

IBR—Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis



IBR is caused by a herpes virus, hence once infected, animals are infected for life and can shed virus when stressed. The clinical signs seen vary depending on the virus strain and the presence of other diseases in the herd.

Common clinical problems include:

- ◆ Upper respiratory tract disease, progressing to pneumonia in some cases. Housed beef cattle are often particularly severely affected as virus is spread mainly by the respiratory route.
- ◆ Depressed milk yield in dairy cattle.
- ◆ Fertility problems—abortions may occur and infected bulls can shed virus in their semen.

Purchase of infected carrier animals is the most important route by which infection is introduced into a herd.

Costs

Losses due to disease include illness inducing reduced feed intake, abortion and loss of calf/lactation, reduced milk yield, antibiotic therapy. Actual costs are very variable but high in herd not vaccinated and not previously exposed to infection.

Barrier to the export of live cattle to other regions or countries within Europe, where the disease has already been eradicated.

Guide to Sampling

As infection is lifelong, antibody tests are used to determine whether a herd is infected, however tests for the virus are also available for diagnosis in sick cattle—consult your veterinary surgeon for advice on the best testing strategy for your herd situation.

In the past it has been impossible to tell vaccinated from infected cattle by antibody testing, however a marker vaccine (gE deleted) is now available. Antibodies to the vaccine can be differentiated from antibodies to IBR virus on laboratory testing.



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