

Bovine Trichomoniasis Reported In Arkansas

About 20 Cases Of Trichomoniasis Reported In Arkansas In Last Six Months

LITTLE ROCK, ARK.

An emergency regulation aimed at stifling the spread of Trichomoniasis, a protozoal disease that can cause abortion and infertility in cattle, goes into effect June 15, said Tom Troxel, associate head-animal science, for the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture.

“State Veterinarian Pat Bradley said infections have been reported in about 20 herds in Arkansas in the last six months,” Troxel said.

Trichomoniasis is caused by *Tritrichomonas foetus*, a small motile protozoan found only in the reproductive tract of the bull and cow. The organisms are transferred to the cow from the bull during breeding and infect the uterus, producing a sticky discharge and causing loss of pregnancy. Producers should test bulls and vaccinate cows against Trichomoniasis.

“Once infected, bulls carry the organism for life,” Troxel said. “Once a cow gets Trichomoniasis, they can shed the disease over a four- to six-month period.”

State law requires all bulls brought in to Arkansas to be tested, with the exception of bulls that are 24 months of age or younger and have never used for breeding, bulls used for rodeo or designated for slaughter.

The emergency regulation will now also re-

quire a negative test for bulls moving within the state’s boundaries. All bulls testing positive for the disease must go to slaughter within two weeks of the positive test.

“Extended breeding seasons and decreased pregnancy rates are the costly issues that cattle producers deal with when a herd becomes infected,” he said. The vaccine works only on the cows, so testing bulls is critical.

Diagnosis of the disease can be confirmed by three separate culture tests or one polymerase chain reaction test. Bulls must be tested no more than 30 days prior to entry into the state.

Troxel recommends the following:

- When purchasing bulls, isolate them and have them tested before turning them out with the cows. “It would be wise to test all bulls purchased regardless of age,” he said.
- Vaccinate their cows.
- Test the current bull battery.
- Send any bull testing positive for Trichomoniasis directly to slaughter.

“Cattle producers cannot afford a significant calf crop loss due to Trichomoniasis,” Troxel said. “Once the disease is in a cow herd, it is very time consuming and costly to eliminate it. Taking preventing steps is a small price to pay.”

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