



The WeCAHN Beef Network held a quarterly virtual meeting on September 2nd, 2026. The network members discussed animal health events from April to June, 2026. Veterinary practitioners, diagnosticians, veterinary college faculty, researchers, public veterinarians, and industry representatives attended the meeting. Data were synthesized from clinical impressions surveys completed by practitioners and laboratory submissions from Manitoba Veterinary Diagnostic Services (VDS), Prairie Diagnostic Services (PDS), the University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Diagnostic Services Unit (UCVM DSU), and, for the first time, the British Columbia Animal Health Centre (AHC).



1) Interesting Cases

More than 40 calves at an Alberta feedlot died with severe abdominal inflammation after multiple treatments for ongoing respiratory disease. Tests detected *Mycoplasma bovis* and *Histophilus somni*. Investigators suspected a complication of respiratory disease, but the cause remained unconfirmed.

Cull cows died after inhaling feed during prolonged wet weather in southern Alberta. Examination showed feed in their airways and severe lung damage. Cattle were moved from muddy pens, but later deaths in concrete pens left the cause unresolved.

A 13-month-old Red Angus heifer became unwell and died. Examination found liver damage associated with *Fusobacterium*-like bacteria and heart failure. Excess rumen acidity followed by infection entering the bloodstream was suspected but unconfirmed.

Heifers in central Saskatchewan delivered small, stillborn calves with stiff joints. Examination of one calf showed poor muscle development linked to a possible nervous-system problem. BVD was suspected, but no further testing was authorized.

Calves were stillborn or died shortly after birth. Tests found severe kidney damage with crystal deposits, and bacteria included *Pasteurella* and *Listeria*. Infection involving the placenta was suspected, but the cause of the kidney damage remained unexplained.

A one-week-old calf developed pus in its eyes, was unable to stand and died the following day. Tests identified *Streptococcus pneumoniae* infection affecting the bloodstream and the lining around the brain. This infection is extremely rare in cattle.

Salmonella Dublin caused widespread infection in young calves, including shaking, seizures and deaths. Some calves also had other infections. Low liver copper and iron in one calf suggested a possible mineral issue in its dam.



2) Syndromic Surveillance

Veterinarian reports and laboratory results from the past three quarters were compared to identify ongoing cattle health problems and changes needing attention.

Respiratory disease remained a major concern, with pneumonia and increases in *Mannheimia haemolytica* and *Histophilus somni*. Repeated treatment failures involving *M. haemolytica* remained a concern. Overall laboratory detections declined after winter, although *B. trehalosi* and bovine coronavirus showed increasing trends. Many pneumonia cases lacked testing to identify the specific cause.

Diarrhea remained the main digestive problem, while bloody diarrhea became more prominent. *Salmonella* detections increased, including confirmed *Salmonella* Dublin deaths. Inflammation of the rumen and large intestine also increased, while earlier increases in BVD and coronavirus subsided.

Bull breeding injuries and reproductive problems increased, while pregnancy losses declined. Infertility caused by infection remained uncommon. Copper deficiency was noted in cases unrelated to infection. Some bacterial detections increased partly because complete reproductive panels were used more often for testing.

Lameness became more prominent, including both foot problems and other causes. Skin inflammation between the toes (interdigital dermatitis) increased following heavy rainfall in Alberta. Higher cattle values encouraged more veterinary investigation, which may explain some increases in reported problems.

Bloodstream infections increased in veterinarian reports and laboratory results, although more submitted samples may explain part of the increase. *Salmonella* Dublin infections were linked to increased inflammation around the brain. Nutrient deficiencies and poisonings remained generally uncommon and stable.

Several bacteria associated with udder infections were detected near or above expected levels. These included several *Staphylococcus* species and *Bacillus licheniformis*. Another bacterium, *Streptococcus dysgalactiae*, continued to increase but remained within expected levels.



3) Network Updates

Feedlot research: The 2025 antimicrobial-resistance update is being finalized. Alberta feedlot health data and 2019–2025 trends linking deaths, antibiotic use and resistance are expected by year-end.

Vaccine development: VIDO identified four promising components for an *H. somni* vaccine and genetic differences between strains from healthy cattle and fatal cases.

Diagnostic testing: PDS is developing a broader BRD testing panel, targeted for late 2026 or early 2027.

4) Weather-Emergency Relevant Resources

- [British Columbia](#) – Prepare Agriculture operations for wildfire
- [Alberta](#) – Farm animals and livestock preparedness – flood
- [Saskatchewan](#) – Livestock emergencies
- [Manitoba](#) – Emergency preparedness – Support for livestock producers affected by drought [LINK](#).
- Comprehensive list of resources from OAHN: Wildfires and emergency management resources [LINK](#)



4) Scan of Emerging and Important Diseases

New World screwworm: Cases continue across Mexico, with only Baja California and Baja California del Sur remaining free of the disease ([SENASICA dashboard](#)). After eradication from the US in 1966, screwworm was confirmed in a Texas calf on June 3, 2026 ([ABC News](#)), with additional US detections reported by [USDA](#).

Shamonda-like virus: This newly detected, midge-transmitted virus has appeared in several European countries, causing fever, diarrhea, reduced appetite and substantial milk losses in French and Swiss dairy herds ([Beacon](#)). Pregnancy effects remain unconfirmed, and the virus was also found in Swiss horses with nervous-system disease ([Swiss Institute of Virology and Immunology](#)). The pattern suggests a single introduction near the French, German and Swiss borders.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza: Canadian cattle surveillance remained negative through July 30, 2026 ([CFIA](#)), while US dairy cattle cases reached 1,171 across 20 states by August 7 ([USDA-APHIS](#)). Commercial poultry outbreaks resumed in September in Manitoba and Alberta ([CFIA investigations](#)) and the US ([USDA-APHIS poultry detections](#)). No new US human cases were reported; the stated total since 2024 remained 71 ([CDC](#)).

5) Producer Takeaways

- Respiratory disease remains a major concern, with some cases failing to respond to treatment. Certain bacteria and bovine coronavirus showed increasing trends.
- Bloodstream infections increased. *Salmonella* Dublin caused serious illness affecting the brain and other organs.
- Diarrhea remained prominent, while bloody diarrhea and inflammation of the digestive tract increased. Laboratory detections of *Salmonella* also rose.
- Lameness became more prominent, including skin inflammation between the toes after heavy rainfall in Alberta. Increased testing may also explain some reported increases.
- International concerns include New World screwworm in Mexico, Texas and New Mexico, and a new virus (Shamonda-like virus) in Europe. HPAI remained undetected in Canadian cattle, but poultry outbreaks resumed in Manitoba and Alberta in September.

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