Central States Testing, LLC
PO Box 876
Sublette, KS 67877
620.675.8640
www.cstbvd.com

Replacement Heifer Strategies - A starting place for Biosecurity

The BVD Education Project - a BVD continuing education brief by Dr. Bill Hessman, DVM

The cow-calf industry appears to be seeing the beginnings of replacing those females liquidated because of the extended drought suffered here in the US. Replacing reproductive animals is an important and critical management step in any herd.

Biosecurity is a buzz word often heard. Biosecurity is defined as reducing or preventing the introduction of new diseases onto a farm from outside sources. Therefore, biosecurity considerations hold considerable importance when purchasing replacement heifers.

With the diagnostic tests available today, preventing the introduction of BVDV into your herd is simple and inexpensive and should become part of your herd management program. Controlling and managing BVDV in your herd is fairly straightforward and simple.

1) **Determine if BVDV is currently present in your herd.**
   The most economical method to test a herd requires testing of all calves, cows not producing a calf and the bulls. If all test negative, the herd is BVDV PI free. If a calf tests positive then you must test the calf's dam.
2) **Design and implement a biosecurity plan for your herd.**
   Test and Quarantine all purchased animals prior to mixing into your herd. This includes testing the newborn carried by purchased pregnant females immediately upon birth.
3) **Appropriate vaccination.**
   Improves the level of active immunity in reproducing females.

By combining biosecurity, diagnostic testing and vaccination you can greatly reduce the potential economic impact of BVDV in your herd.

Bovine Viral Diarrhea Virus (BVDV) is one possibility of a "new disease" that can be introduced into a herd that can have huge economic impacts. Studies have shown that the introduction of BVDV into a herd can have economic consequences of up to $400 per head.

BVDV is unique in that the virus can produce animals (during gestation) that can be Persistently Infected (PI) and are infected for life. These PI animals serve as the primary reservoir for continual transmission within a herd and even to adjacent herds with direct contact. Production of these PI

Central States Testing, LLC
PO Box 876
Sublette, KS 67877
620.675.8640
www.cstbvd.com

animals most commonly occur in heifers because of their inherent lack of good active immunity. Bringing a Persistently Infected replacement animal into your herd can have devastating outcomes.

Also, be aware if you bring in tested replacements it is wise to know the status of the established herd as well. If you already have BVDV in the established herd the benefits of purchasing PI free replacements are removed.

The BVD Education Project - is a producer focused series of articles by Dr. Bill Hessman, DVM, Sublette Kansas, aimed at providing cattlemen with information that will allow them to protect their herds from the impact of Bovine Viral Diarrhea Virus (BVDV or BVD) and persistent infection (BVD-PI).