



WeCAHN Beef Network: Here's what we're watching for

WECAHN BEEF SURVEILLANCE PRIORITIES 2022

BACKGROUND

In fall 2021 the network discussed which topics were most important for WeCAHN to study.

Scope: commercial beef cow-calf herds.

Ranking criteria:

Burden of Disease: how often does it occur, and how severe is the illness?

Availability of control measures: what are options for prevention or control?

Potential for zoonoses: can the disease spread to people?

Socioeconomic impact: is there a public perception of this disease? Could it affect industry's 'social license' to produce beef?

Market access impact: could the occurrence of this disease in western Canada affect cattle market access?

The highest ranked topic was 'emerging disease,' with trends in pre-weaning bovine respiratory disease, trends in calf diarrhea, trends in Johne's disease, and trends in bovine antimicrobial resistance also highly ranked. These are some of the topics we update information on, and discuss control measures for, every three months.

EMERGING DISEASE:

- is a disease or pathogen which is increasing in frequency of diagnosis, or appearing in a new location, or a new class of livestock.
- we are interested in new or unusual cases, or familiar disease problems in an uncommon age/class of cattle, or in a new geographic location.
- over the first two years of operation, we are increasingly discussing animal health problems associated with weather/climate, e.g. impacts of drought such as some diseases (e.g. anthrax, problems with water quality/quantity/toxic plants) and resulting problems when producers are forced to cull and then re-stock.

PRE-WEANING BRD TRENDS

- May involve a variety of bacteria and viruses.
- Increasingly accounts for the majority of antimicrobial use in pre-weaned calves.

CALF DIARRHEA TRENDS

- Over time, we've seen a shift from newborn to slightly older calves being most frequently affected.
- Especially in these older calves, the common causes are less likely to be bacterial, and therefore less likely to be treated successfully with antibiotics.

JOHNE'S DISEASE TRENDS

- Laboratory data and reports from practitioners suggest that the frequency of Johne's disease in western Canadian beef herds is increasing.
- Johne's disease is important to consider whether you're culling or introducing new animals.

FOREIGN ANIMAL DISEASES

- Several regulated diseases could have negative impacts on our access to foreign markets if introduced into Canada. The Middle East is experiencing ongoing outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease, for example.

