotic**, and open cows are routinely sent to slaughter. Lay individuals should not diagnose reproductive disease.
 - **Veterinary diagnosis must precede slaughter decisions** to protect the food supply.
 - **Rectal palpation is invasive and can cause injury.** Without proper skill and supervision, palpation can create serious harm, including rectal tears.
 - **Training standards and veterinary backup are critical.** Any program allowing lay palpation or ultrasound must require:
 - Formal, vetted training
 - Defined safeguards
 - Quick access to veterinarians when complications arise
 - **Lay individuals must work under veterinary supervision.**
-

3. Dr. Earl Aalseth, PhD, DVM – Dairy Consultant; AABP Reproduction Committee Member

Key Themes:

- **Veterinary proficiency in pregnancy checking is declining.** Training new veterinarians with strong palpation skills is increasingly difficult.
 - **Alternatives are widespread and accurate.** Producers already have access to **blood & milk PAGs tests**, including **cow-side ELISA kits**, similar to COVID tests.
 - **Allowing lay palpation risks expansion into other veterinary-only acts.** Once lay persons perform invasive procedures, they may unintentionally drift into:
 - Diagnosis
 - Treatment decisions
 - Use of prescription drugs
 - **Veterinary oversight is essential** for biosecurity, zoonotic disease reporting, and treatment decision-making.
 - **Position of AABP:** Trans-rectal palpation and ultrasound constitute the practice of veterinary medicine and require veterinary involvement.
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SB 1539 – Public Testimony Summary: Supporting and Opposing

Pros (Supportive Testimony)

- **Improves access in rural Oregon.**

Many producers testified that large-animal veterinarians are scarce, especially in eastern and southern Oregon, making timely pregnancy checks difficult.

- **Supports herd management and operational decisions.**

Pregnancy checking is essential for calving management, feed planning, and early disease detection (e.g., trichomoniasis). Supporters stated SB 1539 fills urgent operational gaps for ranch families.

- **Allows limited trained workforce to supplement veterinarians.**

Supporters argued this bill could help relieve pressure on veterinarians by permitting certified individuals to handle routine, high-volume pregnancy verification tasks under a regulated framework.

- **Reflects existing informal practices.**

Some producers already rely on neighbors or experienced lay individuals for pregnancy testing without compensation; the bill brings structure and oversight to an existing need.

- **Aligns with economic needs.**

Supporters emphasized that rural areas face rising herd health demands, rising beef prices, shrinking cattle herds nationally, and long travel distances for veterinary service, making expanded access a “commonsense” fix.

Opposing Testimony Summary

- **Risk to animal welfare and injury.**

Opponents stressed that palpation and ultrasound are **invasive** procedures that can cause rectal tears, missed diagnoses, and other harm when performed by untrained individuals.

- **Public health and biosecurity threats.**

Pregnancy checks frequently uncover reproductive diseases (e.g., brucellosis, leptospirosis, BVD). Unlicensed persons may fail to identify and properly report these zoonotic threats to the public and food supply.

- **Diagnosis is inseparable from pregnancy verification.**

AABP and multiple veterinarians testified that palpation/ultrasound inherently involve diagnosis (staging, abnormalities, pathology), which legally constitutes the practice of veterinary medicine and must remain veterinarian-only.

- **Concerns about erosion of the veterinary workforce.**

Opponents warned that removing routine reproductive services from veterinarians could weaken rural veterinary practices, reduce revenue, and compromise emergency and herd-level services.

- **Existing non-invasive alternatives already available.**

Chemical PAG tests (blood/milk) are accurate and widely accessible and do not require lay palpation or ultrasound; opponents argued this eliminates the need for unlicensed invasive procedures.