



The WeCAHN Smallholder Network held a quarterly videoconference meeting on June 6th, 2025, to discuss smallholder animal health from January to March.

1) Overview

This report draws data from Clinical Impressions Surveys completed by network practitioners, diagnostic results from western veterinary laboratories (VDS, PDS, and UCVN DSU), and smallholder surveillance reports from various sources and networks.

2) Interesting cases

i. **A 12-year-old Big-horned sheep ram taken to a veterinary clinic with a history of weight loss went into cardiac arrest upon arrival at the clinic.** CPR was attempted at the client's request with unsuccessful results. Mobile practitioners are required to carry emergency cardiopulmonary resuscitation supplies, such as a bag-valve-mask, in accordance with provincial licensing regulations. These requirements may vary by province.

ii. **Salmonella abortion in a wool sheep.** Salmonella abortions in sheep can affect 10-20% of the flock, often without prior clinical signs, though some ewes develop fever, diarrhea, or life-threatening uterine infections. Since *Salmonella* is transmissible to humans, stringent biosecurity measures are essential to minimize risks.

iii. Canada continues to monitor HPAI:

- **Poultry:** Five primary control zones between April 30 and June 17, 2025 ([CFIA Investigations and orders by province, 2025](#)). An ostrich farm in BC remains in a legal dispute over bird culling due to HPAI genotype D1.3, not identified elsewhere in Canada.
- **Dairy cattle:** As of May 30, 2025, all samples of raw (unpasteurized) milk collected at processing plants (4,003 samples) have tested negative for HPAI ([CFIA, 2025](#)).



3) Syndromic Surveillance

i. **Small poultry flocks:** Clinical impression surveys for small poultry flocks reported infectious laryngotracheitis (ILT), Marek's disease, and *Mycoplasma* infections at stable frequencies. Lab diagnoses included bacterial granulomatous disease and pneumonia in a domestic bird, *Salmonella* Infantis septicemia in a tom, and inclusion body hepatitis (IBH) in multiple chickens. An emu was diagnosed with bursitis, emaciation, a foreign body granuloma, and valvular endocarditis.

ii. Small flocks of small ruminants: Clinical impression surveys for small ruminant flocks reported lice infestations as rare, with no other significant issues noted. Abortion cases in goats diagnosed at the lab remained within control limits, though an increase in pathological diagnoses was observed.

ii. Small herds of swine: Clinical impression surveys for small swine herds reported rare cases of osteoarthritis and a single instance of pyometra. Lab diagnoses included *Streptococcus suis* blood infection in a Berkshire cross pig.



4) Scan

i. Saskatchewan Western College of Veterinary Medicine publication by Dr. John Campbell: [Understanding Cache Valley Virus in Saskatchewan Sheep Flocks](#)

ii. Summary table of smallholder disease investigation programs and subsidized tests on the WeCAHN Smallholder webpage ([LINK](#))

iii. Canada West Swine Health Information Network (CWSHIN) emphasized strict biosecurity measures.

iv. Réseau d'alerte et d'information zoosanitaire (RAIZO) Poultry Network noted increase infectious bronchitis diagnoses.

v. The US CDC is investigating *Salmonella* outbreaks linked to small flock poultry ([LINK](#)).

vi. HPAI in dairy cattle remains a concern in the US, with continued milk testing for viral presence ([LINK](#)).

vii. Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) surfaced in Hungary (newest detection April 17), Slovakia (newest detection April 4) ([BAB, 2025](#)), and an exotic strain in Iraq ([LINK](#)).

5) Takeaways

1. Sheep infected with *Salmonella* or other bacteria and viruses may abort without showing prior signs of illness. Since these microbes can spread between animals and humans, practicing strong biosecurity when handling aborted lambs, such as wearing gloves, is essential.
2. Laboratory testing of a sick piglet helps determine the most effective treatment for the herd, ensuring appropriate antibiotic use while reducing the risk of overuse.
3. Even though bird migration is ending, bird flu (HPAI) is still a concern in Canada and the USA. Stay alert and follow biosecurity measures to protect your flocks.

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

