



The WeCAHN Dairy Network held a quarterly videoconference meeting on February 12th, 2026, to discuss animal health events from October to December 2025. The session brought together veterinarians, diagnosticians, researchers, and industry representatives. Data were synthesized from clinical impression surveys completed by practitioners and laboratory submissions from Prairie Diagnostic Services (PDS), Manitoba Veterinary Diagnostic Services (VDS), and the University of Calgary Veterinary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Diagnostic Services Unit (UCVM DSU).



1) Interesting Cases



- Two Q fever abortions in an otherwise healthy, well-vaccinated dairy herd. Q fever can cause disease in humans after exposure to aborted tissues, the placenta, the air, and raw milk. In most people, infection causes flu-like symptoms or no symptoms. In immunocompromised individuals, it can cause chronic Q fever. Refer to the [CCOHS](#) for more information on Q fever.
- Ten adult cows died over a week with symptoms of pneumonia, reduced milk yield, and poor appetite, shortly after a new bull was introduced. Practitioners reported similar outbreaks linked to adult cows and noted that underlying viruses may contribute to these events.
- Several calves in a larger herd developed swollen joints at 3-6 weeks of age, with no signs of infection. The investigation was extensive and continues to try and identify the cause of swollen joints.
- Robotic milking systems are extremely useful. But practitioners commented that use of robotic systems can delay detection of udder problems compared with parlour setups. Milking times, box times, conductivity, and other milk quality indicators are useful tools. However, these indicators should not replace teat-end checks and post-milking teat appearance scoring.

2) Syndromic Surveillance

- **Respiratory disease:** Reported commonly to very frequently associated with pneumonia. Pneumonia cases linked to *Mannheimia* appeared stable to increasing in several herds. Lab results showed detections of *Mannheimia*, *Pasteurella*, and *Histophilus*. Viruses stayed mostly within normal ranges, though some regions saw seasonal increases.
- **Digestive disease** was reported rarely to commonly to very frequently.
- **Reproductive system disease:** Reported rarely to commonly to very frequently. *Neospora* and *Ureaplasma* detections increased.
- **Musculoskeletal disease** was reported commonly to very frequently with increasing trends across multiple conditions.
- **Cardiovascular disease:** The WeCAHN Beef Network reported increased *Histophilus* heart disease in feedlot cattle.
- **Mastitis**, acute and chronic, were reported rarely. A practitioner reported an increase in coliform mastitis associated with poor-quality wood-based bedding. Prairie producers, who normally use straw for livestock bedding, have not encountered this issue.



3) Scan and other updates

- Bovine tuberculosis investigation in a Manitoba dairy herd is ongoing ([CFIA, 2026](#)).
- Lumpy skin disease in Italy, France and Spain ([European Union Food, Farming, Fisheries, 2025](#)).
- Bluetongue virus serotype 3 was newly detected in Northern Ireland ([DAERA, 2026](#)).
- Two recent theileriosis cases from the same premises in Ontario ([Ontario Veterinary advisory](#)) emphasized the emerging risk of the long-horned tick, the vector for *Theileria orientalis* Ikeda. The first cow was imported from the U.S., while the second was likely infected on-farm by biting flies. No long-horned ticks were detected on the premises. CAHSS hosted a webinar; follow the [link](#) to view the recording.
- HPAI H5N1 have not been detected in Canadian cattle ([CFIA, 2026](#)), while the US continues to monitor the situation with no new detections in February 2026 ([USDA-APHIS, 2026](#)). The Netherlands documented the first cattle with H5N1 antibodies outside the U.S. ([Science, 2026](#)), reinforcing the value of ongoing milk surveillance and biosecurity.
- The Manitoba chief veterinary officer's office held a bovine health update meeting and plans to coordinate regular meetings.
- A comprehensive diagnostic approach for beef abortion investigation was presented at the WCABP conference ([WCABP 2026 Proceedings](#)).

4) Producer takeaways

1. Abortions in a dairy herd can have a number of causes, including bacteria that can also make people sick (e.g., Q fever). Because the bacteria can stay in the environment for a long time, using gloves, eye protection, and a face mask when handling aborted calves or placentas is a simple way to reduce your risk of exposure.
2. Some veterinarians have seen pneumonia in mature cows, even when vaccination programs are in place. Viruses or declining immunity may play a role. Keep a record of sick cows and contact your veterinarian. They may advise sending in samples for testing to help identify bacteria or viruses and guide treatment.
3. Higher rates of mastitis have been linked to humid sawdust bedding. With good quality sawdust harder to source, some farms are turning to composted or sand bedding to keep cows cleaner and reduce mastitis pressure. Discuss bedding availability and quality with your herd veterinarian to help identify practical alternatives that lower the risk of environmental mastitis.

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