

OAHN Bovine Network Project: Disease testing for newly introduced cattle

Producer Information



Project Overview

The introduction of new cattle into a herd is a significant risk factor for the introduction of disease. Managing the risk associated with animal additions is a key component of a farm's biosecurity control plan. An important element to prevent the introduction of disease is examination and testing of new cattle prior to purchase. While clinical examination may detect some forms of illness, some diseases can be better detected by a blood test.

Goals of the OAHN bovine project:

1. Facilitate the testing of high-risk cattle prior to introduction or following introduction to the herd to improve on farm management and biosecurity decisions
2. Increase surveillance for emerging diseases, *Salmonella* Dublin and Anaplasmosis

The OAHN project will cover the costs for a panel of bovine tests for newly or recently purchased cattle. Cattle purchased in the previous 365 days are eligible. The tests included are:

- **Anaplasmosis** – An infectious bacterial disease that infects cattle red blood cells causing anemia. Recovered animals can become carriers of the disease.
- **Bovine leukosis** – A viral disease in cattle that causes reduced milk production and cancer in a portion of infected animals.
- **Mycobacterium avium paratuberculosis** (Johnes) – A contagious, progressive bacterial infection of the digestive tract causing diarrhea and weight-loss. Infected animals can shed the bacteria in their feces with no other signs of infection.
- **Salmonella Dublin** – A multi-drug resistant bacterial disease that causes severe outbreaks of pneumonia and septicaemia with high mortality in calves. Recovered animals can shed the bacteria in feces. People can also become infected from contact with infected animals or consuming infected food products.

How to Participate

Contact your herd veterinarian to have blood samples collected from newly purchased or recently purchased (in the last year) beef or dairy cattle. Samples are submitted to the Animal Health Laboratory in Guelph using the project submission form and lab test costs will be covered by the project.

Results will be delivered directly back to the submitting veterinarian to interpret and discuss with their client. *Salmonella* Dublin and Anaplasmosis are included in the list of immediately notifiable diseases under the Animal Health Act in Ontario and positive results are automatically reported to OMAFRA.

For more information on the project or questions, talk to your herd veterinarian or contact Cynthia Miltenburg at cynthia.miltenburg@ontario.ca.