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Surveillance Summary

The following data highlights submissions to the provincial veterinary laboratory in Q4 - November 2018 to January 2019.

Calves < 2 months of age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 42% of cases were submitted to work up a diarrhea or gastrointestinal problem • <i>Rotavirus</i> and <i>coronavirus</i> were responsible for 50% of diarrhea cases; more than half of cases were mixed infections where more than one agent was identified • There were 4 cases of <i>Salmonella</i> Dublin diagnosed on farms that had submitted samples for either pneumonia or unexplained mortality
Calves > 2 months to 2 years of age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main cause of death identified from postmortem was pneumonia • There was 1 case of malignant catarrhal fever • There were 3 positive test results for bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV)
Adult Cattle (>2 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main cause of death identified from postmortem was pneumonia • There was one case of blackleg (clostridial myositis)
Abortions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 40 submissions for abortion work-up which is slightly increased over the past year but consistent with the same quarter last year • Diagnoses of ureaplasma were identified as being at increased frequency compared to previous quarters



Ureaplasma Abortions in 2019

Submissions to the Animal Health Lab have identified 8 cases of ureaplasma abortions in 2019, nearly as many as were identified in the entirety of 2018.

Ureaplasma diversum is a bacteria that commonly inhabits the respiratory and genital tract of cattle. Many cattle carry the bacteria without showing any signs. However, *Ureaplasma* can be responsible for infertility, late-term abortions, or the delivery of premature, stillborn, or weak calves. Illness in calves is typically pneumonia and sometimes includes enlarged joints.

Transmission of disease to uninfected animals may occur via contaminated sperm (live breeding or artificial insemination) or oocytes and embryos used in embryo transfer. Infection can also be transmitted by direct contact, passage through the birth canal during delivery, or contaminated breeding or obstetric equipment.

It is valuable to investigate all cases of abortion to rule out if other animals in the herd are at risk. The herd veterinarian can submit the placenta and fetus from an abortion to the diagnostic lab, or perform a postmortem on farm and submit tissue samples. Including placenta will improve the likelihood of finding the cause of the abortion. If ureaplasma is suspected as the cause of disease based on findings in the fetus at postmortem, a lab PCR test is run on tissue samples to confirm.



When to get in touch with a veterinarian:

- If more than one abortion is noted on a farm
- If newborn calves fail to thrive or show signs of respiratory disease

Enlarged joints in a calf with a diagnosis of ureaplasma.

Photo courtesy of Dr. Andrew Brooks, Animal Health Laboratory, University of Guelph



What is the Bovine Ontario Animal Health Network?

The Bovine Ontario Animal Health Network is a group of veterinarians and specialists working in government, university research and laboratory, and in beef, dairy, and veal practice who meet every 3 months to monitor and discuss disease trends in Ontario.

Our Goals:

- To facilitate coordinated preparedness, early detection and response to animal health and welfare
- To identify existing or emerging animal health and welfare trends
- To contribute expertise to prevention, detection and timely information exchange to help practitioners make informed decisions on farm

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