



The Western Canadian Animal Health Network (WeCAHN) Dairy Network held a quarterly videoconference meeting on November 6th, 2025. The network members discussed the animal health events from July to September 2025. Veterinary practitioners, diagnosticians, veterinary college faculty, researchers, and industry representatives attended the meeting.

1) Overview

Data sources in this report include:

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



2) Interesting Cases

1) A pen of calves became sick with pneumonia and digestive problems after their automatic feeder malfunctioned without triggering an alarm. The calves received less milk than calves in other pens (40-50L less at weaning). The plan is to replace the robot, and in the meantime, only place new calves on working feeders. Cross-suckling was also noted as an issue in this group; this problem is common in group housing on dairy farms.



2) An adult cow developed sudden illness with loss of appetite, milk drop, dropping left ear and eyelid. Despite supportive care, the cow didn't recover and was euthanized. Lab testing confirmed listeriosis. The bacterium that causes listeriosis **can spread to people; take precautions when handling affected animals.**

3) A dairy herd experienced an outbreak of severe pneumonia, with several cows ill and one death. Treatments failed. Lab testing showed mixed bacterial infections, including one bacterium that has been emerging more often in recent years.

3) Syndromic Surveillance

Important information:

Clinical impression surveys

Never

Rarely = 1-2 times per 3 months

Commonly = 1-2 times per month

Very frequently = 3+ times per month



'Control charts'

In the following document, under the sub-heading 'laboratory diagnoses,' there are multiple graphs called 'control charts.' Control charts are a simple way of presenting data collected over time (e.g., increasing or decreasing detection frequencies). Each data point reflects the number of positive samples or cases reported by a diagnostic laboratory over 3 months (quarter of a year). The upper and lower horizontal lines are called control limits. Individual points lying outside the control limits (special cause or unstable point) suggest a need for investigation to determine whether/how significant a signal they represent. In some situations, control charts are not applicable (e.g., when the previous data points do not have a horizontal trend line), but these plots can still be used to demonstrate time trends. In some cases, we excluded "zero" detections recorded before a set date to make the data easier to interpret. These zeroes may reflect periods when the test was not yet available.

Respiratory System Disease

Clinical impressions survey

Respiratory system disease was reported **Commonly** (3/3).

- Bronchopneumonia was reported **Never** (1/3) to **Commonly** (2/3). All bronchopneumonia causes were reported **stable** (3/3).
- Un-differentiated pneumonia was reported **Never** (1/3) to **Rarely** (1/3) to **Commonly** (1/3).

Laboratory diagnoses for respiratory system disease

Detections of bacteria and viruses that commonly affect the respiratory system of cattle (e.g., Bovine herpesvirus 1 (BHV-1), bovine respiratory syncytial virus (BRSV), and coronavirus) were within the control limits of the **control charts** at VDS, PDS, and UCVN DSU.

Digestive System Disease

Clinical impressions survey

Digestive system disease was reported **Commonly** (2/3) to **Very frequently** (1/3).

- Diarrhea was reported **Commonly** (3/3). All diarrhea causes were reported **stable** (2/2).

Laboratory diagnoses for digestive system diseases

Detections of bacteria and viruses that commonly cause diarrhea in cattle (e.g., *Salmonella* Dublin, Johne's disease, bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVD)) were within the control limits of their respective **control charts**.

One case at UCVN DSU was notable; a Holstein calf was diagnosed with gastrointestinal disease, liver disease, pneumonia, and the *E. coli* isolated from the colon was resistant to most of the antibiotics tested.



Reproductive system disease

Clinical impressions survey

Reproductive disease, excluding the udder, was reported

Rarely (1/3) to **Commonly** (1/3) to **Very frequently** (1/3).

- Abortions or infectious infertility were reported **Never** (1/2) to **Rarely** (1/2).
- Diseases of the uterus (e.g., pyometra) and ovaries (e.g., cystic ovaries) were each reported **Very frequently** (2/2).
- Non-infectious causes of infertility were reported **Never** (1/2) to **Commonly** (1/2).



Laboratory diagnoses for digestive system disease

Hot summer weather and fewer young cows entering the herd have led to increased infertility rates, resulting in herds keeping older cows for longer periods. With high cull prices, some farms are shipping sick animals immediately, while others are opting to treat them instead.

Few abortions were investigated this quarter at the laboratories.

Neospora testing at VDS yielded more positive results this quarter, partly due to the increased number of samples submitted.

Musculoskeletal system disease

Clinical impressions survey

Musculoskeletal disease was reported **Rarely** (1/3) to **Commonly** (1/3) to **Very frequently** (1/3).

- Foot disease, digital dermatitis, and foot rot were reported **Commonly**.
- Frequency trends varied (stable to increasing), potentially related to treat versus cull decisions.

Multisystemic and metabolic diseases

Clinical impressions survey

Multisystemic disease was reported **Never** (1/3) to **Rarely** (1/3) to **Commonly** (1/3).

Metabolic disease was reported **Rarely** (2/3) to **Commonly** (1/3).

Mastitis

Clinical impressions survey

Teats and udder system disease was reported **Rarely** (2/3) to **Commonly** (1/3).

- Acute mastitis was reported **Commonly** (1/1).
- Chronic mastitis was reported **Commonly** (1/1).
- Chronic mastitis caused by *Prototheca*, an algae, was detected through high somatic cell counts in multiple provinces.
- Traumatic udder injuries were reported **Rarely** (1/1).



4) Scan

1) Bovine tuberculosis in Manitoba (update): One infected dairy herd was depopulated, with ongoing testing and 44 trace herds identified; 13 have been released from quarantine with no positives detected. The strain does not match known North American livestock or wildlife strains. Resources from [CFIA](#) and [Manitoba](#) governments.

2) Lumpy skin disease in Europe: Cases were most recently confirmed in Spain. [CFIA applied import restrictions](#). [CFIA Fact Sheet](#) available.

3) Longhorned tick (LHT) and theileriosis: The ticks are moving northward with establishment risk in Nova Scotia and coastal BC. Theileriosis, an infection transmitted by the tick, was diagnosed in a Canadian show cow that had been imported from Illinois. This cow will be a lifetime carrier *Theileria*. Surveillance is ongoing through [CAHSS](#) and the [e-tick](#) tool.

4) RAIZO bovine network: Anaplasmosis was diagnosed in a dairy herd with five deaths. Lead toxicity was reported on a large dairy farm with interstate animal movement under investigation. RAIZO members noted severe stable fly problems not observed in WeCAHN herds.

5) HPAI surveillance: Canada remains negative for bird flu in dairy cattle: 6,643 raw milk samples tested as of Nov. 5, 2025, all negative ([CFIA](#)). US outbreak continues across multiple states (Idaho, California, Texas, others), although no new cases have been reported in dairy over the last 30 days ([USDA](#)). Poultry outbreaks had an early start in Canada and the United States.

5) Takeaways:

1. Pneumonia cases have been harder to treat in some herds this year, despite the administration of antibiotics. Keep a close eye on sick animals, watch how they respond to treatment and contact your veterinarian for support.
2. Chronic mastitis caused by the algae *Prototheca* was detected through high somatic cell counts in multiple provinces. The source is often environmental. This infection doesn't respond to antibiotics, and management relies on culling affected cows and improving parlour cleaning.
3. Canada remains free of bird flu in dairy cattle. Stay alert during this higher-risk period, as poultry outbreaks began earlier than usual this year and the US continues to report cases in dairy herds.

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