

Southwest Missouri Corner A “Hot Spot” For Trichomoniasis In Bulls

MT. VERNON, MO.

A just released report for Missouri (from March through November 2010) shows about 2000 Missouri bulls have been tested for trichomoniasis.

Trich is a reproductive disease in cattle caused by a protozoan parasite that results in early pregnancy loss. It is passed from bull to female during breeding and infected bulls show no symptoms.

“For years it has been viewed as a disease in western states and those of us in the Midwest were not too worried about it. However, in the last 5 to 10 years, the disease has surfaced on more Missouri farms,” said Eldon Cole, a livestock specialist with University of Missouri Extension.

The recent lab results show 90 bulls in the state (or 4.5 percent of all bulls in Missouri) were positive for trich.

“That 4.5 percent may not seem too bad unless you have a bull in that category and your 2011 calf crop could be reduced,” said Cole.

Of the 90 positive animals testing positive, the “hot” spot for them on the map is Barry, Lawrence and Newton counties. Greene, Christian, Stone, McDonald, Barton and Polk counties all have at least one positive showing up.

The rest of the positives come from 12 differ-

ent counties scattered all over the state that so far only have 1 or 2 positives per county.

“There’s no doubt in my mind that as we do more testing, we’ll find more trich. The new (PCR) test has simplified that procedure and as area vets follow some of the movements of bulls, more trich is discovered,” said Cole.

Earlier this year Missouri put a requirement on non-virgin bulls from other states requiring they be tested and found negative for trich before entering Missouri.

“This must be done within 30 days prior to coming in the state. Since we’re finding more positives, don’t be surprised if tighter restrictions are put in place for intra-state movement of bulls,” said Cole.

Tell tale signs of trich include: cows that recycle due to early embryonic deaths; a high percentage of open cows or short bred cows; a delayed and strung out calving season.

Trich is a sexually transmitted disease that shows no outwardly visible signs. The bull is the carrier, especially older bulls, so know where your bull has been.

“Other threats are rental bulls and bulls who like to jump fences and visit the neighbors. This can work both ways with your bull and the neighbor’s bull,” said Cole. “Buying open or short-bred cows can pose a risk also.” Δ



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