



Colorado's Leap Into Voluntary BVD Control

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Why did Colorado take the leap?



- The push for BVD control was initiated because of concerns expressed by the Academy of Veterinary Consultants and the American Association of Bovine Practitioners.
- These organizations identified BVD as a disease with major impact and the potential for control.

The Leap



- The Academy of Veterinary Consultants formulated the following position statement;

“The beef and dairy industries suffer enormous loss due to effects of bovine diarrhea virus (BVDV) infection. The highly mutable nature of BVDV and the emergence of highly virulent strains of BVDV contribute to limited success of present control programs. Also, persistently infected cattle are the primary source of infection and effective testing procedures are available to identify those infected carriers.

Therefore, it is the resolve of the Academy of Veterinary Consultants that the beef and dairy industries adopt measures to control and target eventual eradication of BVDV from North America.”

The Leap (continued)



- The Colorado Dept. of Ag. and Colorado State University Veterinary Diagnostic Lab began formulating a program to address BVDV control.
- Additionally seed money to defray the cost of educational/informational brochures was provided by Merial Animal Health, Fort Dodge Animal Health, and Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health

Program Elements



- **Education** and Risk assessment
 - Questionnaire
 - Producer and veterinary educational meetings
- Biosecurity
- Testing
- Reward

The Intent of the Questionnaire

- Encourage veterinary involvement
- Promote/renew interest in herdsmanship
- Challenge existing management practices
- Open the channel of thought for biosecurity
- Present some of the signs and potential impact of BVD

Disposition of Questionnaire

- Questionnaire results are recorded in an Access® data base.
- Scores from questionnaire are computed for potential further statistical evaluation.
- When testing is initiated herds where PI's are identified are recorded in the data base.

Questionnaire Design

- Short one page 20 question test.
- Ask questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no”
- Make the questionnaire so that it can be analyzed easily.
- Provide the questionnaire in a user friendly format that the owner could return easily.

Veterinary interaction

- The clients veterinarian is required to work with the producer in tailoring a biosecurity program to fit his operation.
- The interaction between the producer and the veterinarian allows the veterinarian to provide input into the operation, and fosters a mutual goal for the producer and veterinarian to work toward.

Biosecurity Plan

- A workable biosecurity plan requires an understanding of disease transmission.
 - **Origin and impact of PI cattle**
- Biosecurity cannot stymie the day to day operation of the producer.
- Four essentials of biosecurity are:
 - **Reduce exposure**
 - **Record keeping**
 - **Vaccinations**
 - **Addressing health problems**

Testing

- Owners and veterinarians need to be educated as to the what, when and why of testing.
 - **There is a need to understand that a negative calf means a negative cow, but a negative cow does not imply a negative calf.**
 - **Owners need to understand the importance of testing before breeding.**
 - **Owners/veterinarians need to understand that you need to test them all and that eyeballing in this case lacks sensitivity and specificity.**

Reward

- Improved economic and herd performance
 - **\$2,000,000,000 in 2004 financial loss due to BVD.**
 - **Reward may be in reduced cost per head, but although the disease is economically significant owners don't often perceive this type of loss as being real until it happens in their operation**
- Certificates of accomplishments may help put the owner in a better position to market their animals.

Colorado's Progress



- After two years Colorado has enrolled 55 herds in its voluntary control program.
- 27 herds have reached the certified BVD PI free status.
- Interest comes from those who have had the problem, we are still in a put the fire out mode of thinking.

Increasing Producer and Veterinarian Interest

- Hard economic data that reflects the potential financial rewards of BVD control.
- Better educated producers and veterinarians.



Editorial



- BVD presents a unique opportunity to the beef industry, it is a disease whose mode of transmission through only a few individuals allows for the removal of those few and a resultant performance improvement to be realized. It is a disease that when it is controlled will provide greater performance for the producer while benefiting the consumer. Technology has supplied us with the tools to control BVD and the time to address it through organized effort is **NOW**.

The End

