

President's Message - Ken Linde

What can the WCABP do for you? In Calgary, the Board received valuable input from conference attendees on expanding the association's mandate while fulfilling continuing education interests. Participation like that will keep the WCABP in touch with bovine practitioner needs, and encourage increased membership. As a Board we often grapple with issues based on our own regional and personal perspectives, so it helps to have continual input from a wide array of members. Please continue the trend towards greater involvement.



Here are some issues we are currently dealing with that may interest you:

1. Increased correspondence with the CVMA (National Issues Committee), OABP and the Maritime and Quebec bovine practitioner groups. We are interested in developing a fluid, timely line of communication to allow for a more unified voice to represent bovine practitioners in Canada when issues arise. For example, reaffirming to federal and provincial governments the veterinarians' role in national biosecurity and trade issues, as well as the veterinarians' role in the exportation and importation of animals. (Thanks to members who critiqued the Biosecurity brochure the WCABP produced. Both positive and negative comments are welcomed as participation in the association.)

2. With respect to improving the future supply of food animal practitioners, Dr. Andy Acton is heading a committee that will develop a visual presentation on food animal practice for high school and university students. He's asking for photos and other contributions to the project.

3. Due to the low volume of sales, Trueman Manufacturing will soon cease production of the Coulter scrotal tape. Do we pursue an alternative manufacturer or do we need to focus on measurement technique more than on the tape?

4. Dr. Joyce Van Donkersgoed, continues to be a catalyst on the Board. She currently sits in on the Johne's Committee and Production Limiting Diseases Committee meetings. These committees are looking at the incidence and risk factors for Johne's, BVD, BVL and Neospora in various parts of Canada, and are involved in some economic modelling for these diseases.

5. Planning for the 2002 conference is proceeding smoothly under the direction of Dr. Bob Ruckman and Dr. Ray Butler. Conference planning is an extensive task, and Ray and Bob have done a great job of putting together a varied, interesting conference. As always, conference directors welcome your input, including practice tips and case reports.

6. The BSE forms were recently updated, as well as the BSE software program.

Thank you to the practices that were patient while the wrinkles were ironed out of the form changes. Please contact me if you want an upgrade to your BSE software.

Our office management team has changed as well. The staff remains the same, with our main liaison being Erika Rauser, however the company has split into Associations Plus Inc., which manages the office, and ConventionAll, which manages the conference and event planning component of the business. In essence there is no impact on the WCABP. Best wishes for the summer season! 🐮
Ken Linde DVM

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From the Secretary-Treasurer's Desk

As you are aware, Association Management Centre (AMC) was administering our office. Recently, this company changed hands from Marjorie Zingle to Pam Wilson, and the new company is called Associations Plus Inc. (A+). Our services from A+ continue to be the same as those from AMC, and Erika Rauser is still our contact at the office for WCABP. A+ provides administrative support, including our toll-free phone number, bookkeeping, membership database maintenance, newsletter printing, notekeeping services, and contact for bull forms and manuals. Our phone number and address remain the same.



This is a reminder that membership fees are due. Please remit payment to the WCABP office, so that we can continue to provide you with the services that you request.

Based on your response at the last convention, the Board has become involved in some political issues:

- We wrote a letter to the Quality Starts Here program, indicating practitioners' interest in being directly involved in the on-farm food safety program, including training and verification of farms.
- As well, we wrote a letter to the Bureau of Veterinary Drugs, requesting that they work towards equivalency in registration and label use of veterinary drugs in food animals on both sides of the border. We also suggested that they receive additional funding from the federal government to improve their efficiency in granting licenses for new products, for animal welfare and economic reasons.
- We responded to a request from CVMA as to their tentative guidelines for prudent use of antimicrobials.
- We worked with ACFA, AMP, AP, AAFRD and AVMA to develop a foot and mouth disease (FMD) brochure and biosecurity measure guidelines for FMD, as an educational tool for producers.

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Canadian Food Inspection Agency - Animal Health and Production

Role of the Private Veterinarian in the Diagnosis of Foreign Animal Diseases

Foreign Animal Disease Relevance

- Canada is one of the few countries which remains free from a number of serious epizootic diseases of animals. It is a high priority of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency that Foreign Animal Diseases, especially a rapidly spreading disease such as Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), be recognized and then eradicated as soon as possible. The consequences will depend on the size and nature of the outbreak, and can be greatly minimized by early identification, containment and elimination.
- A 1998 study estimated that an outbreak of FMD would result in an embargo of Canadian red meat and animal product exports, and reduce the value of Canadian livestock between 950 million and 1.9 billion dollars. Costs of an unmitigated outbreak are estimated by the cattle industry to be \$34 million per day.
- Veterinary practitioners are most likely to be the first to encounter and recognize a Foreign Animal Disease once it has gained entry into Canada. Early recognition by veterinarians may prevent widespread transmission and great expense to the Canadian public.

When should you suspect a Foreign Animal Disease?

Foreign Animal Diseases of concern to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency are those which would have severe economic consequences in Canada, primarily associated with the loss of our export markets. It is essential to be aware of the possibility of Foreign Animal Diseases. The spectrum of pathogenicity of Foreign Animal Diseases has changed significantly. Traditional expectations of dramatic clinical manifestations of foreign animal diseases in our highly susceptible livestock must be discarded. Changes in pathogenicity induced by accidental release of modified strains, or alterations included by passage through partially immune hosts, has resulted in a generation of agents whose clinical signs closely mimic common diseases of Canadian livestock.

The challenge for the clinician then becomes - when do I refer a case to the District Veterinarian? This must remain the judgement of the attending clinician. However, there are a couple of guidelines which may be useful. First, a history of a possible recent contact, such as visitors or people or livestock returning from abroad should raise suspicions. This should be a key factor in the decision to refer. Secondly, a syndrome which does not follow expected clinical treatment and response patterns should also be questioned. During the last thirty years, outbreaks of Hog Cholera, Anaplasmosis, Avian Pneumoencephalitis (Newcastle Disease), and Bluetongue have all occurred in Canada. Although clinicians are unlikely to encounter such diseases you should be aware that they exist.

The following examples may be a useful reminder of some of these:

- Hemolytic anemia with no hemoglobinuria, affecting adult cattle - consider Anaplasmosis
- Mature cattle affected with oral lesions and diarrhea; morbidity and mortality high or low - consider Rinderpest
- Pigs with severe systemic illness; morbidity high, or low and increasing (insidious) - have the possibility of African Swine Fever and Hog Cholera in mind. History and gross necropsy may be most useful
- Reproductive problems in sows - always include Pseudorabies, Hog Cholera and African Swine Fever, at least in initial list of rule-outs
- Horse with vesicles or papules on tongue - definitely call the Canadian Food Inspection Agency on suspicion of Vesicular Stomatitis
- Several bred mares return to heat with mucopurulent vaginal discharge; cultures are negative - search in breeding/travel history for possibility of Contagious Equine Metritis
- Sheep with stomatitis, lameness - suspect Bluetongue, Vesicular Diseases
- Poultry - depression, neurological signs, head edema, diarrhea, variable morbidity and mortality, hemorrhagic enteritis - consider Newcastle Disease, Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, possibly Fowl Typhoid.
- If restricted to chicks and poults - consider Pullorum Disease
- Cattle over three years of age exhibiting a progressive neurological disease of two to three months duration, consider Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE).

You are encouraged to request printed material from your District Office, to keep updated on clinical signs and postmortem findings of serious Foreign Animal Diseases.

The Practitioner's Role

Veterinarians are required by law (see *Health of Animals Act* Sec.5(1)(2)) to immediately notify the District Veterinarian of reasonable suspicion of any serious Foreign Animal Disease, regardless of whether it is reportable. African Horse Sickness, Rift Valley Fever, Sheep Pox, and Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia are examples of serious Foreign Animal Diseases that are not reportable.

Once a firm suspicion is established, it is important that the practitioner remain on the suspect's premises until relieved by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency Veterinarian.

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If the District Veterinarian is of the opinion that a Foreign Animal Disease is a serious possibility, the clinician must consider very carefully the risks associated with continued contact with livestock on other premises without extensive personal and equipment disinfection. Many Foreign Animal Disease agents are resistant and spread readily by fomites. The danger of transmission by veterinarians from premises to premises is real and must be recognized along with the potentially tragic consequences and possible liability to the veterinarian should such an incident occur.

Individuals should maintain a list of alternative contacts, in case you are unable to reach local District Veterinarians (e.g. neighbouring District Veterinarian, Area Office Personnel). Be discrete when discussing a tentative diagnosis with clients especially on party telephone lines. For example, use the term "Possible Exotic Disease" rather than "Foot and Mouth Disease". If confirmed, eradication measures would involve at least quarantine of the premises, and an epidemiologic investigation (e.g. Vesicular Stomatitis confined to horses at one stable). Further action would depend on other factors such as extent of spread (e.g. involvement of wildlife), legal mandate and industry support and could extend to a quarantine of an entire area and involve depopulation of affected premises.

In the case of an outbreak of a Foreign Animal Disease, a predetermined Emergency Response Team would be mobilized to a Field Operations Centre (FOC) to control the spread and eradicate the disease. Operationally, this team is made of units having very specific tasks to do: Diagnostic, Trace-out, Movement Control, Evaluation, Slaughter and Disposal, and Cleaning and Disinfection. Veterinary practitioners could be requested to give assistance in one of these areas.

The control and eradication activities would begin by controlling movements of animals and people in zones where the disease has been diagnosed. There would be one infected zone (or more) containing the infected premises. Depending upon the disease, the perimeter of the infected zone(s) would extend a finite distance beyond all known infected premises and would follow, when possible, natural barriers and roadways to facilitate implementation of disease control procedures. Surrounding this (these) infected zone(s), would be a security zone

extending from the perimeter of the infected zone(s) to a certain distance, which could vary according to the disease. A buffer zone would extend from the outer limit of the security zone to the limit of the control area. The three zones would constitute a control area where certain measures would be applied according to a pre-approved disease control/eradication strategy. During an outbreak, practitioners receiving information suggestive of the Foreign Animal Disease in question would notify the FOC

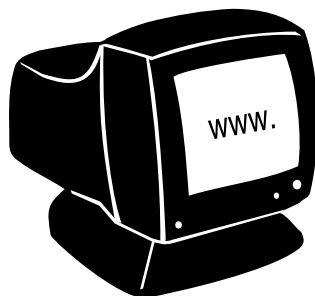
in the outbreak area. In the case of a Foreign Animal Disease emergency, appropriate information concerning the location and the telephone number(s) of the FOC, the limits of the control area, the movement restrictions, disinfection procedures, etc., would be made available, at that time, to all practitioners through the appropriate channels.

Disinfectants routinely used by a practitioner may not be effective against the agent of a suspected disease. The veterinary practitioner should consult with a District Veterinarian to determine what products are acceptable in the disinfection of himself, his equipment and vehicle.

Client education is an integral part of the practising veterinarian's role in Foreign Animal Disease prevention and control. Owners will turn to their veterinarian as a primary source of information in the event of an outbreak. Control procedures such as disease reporting, quarantine and disinfection will be effective only with the element of owner co-operation and participation. This results from an understanding of the procedures and their rationale.

The involvement of practising veterinarians with respect to Foreign Animal Disease may be summarized as follows:

- a. Prevention:
 - i. Maintain current knowledge of the Foreign Animal Diseases most likely to enter Canada. These include: Anaplasmosis, Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, Bluetongue, Velogenic Newcastle Disease, Pseudorabies, Vesicular Stomatitis, Foot and Mouth Disease, Hog Cholera, African Swine Fever and Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy. The District Veterinarian has information on such diseases.



For current information on
Foot and Mouth Disease,
and Food and Agriculture Emergency
Response System (FAERS),
please visit

www.cfia-acia.agr.ca/english/corpaffr/newcome/fmde.shtml

Seroprevalence of Neospora Caninum Infection in Twenty-Five Ontario Dairy Herds and its Association with Periparturient Health and Production

TF Duffield, BJ McEwen, SK Hietala, R Bagg, P Dick

Serum samples were collected in 1995/1996 from 758 animals on twenty-five Ontario Holstein dairy farms three weeks prior to expected calving. The frozen sera were subsequently analyzed for anti-Neospora caninum antibodies. Herd seroprevalence was 60% and 73% using two different cut-off values for defining infection. Using the lower cut-off, within-herd seroprevalence ranged from 0 to 38% with a mean of 9.0% in seropositive herds.

Seropositivity was associated with a 3.8-fold increased risk of retained placenta. No significant impact of infection on milk production was detected for the first three Dairy Herd Improvement test-day evaluations of each cow's lactation.

Passively Transferred Immunity in Newborn Calves, Rate of Antibody Decay, and Effect on Subsequent Vaccination with Modified Live Virus Vaccine

J Kirkpatrick, RW Fulton, LJ Burge, WR Dubois, M Payton

The passive immunity transferred to calves via colostrum containing antibodies to IBRV, BVDV-1, BVDV-2, PI3V, and BRSV was investigated to determine half-life of antibody, time to seronegative, and effect on immunization. Thirty dairy calves were fed colostrum from non-pooled sources. Antibody titers were determined using VN tests. The mean half life of antibodies to IBRV was 12.7 days, BVDV-1 20.5 days, BVDV-2 20.5 days, PI3V 21.7 days, and BRSV 28.1 days. The calculated time to seronegative status was IBRV 65.1 days, BVDV-1 117.7 days, BVDV-2 94.0 days, PI3V 183.8 days, and BRSV 200.2 days. Calves were vaccinated with a MLV vaccine containing IBRV, BVDV-1, BVDV-2, PI3V and BRSV when antibody titers reached 0 or in the presence of waning antibodies. The active immune response (seroconversion) was dependent on the virus and amount of passive antibodies present at vaccination.

Critical Control Points in Beef Heifer Development

FD Lehman

Critical control points (CCPs) are the important thresholds that provide opportunities to measure success of a process. The appropriate application of CCP in a heifer development program will provide insight as to the success or failure of management's efforts to introduce productive females into the herd. The first CCP occurs at breeding and reflects how appropriately the heifer's growth and phenotype have satisfied the physiologic demands of reproduction. Breeding management and breeding

efficiency rates are examined at the second CCP, which is measured at the first pregnancy examination. The third CCP, measured at calving, gives an indication of the success of the nutritional plan and losses associated with pregnancy and the perinatal period. The fourth CCP, measured at the second seasons pregnancy exam, is a critical evaluation of how the heifer has fared with the cumulative stress of reproduction and lactation.

Effects of Conformation and Management System on Hoof and Leg Diseases and Lameness in Dairy Cows

C. Bergsten, Veterinary Clinics March 2001

Healthy hooves and legs in cows are of utmost importance for dairy performance, longevity and economical production. Because hoof health so strongly influences the animals' overall well-being, it is of concern for producers; ethical aspects regarding the treatment of animals also make it a concern for society, as consumers. Today's confined dairy system can hardly compare with the cows' natural grazing environment, which is much more conducive to comfortable lying, standing, and walking. Feet and leg disorders resulting in lameness tend to increase along with increased production and more confined management systems. Many factors affect hoof health (i.e. genetics, conformation, diet, contagious agents, hygiene, housing system, animal behaviour, and management).

- Consequences of lameness: reduced fertility, reduced production, increased leg injuries, teat trauma and mastitis, resulting in premature culling.
- Most common diseases: sole ulcer, white-line abscess, digital dermatitis (heel warts), and interdigital phlegmon (footrot).
- Sole ulcer and white-line abscess often seen in cows with chronic laminitis, in which poor nutrition is the most significant etiologic factor. Excessive wear from abrasive floors, or incorrect hoof trimming can result in thin soles causing traumatic laminitis. Interdigital dermatitis and heel horn erosion are related to inferior hygiene and the presence of contagious agents.

Hoof shape and posture adapt to physiologic and environmental changes. Harsh surfaces disturb the balance between outer and inner digits of the rear feet, resulting in an asymmetry between them and disposition for hoof injuries and lameness. Some lost sole concavity can be regained during the dry period, if cows are kept on pasture. Correct foot trimming and soft foundation can equalize the weight distribution between the claws and restore sole concavity by putting more weight on the hoof wall. Genetics have an influence on conformation and lameness. Breeding programs for healthy feet should be encouraged.

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- ii. Be aware of clinical/necropsy findings which should alert suspicion. Routinely include Foreign Animal Diseases in differential diagnoses.
- b. Reporting:
 - i. Immediately report any suspicion of the existence of a Foreign Animal Disease to the nearest District Veterinarian.
- c. Control:
 - i. If you have been physically present on the farm, stay on site until the District Veterinarian arrives and encourage others not to leave the premises.
 - ii. During an outbreak, continue to refer suspicious calls.
 - iii. Inform the owner of your suspicions of an exotic animal disease without specifying the disease.
 - iv. Owners will be more willing to comply with regulatory requirements when they are kept informed. 🐮

Good foot health is highly dependent on a sound environment. Any compromise with the animals' natural requirements increases the risk of foot and leg disorders and lameness. A comfortable lying place and proper floor hygiene are crucial components to good housing systems for dairy cows. On the other hand, unhygienic, hard, uncomfortable floors, uncomfortable lying areas, and improper management that cause excessive standing and walking increase the risk of foot and leg disorders. Well-designed housing systems, relief areas for the feet, and good management with long adaptation before calving can reduce the negative influence of confined dairy systems. 🐮

**CONFERENCE
2002**

ROOMS

Rooms for the Saskatoon Inn can be booked by calling 1-800-667-8789. Mention that you are with WCABP to qualify for the conference room rate. Room reservations can also be made online at www.saskatooninn.com

Large Animal Veterinary Rounds - WCVM A New Educational Resource for Veterinarians

The Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM) is pleased to announce the launch of a unique, educational publication *Large Animal Veterinary Rounds*, a published version of the most topical and relevant teaching rounds recently presented at the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences.

Large Animal Veterinary Rounds is designed to offer practicing veterinarians a unique window to the most current discussion on scientific and clinical developments in food animal and equine veterinary medicine. Published ten times a year, in both English and French, *Large Animal Veterinary Rounds* is written and edited by Department

veterinarians, fully referenced and includes abstracts pertinent to the featured topic as well as a schedule of upcoming scientific meetings.

"*Large Animal Veterinary Rounds* is an important initiative for the College," said Dr. Alex Livingston, Dean of the WCVM. "The publication gives us the opportunity to share current scientific information and opinion with our colleagues across the country."

Large Animal Veterinary Rounds will also be available at the soon-to-be-launched www.canadianveterinarians.net – the official website of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association. 🐮

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Canadian Food Inspection Agency - Animal Health and Production

Farm Biosecurity ...A Common Sense Guide

What is farm biosecurity?

Biosecurity refers to protecting the health of livestock by preventing the transmission of disease. Any disease that could jeopardize the health of these animals represents a threat to the economic viability of the farm and the welfare of the herd. Taking common sense precautions to prevent disease from coming on to your farm is the best investment you can make.

Infectious diseases are caused by a large number of agents. These range in size from things that we can see, like bot eggs on the legs of a horse, to submicroscopic particles, like viruses. We cannot see most infectious agents, so we cannot tell if an article is contaminated by looking at it. However, we must assume that any article that is dirty is contaminated.

Infectious diseases can be spread a number of ways. Some are spread by direct contact between animals, others can be spread by indirect contact, such as by a contaminated water bowl. Still others are spread by the wind, through insect bites, on contaminated clothing, in feed or water, or through contact with wildlife, including vermin. Just as there are many types of infectious agents, some are easier to destroy than others. Many will survive well in dirty, damp, dark, and cool conditions. Most are eliminated in clean, dry, warm environments.

There are a number of methods for destroying disease-causing agents. These include steam cleaning, fumigation, and chemical disinfectants. Many disinfectants are in common use, each having been formulated for a specific purpose. Some products will kill bacteria, but not viruses, and most will not kill spores. Soil and organic matter rapidly inactivate most disinfectants, so it is important to first thoroughly clean the objects with warm water and detergent. Then apply the appropriate disinfectant. Footbaths are important, but only work properly if boots are washed before using the footbath, and by keeping the disinfectant properly replenished. Your veterinarian or provincial extension agent can advise you as to which disinfectant is most suitable for your application.

What can be done to minimize the risk of introducing disease?

Bringing new animals onto the farm poses the risk of spreading disease between the introduced and the resident farm animals. Buying a new bull, ram or boar are common practices that can potentially compromise the biosecurity of any farm.

Consider vaccinating herds against the common diseases in your area. Arrange to have new animals properly vaccinated to match your herd program.

Quarantine new arrivals for at least two weeks. This can be done by confining the animal to a separate pen that does

not allow nose to nose contact with other animals, and does not share feed and water supplies.

Buyer beware! Purchase from herds with a known clean health status.

Livestock feed obtained off-farm should be from known, reputable sources.

Farm Visitors

Some operations, such as integrated poultry and swine barns, have a well-developed biosecurity plan designed to protect the high health status of the herd or flock. The following recommendations are directed toward smaller operations and offer practical steps for protecting the health of the herd.

Accepting visitors from countries with serious animal diseases requires special precautions. They must not be allowed contact with susceptible species on your farm for at least fourteen days after arrival in Canada.

Low risk visitors

Visitors coming from urban areas, that have no other contact with livestock, pose very little risk of spreading disease to your livestock.

Recommended Precautions:

Ask visitors to arrive on the farm with clean clothing and footwear. If anyone arrives with dirty boots, they must be cleaned and disinfected before proceeding. Or, you may provide your own clean boots or disposable footwear.

Accompany visitors and ask them not to enter pens, or contact the animals. As the degree of contact with livestock increases, so does the risk both to the animals, and to the visitors.

When visitors leave, ask them to wash soiled boots and hands with water and detergent.

Moderate risk visitors

People that travel from farm to farm, but have no direct contact with livestock pose a moderate risk for disease transmission. These would include salesmen, feed distributors, farm equipment mechanics, and various types of inspectors.

Recommended Precautions:

Same precautions as above with additional requirements.

Clean coveralls should be worn if there is any contact with feed, water, soil samples, manure, or farm equipment.

Sampling equipment should be cleaned after each use.

When leaving the farm, dirty boots must be cleaned and disinfected, and soiled coveralls should be removed before entering any vehicles.

High risk visitors

These are visitors that travel from farm to farm and have direct, often intimate contact with livestock. These would include veterinarians, inseminators, processing crews, livestock haulers and neighbours.

Recommended Precautions:

Same precautions as above with additional recommendations.

Visitors should arrive with clean outerwear, boots, and equipment. Vehicle interiors should be clean and equipped with easily removable rubber floor mats. Livestock trailers should be clean prior to arrival on the farm.

Livestock instruments and equipment such as dehorners, castrators, and syringes should be clean and sterile before use. (BUT, Do not use chemical disinfectants on syringes or needles used to deliver live vaccines!) Use disposable needles and syringes wherever possible.

Wear disposable plastic sleeves and gloves whenever there is direct contact with body fluids, tissues, or excrement. These situations would include assisted births, inseminations, post-mortems, or butchering.

Before leaving the farm, soiled equipment and footwear must be cleaned and disinfected. Wash hands with detergent. Remove dirty coveralls before entering the vehicle.

* A Note on Neighbours:

When neighbours arrive on your farm to help, it is sometimes a delicate matter to bring up concerns about biosecurity. Ensuring that you have a few extra pairs of clean coveralls on hand, and providing convenient access to a boot washing tub will encourage your neighbour to respect your protocol. Offense can usually be avoided if you explain that you want to protect the health of your neighbour's herd as well.

*A Note on the Practical Choice of Outerwear.

Coveralls: consider purchasing nylon coveralls for use in wet, dirty conditions. Although not completely waterproof, they are less permeable than cotton and are less apt to soak through. They are also windproof, and light, and stand up well in the washing machine. They can be damaged in the dryer but they do air dry quickly.

Coats and Jackets: it is very difficult to frequently wash parkas and insulated jackets. A good choice for outerwear is the so-called three-in-one jacket. These consist of an outer detachable shell made of nylon, and an inner liner of nylon and polypropylene. These stand up well to frequent washing.

Wildlife and Vermin

Wildlife and vermin are often very mobile and present an opportunity to spread diseases such as rabies and leptospirosis to farm animals. It is wise to take precautions to eliminate contact with these animals. Make the

farmyard environment unattractive to skunks and other vermin by cleaning up old buildings, debris, and spilled grain. The mere presence of a cat or a dog will act as a deterrent to many vermin.

To summarize, you are in the best position to safeguard your herd and your pocketbook from these and other infections by following basic principles of disease control and prevention:

- maintain a closed herd/flock purchase from known healthy sources
- isolate purchases restrict visitors
- practice good biosecurity
- Insist on clean footwear, clothing, and equipment identify all animals keep accurate records.

Together we can work to safeguard the health of Canada's livestock and poultry sectors. 🐄

From the Secretary-Treasurer's Desk
continued from page 2

- We have sent a request to the Quebec Bovine Practitioners to see if we can begin communication with their association
- Dr. Ken Linde is contacting CVMA to discuss ways we can strengthen communication with them on issues of importance to bovine practitioners.
- We have attended the National Production Limiting Diseases Committee teleconference to keep informed, and attended a meeting of the John's Working Group in Alberta (check our website for details on the John's program in Alberta).

In regard to student activities, Dr. Andy Acton is working on developing powerpoint presentations that can be used when giving presentations to 4H clubs, junior and senior high schools, to encourage students into food animal practice. If any of you have good photos of large animal practice that you would be able to send to Dr. Acton, we would really appreciate it.

The Vet Advice column in the Canadian Cattleman's magazine is still supported by WCABP. If any of you are interested in writing an article, please contact Dr. Acton. 🐄

Joyce Van Donkersgoed
DVM, MVS

Have you checked out the WCABP website lately???

Keep in touch with your association by visiting the site regularly, at

www.cattle.ca
/wcabp

**To access PDF
newsletter files
and conference
proceedings:**

User Name: **animal**

Password: **bovinevet**

Beef Production Medicine 2000 - The Buller Problem

Palo Duro Consultation Research and Feedlot Global Animal Products, Inc.

Often we see increased buller pulls during the prolonged hot days of summer. These pulls result in increased labour and economic losses due to lost performance and medical costs. Each feedyard is unique in its "buller potential" and causative factors vary. Thus, it's important to evaluate your own situation and design a customized management plan. Causes of the buller syndrome have not been truly defined. Little scientific research has been done, as it is not predictable in occurrence. (In fact, bullers are not found in small groups of ten to fifteen head or less). But here are some contributing factors based on observation:

Cattle breed or type may impact buller incidence. Holsteins, for example, show a greater tendency toward bullers than other breeds. This may reflect a true genetic predisposition or simply past husbandry and management practices.

Bunk management can play a role in buller incidence. If hungry cattle are without feed for an extended period, we see buller activity arise. They are discontent, will gather behind the feed bunk, and mill about - all of which predispose to riding.

Implants have been implicated in the past. Technique of implanting is the most critical consideration here and buller pulls should be checked as to technique quality. Implants that are crushed, bunched, or abscessed may contribute and also alert you to performance losses unrelated to bullers.

Brand of implant has also been suggested as a potential cause. The suspicions are equally divided among all the available products and more likely reflect unique management practices.

An intact bull in a pen of incoming steers can serve as an inciting factor. Additionally, "stags" may play a similar role. A stag maintains the physical appearance and behavioural patterns of an intact male, even though external examination reveals no evidence of testicular tissue.

"**Cutter bulls**" can present a challenge to buller management programs. If returned too soon after surgery, recently castrated bulls may be ridden to the point of injury by their penmates. Also, in feedyards with intense buller activity, cattle pulled for other reasons become targets for riding when placed back in the pen.

Pen population certainly plays a role and should be monitored. Inadequate pen or bunk space can intensify activity. This includes receiving pens, since only a few hours in tight conditions can be an instigating factor. Conversely, we have occasionally observed a halt in activity in a particularly troublesome group of cattle when moved to a larger pen. Some feedyards with high buller rates have constructed buller guards, under which animals being ridden may find some protection. Though not directly influencing buller rate, these guards may prevent exhaustion or injury. Some feedyards attempt to return bullers to the home pen after a period of time. If this is done, here are a couple of points that may increase the success rate:

- First, pen riders should differentiate between a true buller and a social buller. A true buller will behave like a heifer in estrus and actually stand to be ridden. A social buller attempts to depart from the active group and is most likely a submissive member on the pen's social "pecking order." Do not return true bullers, as they may reinstate group riding activity.
- Secondly, use good cow sense when returning bullers. If activity is observed to be on the rise during any one day or time period, do not take bullers home during this time. Any distractions that direct attention away from returned individuals can be helpful. For example, some operations put bullers back in the home pen at reimplant time. Also, inclement weather may be an opportune time to return bullers.

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Restricted Feeder Cattle Imports 2000-2001										
Final totals from information received for season October 1,2000 to March 31,2001										
	premises approved	permits issued	from AK	from HI	from ID	from MT	from ND	from NY	from WA	Total
BC	10	12		4529		79			9142	13750
AB	147	245		1278	25626	127608	7926		8642	171080
SK	35	43				20253	969			21222
MB	6	8				88	2733			2821
ON	3	3						607		607
QU	0	0								0
TOTAL	201	311	0	5807	25626	148028	11628	607	17784	209480

Implementation of an Integrated Johne's Disease Control Program for Cattle in Alberta



H. Morgan Scott, Food Safety Division, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, 6909 - 116 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6H 4P2, Telephone: (780) 422-0275, Fax: (780) 422-3438, Email: morgan.scott@gov.ab.ca.

Over the past five years, the Alberta Johne's Working Group (AJWG), a committee comprising government,

ruminant livestock industries, and veterinary representatives, has been working to develop and advocate for better Johne's disease research and control programs in Alberta. A recent Alberta study by Sorensen et al. (2000) suggesting that the individual and herd prevalence of Johne's disease in Alberta dairy herds is substantially higher than in other jurisdictions (NAHMS, 1997), has driven cattle industry demands for the immediate implementation of an integrated and comprehensive Johne's disease control program in Alberta. Recent Johne's-related punitive action taken by a trading partner (Japan) against Canadian live cattle exports, coupled with fear of adverse public perception pertaining to the continued debate over the role of the causative agent for Johne's disease in human Crohn's disease, has

hastened the development of this program. Ideally, a national Johne's control program will be developed and implemented soon. However, recent changes to trade regulations, as per World Trade Organization (WTO) guidelines, suggest that regionalization may also be used in establishing trade criteria for issues pertaining to Office International des Epizooties (OIE) listed animal diseases such as Johne's.

Over the past three years, in consultation with industry, veterinary representatives, scientists, and laboratory managers, we have developed a proposed Integrated Alberta Johne's Disease Control program for multiple ruminant species. The program will consist of varying levels of basic prevalence and applied risk factor research for a range of domestic and captive game species. In addition, the program will focus on the development of awareness and educational materials for beef and dairy cattle producers and their herd veterinarians. Finally, we expect to implement a voluntary cattle herd status program by the summer of 2001. The remainder of this article will describe the herd status program and discuss the rationale behind our approach.

Cattle Herd Status Program

The proposed herd status program is voluntary in nature. The program will be overseen and managed by AJWG with the provincial government providing auditing and certification services. The herd veterinarians (accredited by AJWG) will work with producers to make decisions relating to sampling, creating the paper trail, interpreting results from the lab, and then petitioning AJWG for certification of herd status (see Figure 1). The herd veterinarian will maintain the confidentiality of the producer using a coding system. Only when the producer elects to petition, with the necessary documentation, for herd status, will the producer's identity and herd status enter the public domain.

The program follows the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) protocol (3) as far as the preliminary stage. This allows all producers, regardless of size of their herd, to assess their status initially with a minimal

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Have You Paid Your DUES?

Deadline for membership renewals is fast approaching, so if you have not yet renewed your membership for 2001, please remit payment immediately to:

WCABP Office
PO Box 6173, Station D
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2C8



Beef Production Medicine 2000 - The Buller Problem
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Buller management should also focus on conditions in the buller pen as well. The good news is that when handled properly, bullers usually will perform as well as home penmates. Again, focus on pen and bunk space. Avoid ration changes that are too abrupt, but also get these cattle on to full feed just like their home pen. 🐄

investment. Subsequent levels of the Alberta program rely on either:

- a) a complete herd sample, utilizing strategically-pooled fecal cultures (grouped and ranked by age of animal),

subset (essentially all 2nd and greater lactation animals if herd size < 350) is tested using the ELISA. An unacceptably high number of false positive results may be expected. This, coupled with the long delay in completing

confirmatory fecal cultures, led us to seek alternatives. New evidence from the Netherlands and Australia suggests that strategically pooled fecal samples provide at least as good a level of herd sensitivity as do individual-level cultures, providing us with a cost-effective and highly specific alternative. The decision to predicate the subsequent levels (II-IV) of the Alberta program on the length of time and number of times the producer has subjected the herd to testing is based on known and postulated aspects of Johne's disease and shedding patterns in herds. That is, as animals age in the herd, the more likely they are to shed the bacterium in their feces.

We have recently been allocated a substantial budget to continue our research efforts, provide seed funding to get the Herd Status program off the ground and running, operate the Johne's Working Group, and develop producer and veterinarian information packages.

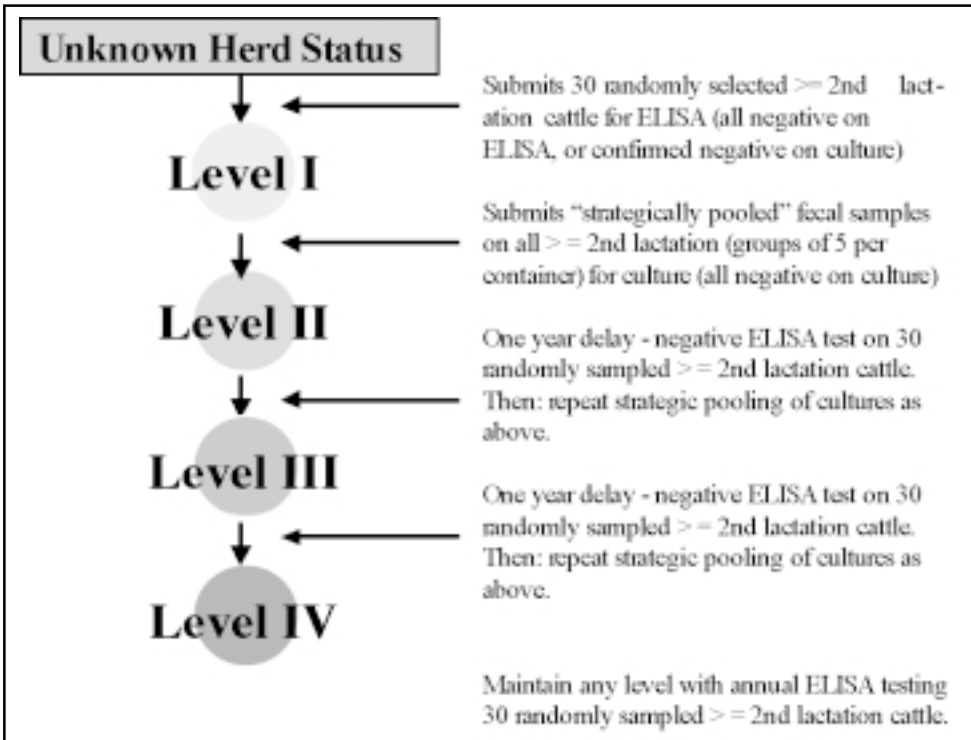


Figure 1: Schematic diagram of the Alberta Voluntary Johne's Disease Cattle Herd Status Program

or in alternate years

- b) a repeat of the first level sampling protocol.

Movement of animals into the herds will be governed by either:

- a) herd status of purchased animal, or
- b) testing and isolation of purchased stock from the rest of the herd.

Laboratories utilized for the herd status testing will be certified by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for Johne's testing (either or both of ELISA or fecal culture). In the immediate future, fecal culture will likely continue to be provided through provincial government laboratories for:

- a) confirmation of ELISA test-positive animals, and
- b) strategically-pooled fecal cultures for herd status testing.

The decision to move away from the USAHA program is based on our concerns that the reported test specificity of the available IDEXX ELISA test for Johne's may be overly optimistic. At level II of the USAHA program, a statistical

We are developing a website and communications materials to promote the program, provide information to interested parties, and to advertise the herd status accomplishments of participants. We expect to begin a mail-out to Alberta veterinarians by early summer, detailing the herd status program, the accreditation process for testing, and other aspects of the program. A series of meetings (comprising Johne's disease continuing education and a herd veterinarian Johne's testing accreditation program), will be held in various regions of the province this summer. Watch for details in the mail.

Our objective has been to develop a program that is valid, does not subject producers to unnecessary worries over false positives, and is economical enough that it could thrive as a user-pay system if necessary. The cattle industry in Alberta, along with the provincial government, have committed adequate funds to oversee the operations of AJWG for the next several years. The success of the program will determine its sustainability. Ideally, a national program will develop in the near future. 🐄

Note: An earlier version of this document, appeared in the Proceedings of the Canadian Association of Veterinary Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, Charlottetown, PEI, May 13, 2001.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE 2002 CONFERENCE



DATE:

Thursday,
January 17, 2002 -

Saturday,
January 19, 2002

PLACE:

Saskatoon Inn,
2002 Airport Drive,
Saskatoon,
Saskatchewan

REASONS TO ATTEND

- Full day workshop on the Thursday, with similar program for beef practitioners.

- First-rate speakers: The pre-conference dairy workshop will be conducted by Oded Nir, Director of Veterinary Services and Animal Health for the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

OABP News

Now that the phones have finally stopped ringing with people asking all kinds of questions about foot and mouth disease, I can carry on doing the every day things that happen during calving season. I'm not sure if it was the cooler winter, the incredible amount of snow that we got here or the "alignment of the stars", but this year has been a particularly busy one. I am hopeful, however, that we can see the light at the end of the tunnel any time soon.

We have just finished our very successful spring meeting this past April 19th. Our one-day spring meetings are held in conjunction with the Ontario Agri-Business Association and they have been a great opportunity for interaction between practitioners and feed sales representatives. This year was no different and with a new format with case presentations, and the meeting was very well received by all. Now please mark your calendars for October 25th, when the fall conference and annual general meeting will take place.

Many issues have surfaced in the last little while at OABP. We have been in conversation with Dairy Farmers of Ontario since last fall, to try and work together when veterinary presence on a farm is mandated by the DFO (shut offs because of SCC penalties). A lot of veterinarians feel frustrated in these situations because of both lack of information and possibility of lack of payment. The Dairy Farmers of Ontario and OABP are working together to create some guidelines for proper action in these situations.

The OABP and the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association have formed a task force to look into the future of bovine practice in Ontario. At the moment information is being gathered about demographics of large animal practice itself – average age of practitioners, etc. The object of obtaining this kind of data is to predict a possible shortage of rural veterinarians and perhaps with a little forward thinking come up with ideas on how to attract qualified food animal practitioners into rural areas.

The reason for a closer relationship between our Associations was to increase the awareness of national issues that affect bovine practitioners across the country. This is at work now. Recently it was brought to our attention that the on farm validations of the Quality Starts Here program could be delegated to provincial beef specialists as opposed to veterinarians. We at OABP feel strongly that only veterinarians can perform on-farm validations because of our understanding of proper drug dosages and uses. We are addressing the issue as well as WCABP.

To conclude I have to say that "behind every cloud there is a silver lining" has never been more true than in the case of the foot and mouth disease epidemic in the United Kingdom. I can only imagine what the British farmers and veterinarians have gone through in the last little while. But in a strange way, my own clients have become considerably more aware of biosecurity issues on the farm, and better practices to contain spread of disease have been adopted in many farms. One can only hope that the lessons we have learned now stay fresh in their minds for a long time. 🐾

Clarice Lulai, DVM, MS