



The WeCAHN Beef Network held a quarterly videoconference meeting on June 19th, 2025, to discuss the animal health events occurring from January to March 2025, with veterinary practitioners, diagnosticians, veterinary college faculty, researchers, and industry representatives in attendance.

1) Overview

Data sources in this report include:

- Clinical Impressions Surveys completed by network practitioners.
- Data shared by western veterinary diagnostic laboratories: Manitoba Veterinary Services Diagnostic Laboratory (VSDL), Prairie Diagnostic Services (PDS), and University of Calgary College of Veterinary Medicine Diagnostic Services Unit (UCVM DSU).
- Scan: bovine surveillance reported by other sources or networks.



2) Key diagnoses and cases

- Hairballs caused severe blockage of the intestines in Holstein cross calves weighing between 350 and 500 lbs. Several calves died or were euthanized. Eating hair may be associated with inadequate dietary fibre.
- Leptospirosis caused sudden death in multiple Holstein feeder calves weighing over 800 lbs. In April, a leptospirosis vaccination protocol was implemented for calves weighing approximately 500 lbs. The source of the bacteria is unknown. The bacteria were likely transmitted to other calves during cross-suckling.

- Bovine tuberculosis was detected in a dairy herd in Manitoba in 2025. Past confirmed cases were in beef herds in Saskatchewan (2023 and 2024). The CFIA is actively investigating these outbreaks involving depopulation and extended testing protocols. The Manitoba case was notable as it marked the first time bovine tuberculosis has been detected in a dairy herd, bringing new management challenges for regulators. Traceability systems like DairyTrace played a key role in identifying the affected herd.

3) Syndromic Surveillance

Respiratory illnesses, including pneumonia, were commonly observed. Causes of respiratory diseases exceeded levels seen in prior years.

[VIDO](#) is developing a subunit vaccine to address *Histophilus*-associated **heart disease**.

Digestive system diseases in calves were notable, with coronavirus, rotavirus, and cryptosporidiosis cases exceeding expected levels. One case involved a three-year-old Angus cross with a stomach ulcer that perforated. It resulted in an abdominal infection and pneumonia.

In **reproductive health**, trichomoniasis was detected in Simmental cross cow-calf pairs, marking the first positive cases since 2020. Yersiniosis abortions were reported; this bacterium is zoonotic.

The **multisystemic** section revealed trends of rising septicemia caused by *Histophilus* and increased detections of Johne's disease. One case of blackleg with infection of the heart and one case of congestive heart failure caused by ionophore toxicity were observed.

Dermatological issues such as lice and external parasites remained frequent, and musculoskeletal diagnoses included multiple reports of myositis (muscle inflammation) and common interdigital dermatitis.

4) Scan

i) The Canadian Feedlot AMU and AMR Surveillance Program expects to release its first dataset in 2025 ([CFAASP.ca](https://cfaasp.ca)).

ii) Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) has never been found in Canadian cattle; all unpasteurized (raw) milk tested so far has been negative ([CFIA](https://cfia.ca)). In the US, over 1,000 HPAI cases have been detected in dairy herds across 17 states ([USDA](https://usda.gov)), with several human infections traced back to dairy herd exposure ([CDC](https://cdc.gov)).

iii) Regional disease updates indicate increasing cases of bovine respiratory disease and multidrug-resistant *E. coli* strains in Quebec and Ontario, along with sporadic leptospirosis and nervous listeriosis in cow-calf herds.

Takeaways

1. Sudden deaths in calves with swollen bellies aren't always caused by bloat. In one recent case, postmortem examination and testing by a veterinarian revealed leptospirosis as the actual cause. Identifying the reason for death helps protect the rest of the herd, and having your vet on site for regular consultation or diagnostics is a smart move for long-term herd health.
2. Veterinarians in the network reported mixed occurrences of the bacteria *Histophilus* (part of the bovine respiratory disease complex). The Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization ([VIDO](https://vido.ca)) is working on a new vaccine in response to heart-related illness from this bacterium. Ask your vet about emerging vaccine options to help protect your herd.
3. Bovine tuberculosis was detected in a dairy herd in Manitoba. Previous cases in Canadian cattle were detected in Saskatchewan (2023 and 2024). Government investigations are ongoing. Keep animals tagged and records updated to act quickly, minimize costs, and safeguard your herd during a disease investigation.

Financial support was provided under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

