



Johne's Disease

Johne's disease, also known as Paratuberculosis (or MAP), is a chronic, contagious bacterial disease of the intestinal tract that primarily affects cattle, but can also affect sheep, goats and other ruminant species.

Cattle are typically infected as calves within the first month of their life by ingesting contaminated faeces, colostrum or milk from older animals. Animals can be infected and shedding without showing clinical signs so testing and robust biosecurity is the main way of controlling this disease in a herd.

Once an animal is infected the disease is slowly progressive over several years. Infected cattle can start spreading the disease before developing clinical signs. Eventually, the infection progresses enough that the animal becomes unwell.

Tests on live animals tend to detect infection in the later stages of the disease and infected animals may test negative for several years before testing positive. This means that control and eradication is difficult and is usually a lengthy procedure. Herds that are free of the disease should recognise that as a valuable asset to be protected and accredited.

Clinical signs

- The disease eventually causes adult cattle to waste and die
- Progressive reduction in milk output, feed conversion efficiency and fertility
- Clinical signs of diarrhoea and weight loss usually occur in cattle over 2 years of age
- In heavily infected herds this leads to a high rate of wastage in cattle at 3 to 5 years old

Transmission

- An infected cow can shed billions of MAP bacteria into the environment via faeces as well as colostrum and milk often before showing clinical signs.
- Young animals (particularly calves) are most susceptible to infection by ingesting the bacterium but are least likely to show clinical signs
- Infection is usually introduced to a herd by purchasing infected breeding stock including bulls
- Semen can be infected in the later stages of the disease but this is a low risk for disease transmission
- MAP may last a year on slurry or pasture

Impact

- Studies show that Johne's Disease may affect **20 to 50 per cent** of UK herds¹
- Considerable financial losses due to culling, poor milk yields, weight loss and poor fertility
- The financial losses are estimated to be **£2600 in a 100 cow dairy herd**¹ with clinical cases but this is likely to be a gross underestimate

Protect your herd!

Johne's Disease Accreditation Scheme

Add value and protect your herd by joining the Premium Cattle Health Scheme

Join today for 50% off Annual Membership in your first year!

Benefits of Joining

- As a member you benefit from preferential testing rates to keep costs down
- Results are emailed directly to you and your vet simultaneously, for easy integration into your existing herd health management
- Our specialist vets are also available to discuss test results and action plans
- Advertise your stock as **Johne's Disease** accredited at auction or for private sales and be listed on our **online database** to help market your stock and achieve higher prices
- Attend Johne's Disease accredited sections of shows and sales

How the Accreditation Scheme Works:

- Follow the **CHeCS** rules and conditions for testing, stock management and biosecurity
- Annually test all stock over 2 years of age
- Herd status is gained after 3 clear annual herd tests
- Risk Level system used to identify higher and lower risk herds (explained below)
- Members can also become accredited for **BVD, Leptospirosis, IBR and Neospora**
- Certificates are issued to show herd health status

Risk Levels

Level 1: There have been at least three clear annual herd tests. This is the lowest level of risk

Level 2: There has been at least one clear herd test but does not yet qualify for Level 1 status

Level 3: Three per cent or less of the herd identified as reactors at the most recent herd test

Level 4: More than three per cent of the herd identified as reactors at most recent herd test

Level 5: This includes herds without a health plan for Johne's disease, herds that not adhere to the mandatory elements of the health plan and herds that do not carry out the required testing. This is the highest level of risk

For more info please contact:

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