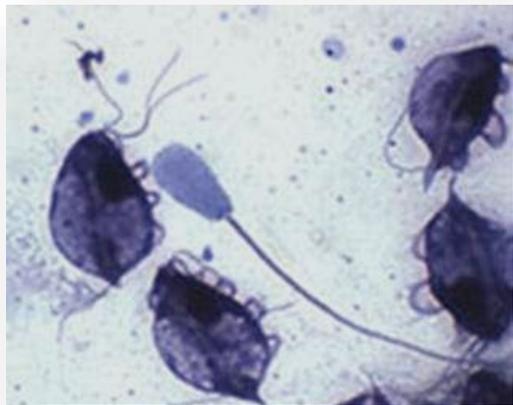




Trichomonosis Program in California

Information for Cattle Producers

Bovine trichomonosis is a venereal disease of cattle caused by the protozoa *Tritrichomonas foetus*. This organism lives on the folds of the penis and internal sheath of bulls and colonizes the vagina, cervix, uterus, and oviducts of cows. Trichomonosis can affect all cattle; however, the disease is recognized more in beef herds.



Trichomonosis Regulations

Trichomonosis poses a serious economic threat to California's cattle herds. In response, the California Cattlemen's Association (CCA) and the Western United Dairymen jointly sponsored legislation to develop a program to prevent and control trichomonosis.

The CCA drafted the California Bovine Trichomonosis Control Program, and California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) prepared regulations to support the program. These laws became effective in September 2003, and were modified in October 2007 and 2011.

California's Trichomonosis Program

- All trichomonosis tests are official tests and bulls require official ID.
- Veterinarians, laboratories, or owners must report positive cases to CDFA within two days of a diagnosis.
- All negative tests must be reported to CDFA within 30 days.
- Veterinarians must be approved to collect samples for trichomonosis.

- Laboratories must be approved to read the tests.
- Routine testing on unaffected herds can include either real-time PCR (qPCR) or conventional culture.
- Bull samples should be collected after ten days of separation from female cattle.
- Veterinarians or owners may request that positive cultures have confirmatory tests, because false positive results can occur, particularly in young group-raised bulls.
- CDFA will investigate cases, notify owner(s) of potentially exposed cattle and quarantine bulls in affected and exposed herds.
- Bulls from affected herds require one negative qPCR test or three negative cultures at least seven (but no more than 28) days apart to move anywhere but direct to slaughter.
- Bulls from exposed herds (neighbors) require one negative test before movement.
- Bulls 18 months of age and older entering California require a negative test within 60 days unless entering for slaughter, semen collection, or exhibition where they are not commingled with female cattle.
- Bulls 18 months of age and older sold at sale yards require a negative test within 60 days before sale or be consigned for slaughter only.
- Bulls entering California on a Pasture-to-Pasture permit require a negative trichomonosis test with 12 months.



How is Trichomonosis Spread?

Bulls spread trichomonosis during natural service. Bulls over four years of age are typically the main reservoir of infection in a herd. However, younger bulls and cows can be affected and spread disease. In rare cases, infection is spread during artificial insemination by contaminated insemination equipment, semen, or non-hygienic procedures.

Signs of Trichomonosis in Herds*

- Repeat breeding,
- Extended calving season,
- Early abortion (too early to find a fetus),
- Occasional late-term abortions,
- A high percentage of open cows at pregnancy exam (20-50% or more), and
- Pyometra (pus-filled uterus) in about one percent of cows.

*Bulls **do not** show signs of trichomonosis.

Can trichomonosis be Treated?

- There is no approved treatment,
- Bulls remain persistently infected,
- Most cows clear infection within a few months; however, a few cows may carry infection to calving, and
- Cows with pyometra can remain persistently infected.

A trichomonosis vaccine is available for cows which:

- Serves as an aid in prevention of the disease,
- Reduces the incidence of early embryonic death and abortion in cows, and
- Is **not** labeled to prevent or clear infection in bulls.

Testing, culling, and vaccination can be used to help manage *Trichomonas foetus*.



Controlling Trichomonosis

- Maintain a closed herd,
- Culture all bulls yearly before breeding,
- Use young, virgin bulls,
- Use separate breeding groups,
- Track the movement of breeding bulls in operations with multiple location,
- Cull positive bulls and open cows, and
- Using artificial insemination can be beneficial.

If one or more bulls in your herd is infected, contact your veterinarian about control programs.



Animal Health and Food Safety Services Animal Health Branch

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Modesto District - (209) 491-9350
Tulare District - (559) 685-3500
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California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratories

Davis - (530) 752-8700
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For more information, please click the following:

[Animal Health Branch](#)
[California Bovine Trichomonosis Regulations](#)
[California Cattlemen's Association](#)