



The WeCAHN Small Ruminants Network held a quarterly virtual meeting on September 10th, 2026. The network members discussed animal health events from April to June 2026. Veterinary practitioners, diagnosticians, veterinary college faculty, researchers, public veterinarians, and industry representatives attended the meeting.

1) Overview

Data sources in this report include:

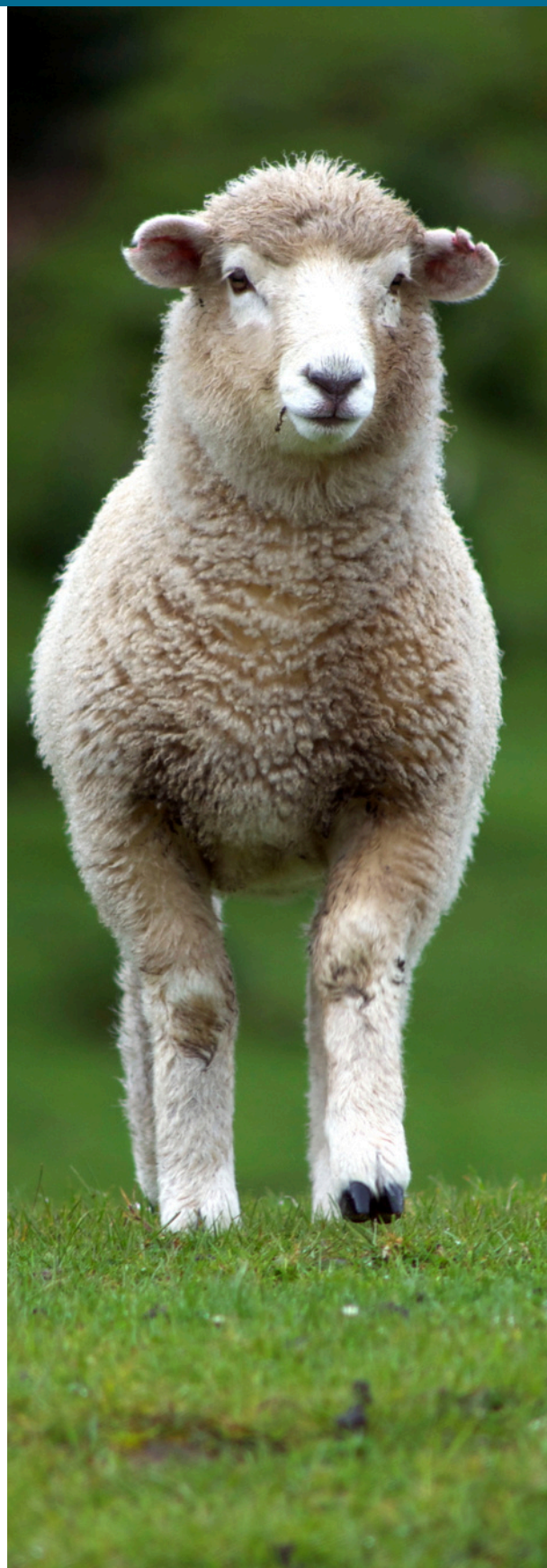
1. Clinical Impressions Surveys completed by network practitioners.
2. Data shared by western veterinary diagnostic laboratories: Manitoba Veterinary Diagnostic Services (VDS) laboratory, Prairie Diagnostic Services (PDS) laboratory, University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Diagnostic Services Unit (UCVM DSU), and, for the first time, the British Columbia Animal Health Centre (AHC)
3. Scan: small ruminant surveillance reported by other sources or networks.

2) Interesting Cases

Goiter in sheep, goats, and cattle. An Alberta smallholder had stillborn calves and weak or stillborn lambs and kids, with large swellings under the neck in a calf and 2 goat kids. Testing found severe iodine deficiency in the cow and no infectious cause in the calf. The animals had consumed very little of their brown salt block despite its low iodine content. Practitioners described similar cases as uncommon, sometimes associated with missing supplements, weathered salt blocks, expired minerals, or certain feeds. The case highlights the importance of checking supplement condition and consumption.

Mouth sores and deaths in sheep. Two flocks experienced deaths involving severe mouth sores. Sheep in one flock were in poor body condition and had a heavy worm burden. In the other flock, a young lamb had foul-smelling breath, severe mouth damage, and damage to several internal organs. Testing suggested *Fusobacterium* infection, but the bacterium was not confirmed by culture. An underlying illness that weakened the lamb's ability to fight infection was suspected, but further testing was declined.

Infection before birth in a goat kid. A three-day-old goat kid died and testing confirmed *Trueperella pyogenes* in its liver. The liver damage and scarring showed that infection had begun before birth. The infection was believed to have spread from the placenta through the umbilical cord. It remained confined to the liver. This bacterium can cause placental infection and pregnancy loss and infection in unborn lambs and kids.



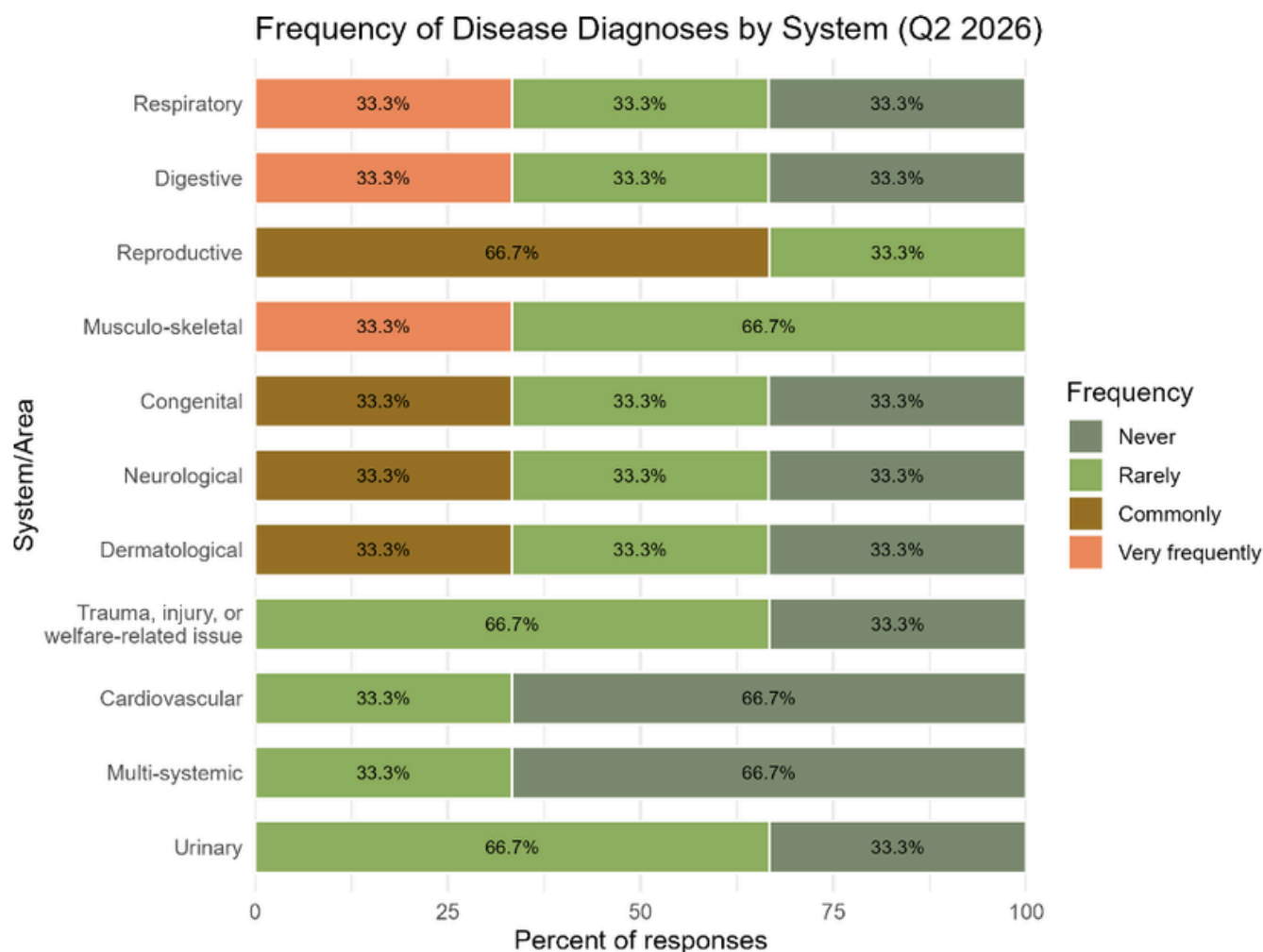
3) Syndromic Surveillance

Clinical impression surveys

Never; **Rarely** = 1-2 times per 3 months; **Commonly** = 1-2 times per month; **Very frequently** = 3+ times per month.

New: BC Animal Health Centre laboratory results were included for the first time; its historical trends will be reviewed at future meetings.

This report compares veterinarians' observations with laboratory findings over five quarters, from **Q2 2025 to Q2 2026**. Survey participation was limited and varied, and most reported increases came from one returning veterinary practice, so these findings need confirmation before being considered wider regional trends.



Respiratory system disease

Respiratory disease was **never** to **rarely** reported through Q1 2026, followed by increasing pneumonia reports from one practitioner in Q2; confirmation from other practices is needed.

In Q2, pneumonia, *Mannheimia haemolytica*, and *Pasteurella multocida* were reported **very frequently**, while *Histophilus somni* and Maedi-Visna were **common**.

At PDS, *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* detections declined after exceeding the upper control limit in sheep in Q2 2025, with none detected from Q4 2025 through Q2 2026.

Across the laboratory results, pneumonia remained the most consistent respiratory diagnosis. *M. haemolytica* detections decreased, *Bibersteinia trehalosi* remained sporadic, and CAEV and Maedi-Visna detections were low and variable. There was no sustained regional increase in a single respiratory pathogen.

Digestive system disease trends

Digestive disease was generally **never** to **rarely** reported through Q1 2026, while intestinal parasites remained an ongoing concern and strongyle treatment failure was reported.

In Q2, diarrhea, *E. coli*, rotavirus, coccidiosis, strongyles, and gas bloat were reported **very frequently**.

Grain overload, stomach ulcers, and liver disease were reported **commonly**, alongside increasing reports of diarrhea, coccidiosis, and feeding-associated disease.

At PDS, liver inflammation in sheep increased despite stable submission levels. Reported causes included parasites, fatty liver disease, and copper poisoning.

Across the laboratory results, intestinal inflammation in sheep also increased, but varied causes did not suggest a shared regional outbreak. *Clostridium perfringens* disease occurred intermittently, including types C and D, while feed overload and bloat remained concerns. *Yersinia pseudotuberculosis* caused intestinal disease in a goat and can affect people, making personal precautions important. No rotavirus was detected in Q2, but continued monitoring remains necessary.

Reproductive disease and mastitis trends

Reproductive disease was predominantly never to rarely reported through Q1 2026, while Q2 abortion reports ranged from **never** to **commonly**.

Chlamydia and *Campylobacter* were reported rarely and considered stable.

One practitioner reported energy and copper deficiencies **very frequently**, while mastitis ranged from **rarely** to **very frequently**; no consistent regional increase was identified.

PDS and UCVM recorded a Q1 increase in sheep abortions associated with inflammation of the placenta.

Across the laboratory results, abortion diagnoses declined in Q2. Infectious causes included *Coxiella burnetii*, *Chlamydomphila abortus*, *Toxoplasma gondii*, and *Campylobacter* spp., but many abortions had no identified cause. Goat mastitis persisted, with *Staphylococcus* spp. the most consistent bacteria and a broader mix of organisms identified in Q2.



Disease affecting several body systems

These diseases were generally **never** to **rarely** reported, with caseous lymphadenitis (CL) the most consistent concern.

Anemia and nutritional deficiencies occurred sporadically, and one practitioner considered copper and vitamin A deficiencies to be increasing.

At PDS, sheep CL detections fluctuated within control limits, while goat detections rose in Q2. BC's Animal Health Centre also reported positive CL blood tests in sheep and goats.

Across the laboratory results, bloodstream infections declined, but *B. trehalosi* remained associated with disease affecting several organs. Mineral deficiencies and copper poisoning accompanied some infections.

Joint, foot, and lameness problems

These problems were generally **never** to **rarely** reported through Q1 2026, although arthritis was reported **commonly** in Q3 2025.

In Q2, foot lesions, lameness, and arthritis were reported **very frequently**, while foot rot and non-foot lameness were reported **commonly**; the increasing foot disease signal requires confirmation.

Brain and nervous system disease

These diseases were predominantly **never** to **rarely** reported through Q1 2026.

In Q2, one veterinarian reported polioencephalomalacia very frequently and seizures and paralysis or weakness commonly; this increasing signal warrants investigation of feed, sulfur, thiamine, salt, and water-related risks.

UCVM confirmed listeriosis caused by *Listeria monocytogenes* in a pet goat, with no sheep cases reported there. PDS, VDS, and the BC Animal Health Centre reported no listeriosis in sheep or goats.



4) Network updates

Vaccination against caseous lymphadenitis (CL)

Vaccination practices for CL varied among sheep and goat farms in Western Canada. A BC veterinarian reported limited vaccine use, while a study involving highly engaged producers found greater use of vaccines. A Saskatchewan veterinarian reported that sheep producers were switching vaccines because of concerns about *Clostridium perfringens* type A. Participants also raised concerns about severe tiredness after vaccination in previously unvaccinated goat herds containing animals already infected with CL. Discuss CL vaccination needs with your veterinarian.



Vaccination against respiratory disease

One veterinarian reported that *Mannheimia* vaccination did not improve respiratory disease on a client's farm, while better barn ventilation substantially improved animal health. The veterinarian noted that sheep and goats respond differently from cattle to *Mannheimia* vaccination.

Pregnancy scanning by trained non-veterinarians

Saskatchewan producers, particularly those with larger herds and flocks, expressed interest in having trained non-veterinarians travelling to farms on a timely basis to perform abdominal ultrasound to count unborn lambs/kids. The main goal is modifying feeding and management. Veterinarians identified cost, travelling logistics, requests made too late to adjust feeding, and inadequate animal handling facilities as barriers to pregnancy ultrasounds. Participants noted that allowing this service in SK would require a change to provincial legislation. Ontario already allows this approach, and the Canadian Sheep Federation offers a two-level ultrasound training course.

5) Weather-emergency relevant resources

- [British Columbia](#) – Prepare Agriculture operations for wildfire
- [Alberta](#) – Farm animals and livestock preparedness – flood
- [Saskatchewan](#) – Livestock emergencies
- [Manitoba](#) – Emergency preparedness – Support for livestock producers affected by drought [LINK](#).
- Comprehensive list of resources from OAHN: Wildfires and emergency management resources [LINK](#).

6) Scan of emerging and important diseases

Scrapie: Classical scrapie was detected in an adult sheep in Oregon in June 2026 through routine slaughter testing. The sheep showed no signs of illness ([WOAH WAHIS](#)). The last reported Canadian cases were in Alberta in June 2019 ([CFIA](#)).

New World screwworm (NWS): Cases continue in Mexico, where only Baja California and Baja California del Sur were reported free of NWS (SENASICA [dashboard](#) [in Spanish]). Following its eradication from the United States in 1966, NWS cases in livestock and pets were confirmed in the summer in Texas and New Mexico ([USDA screwworm website](#)).

Shamonda-like virus: A newly identified virus has spread across France, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Austria. Affected dairy cattle developed fever, diarrhea, reduced appetite, and substantial milk losses, with herd outbreaks lasting two to three weeks ([FLI](#)). Its appearance during the biting-midge season suggests an introduction near the French-German-Swiss border. Detection during sheep breeding raised concerns about pregnancy losses and birth defects, but these effects remain unconfirmed; authorities are monitoring upcoming calving outcomes ([LINK](#)). Participants noted that BC's Okanagan and Fraser valleys also have mild climates and are prone to diseases spread by insects and other vectors (e.g. blue tongue and EHD)

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 continues to affect birds and US dairy cattle. In Canada, commercial poultry flocks in Manitoba and Alberta were affected again beginning in September as fall wild bird migration got underway ([CFIA](#)). No HPAI has been detected in Canadian cattle, and all raw milk samples tested through July 30, 2026, were negative ([CFIA milk surveillance](#)).

6) Producer takeaways

- Reports of pneumonia, digestive problems, lameness, and brain disease increased in Q2, but limited participation makes regional trends uncertain. Laboratory testing found no sustained increase in respiratory diseases.
- Intestinal parasites and treatment failure remained a concern. Sheep liver disease increased, with parasite, feeding, and toxicity-related causes.
- Caseous lymphadenitis (CL) persisted in sheep and goats. *Bibersteinia trehalosi* continued causing infections affecting several organs.
- New World Screwworm spread in Mexico and has been detected in Texas and New Mexico. Shamonda-like virus emerged in European dairy cattle causing fever, diarrhea and drop in milk production; effects on pregnancy remain unconfirmed. Bird flu affected Western Canadian poultry, while Canadian cattle testing remained negative.



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