

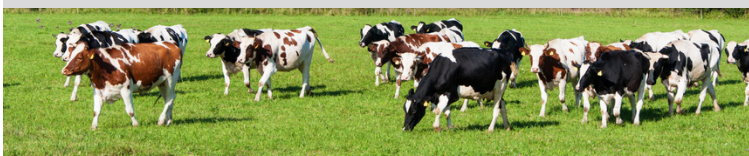


The WeCAHN Dairy Network held a quarterly videoconference meeting on November 8th, 2024, to discuss the animal health events occurring from July to September 2024, with veterinary practitioners, diagnosticians, veterinary college faculty, researchers, and industry representatives in attendance.

## 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.



## Interesting cases

### i. HPAI in Dairy cows



- **Background:** Influenza A(H5N1) in dairy cattle is a continuously evolving issue. Between March 25th and December 3rd, 2024, there were 695 confirmed cases (herd with positive PCR sample of Influenza A, H5, clade 2.3.4.4b) in 15 states.
- **USDA's most up-to-date information** can be found here ([LINK](#)).
- Two pigs from a smallholder farm in Oregon tested positive for influenza A(H5N1). Three other pigs were negative ([LINK](#) to news article and USDA [LINK](#)). The pigs were tested in response to identifying the disease in the poultry on the farm and knowledge that these animals shared water sources, housing and equipment.

- HPAI is present in poultry and wild birds, but NOT dairy cattle in Canada ([LINK](#)).
  - As of Nov 4th, CFIA laboratories tested 391 raw milk samples arriving at the processor, and as of September 5th, 1,211 pasteurized commercial milk samples; all samples were negative ([LINK](#)).
  - The Public Health Agency of Canada poster "Help prevent the spread of avian influenza" ([LINK](#)).

### ii. Cow mortalities associated with Salmonella serotype Dublin

- **History:** 10 adult milking cows died in a well-managed and "high health" herd. The farm recently started heifer raising; heifers were sent to a secondary location for development and were reintroduced to the herd as adults.
- **Take-home message:** Raising heifers at a development farm may increase the risk of diseases because the development farm likely receives heifer calves from other farms, each with unknown biosecurity standards.

### iii. Four sick and dead dried-off cows

- **History:** 3 cows died after dry-off, and a fourth cow was weak and feverish. One of the cloths used on the farm to clean the udder prior to administering teat sealant was tested, and there was a variety of bacteria.
- **Take-home message:** Bacteria were likely introduced into the teat at drying off by using a dirty cloth to clean the udder and no intramammary antimicrobial. This caused an infection which killed the cows. This case highlights the importance of hygiene at drying off to avoid introducing infection into the teat.
- There are many resources available regarding techniques for dry-off, e.g., the [Canadian Mastitis Network](#).



## Syndromic surveillance

### Reproductive and digestive systems

**Take-home message:** The end of feed sources from last year's harvest inventory and the stretching of feed sources have resulted in energy/calorie deficiency; veterinarians reported increased secondary infertility (no ovulation and cystic ovaries) and diarrhea.

### Mastitis

**Take-home message:** If a cow's mastitis is not responding per your usual mastitis treatment protocol, please contact your herd veterinarian to discuss treatment and diagnostic services to avoid an acute case becoming chronic.



### Scan

1) Dr. van der Meer at UCVM has initiated a project on scours in dairy calves. The main objectives of the project are to compare field strains of diarrhea-causing viruses in calves to the strains found in current vaccines. The project is currently recruiting dairy farms with calves up to 4 months old for submission of samples of feces.

- Interested dairy farmers will receive a sampling kit and shipment material (postage paid).
- 5-10 grams of feces in a leak-proof container from calves with and without scours. For calves with scours, the feces must be collected prior to treatment of the calf.
- The producer and veterinarian will receive the results of the PDS Bovine Diarrhea Panel in the format of a laboratory report, and if requested, this will be forwarded to your veterinarian.
- If interested, please contact Frank van der Meer: [frank.vandermeer@ucalgary.ca](mailto:frank.vandermeer@ucalgary.ca) or 403-992-4678

2) National Farm Animal Care Council update to the dairy cattle codes of practice ([LINK](#)): the updated Code came into effect in April 2024, and there are new requirements to be met (e.g., all indoor systems must pair/group calves early in life by 2031).



### Meeting takeaways

1. Dr. van der Meer at UCVM has started a project on scours in dairy calves. If interested in participating, please contact Frank van der Meer: [frank.vandermeer@ucalgary.ca](mailto:frank.vandermeer@ucalgary.ca) or 403-992-4678
2. New presentation of blood poisoning in adult cows from Salmonella serotype Dublin. Ten cows died from blood poisoning in BC.



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