

Cattle Health Surveillance System (CHeSS) for major infectious diseases in dairy herds in Alberta, Canada

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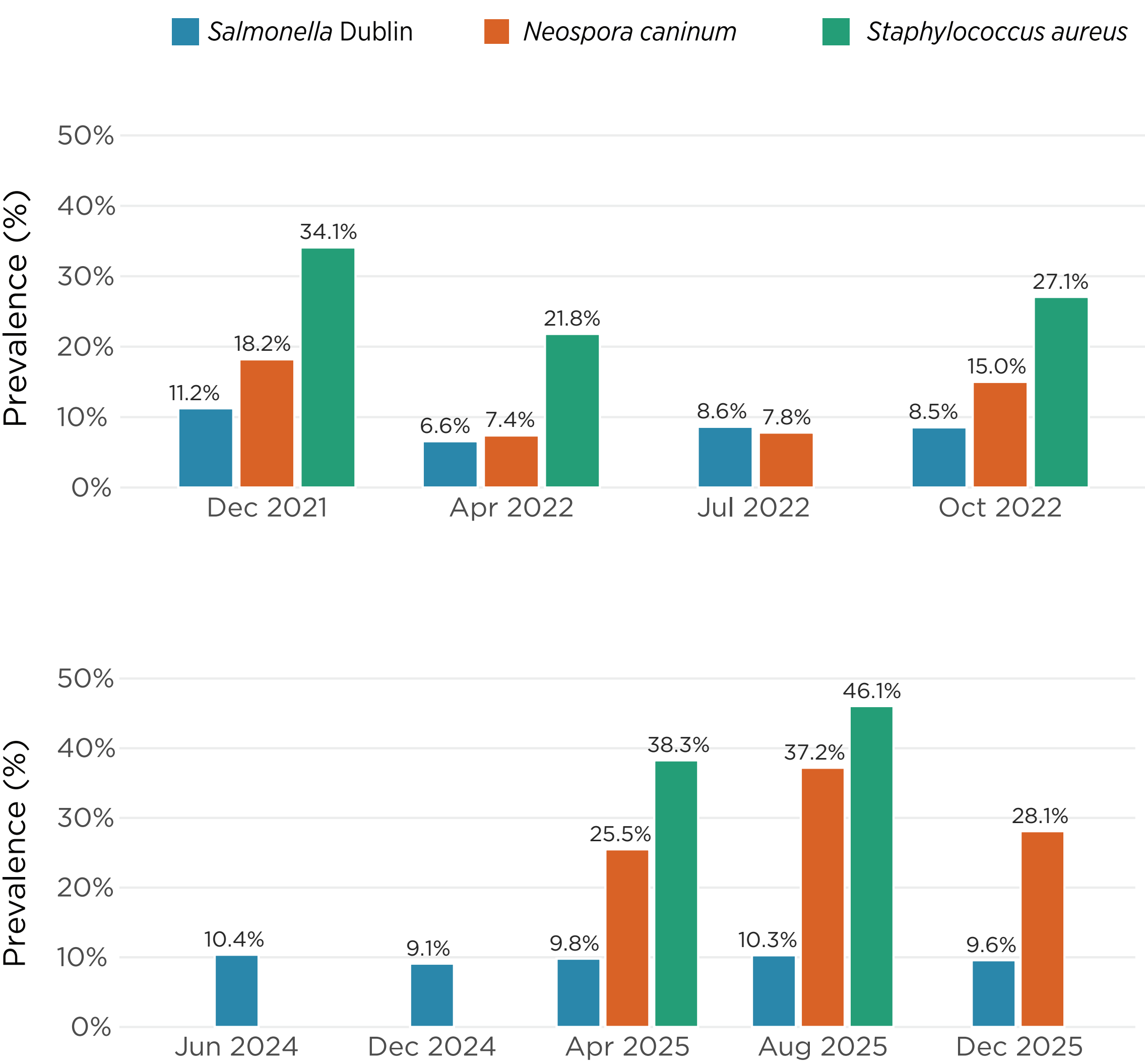
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Infectious disease surveillance

Endemic infectious diseases remain a major challenge for the dairy farms in Canada. The Cattle Health Surveillance System (CHeSS) project is a comprehensive approach for surveillance and control of several endemic diseases of importance in Western Canada.

Bulk tank milk testing has revealed varying percentages of Alberta herds testing positive for various diseases at different time points.



Get your bulk tank milk disease results

Your bulk tank milk has been tested for various infectious diseases since 2022 as part of the Cattle Health Surveillance System (CHeSS) 2.0 project, led by Dr. Herman Barkema at the University of Calgary. These infections include Bovine Leukosis, *Salmonella* Dublin, *Neospora caninum*, and contagious mastitis (*Staph. aureus*, *Mycoplasma bovis*, and *Strep. agalactiae*).

About 125 Alberta dairy producers are already subscribed and have received their results up to the December 2025 tests, and they will continue receiving future results automatically and more frequently.

If you have not yet received results, you can also start receiving your herd's reports by completing a short questionnaire (15–20 minutes).

Scan the QR code.

It consists of three sections:

- Your contact details
- Opt-in to receive BTM test results
- Questions about herd management and biosecurity practices



Join animal-level testing under CHeSS 2.0

Besides ongoing bulk tank testing, we are now enrolling a limited number of Alberta herds for animal-level testing. For enrolled herds, individual animal samples will be collected on the farm and/or via DHI and tested for *Salmonella* Dublin, *Neospora caninum*, and *Mycoplasma bovis*, with results returned to you for decision-making.

Why participate?

- Free herd-level status reports through the bulk tank testing program, and free animal-level test results for *Salmonella* Dublin, *Neospora caninum*, and *Mycoplasma bovis*
- Contribute to identifying risk factors and economic impacts relevant to Alberta's dairy industry
- Support the development of better, industry-wide disease control strategies

What is involved?

- Use of individual milk samples from routine DHI testing, or on-farm sampling during milking
- Blood sampling of non-lactating animals, including youngstock
- Fecal sampling from selected animals and environmental manure sampling
- Questionnaire on biosecurity, disease control, production, and economic parameters
- Sharing, and authorizing the sharing of, relevant records/data (e.g., DHI/Lactanet, Vigil Vet, veterinary records, Dairy Trace, proAction biosecurity, etc.)
- One farm visit (~3-4 hours) during 2026 for sampling and questionnaire (sampling time may vary with DHI participation and herd size). Two visits on S. Dublin-positive farms (over one year)

Confidentiality:

All data will be de-identified before analysis, and your (farm) name will never appear in publications. Data will be stored on secure University of Calgary server for a minimum of 5 years. You may withdraw at any time before data are included in publications.

Scan the QR code to express interest for enrollment in this phase



For more details or questions, contact:

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