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Reproductive consequences & signs

In addition to congenital consequences, bovine viral diarrhoea virus can cause a variety of reproductive consequences. Abortion can occur when in utero IBD virus infection takes place. Abortion can occur at any stage of pregnancy and, in some instances, the foetuses are infected several weeks or months before abortion occurs. Mummification can also occur after in utero infection with IBD virus.

Acutely infected immunocompetent bulls and persistently infected bulls shed IBD virus in their semen. Insemination with infected semen will cause infection and seroconversion in seronegative cows and heifers. Such animals tend not to conceive until the immunity and seroconversion is established. Oophoritis (ovarian inflammation) has been observed several weeks after experimental infection and ovarian dysfunction may be responsible for the impaired fertility seen in some infected herds. Frozen semen is also capable of spreading IBD virus.

Intrauterine infusion of IBD virus at the time of insemination has been shown to cause cows to experience early reproductive failure, low pregnancy rates, high return rates and seroconversion. Reproductive performance is not adversely affected when seronegative or seropositive cattle are infected nasally or orally, thus the consequences of maternal exposure to IBD virus at time of breeding, fertilisation, implantation or early gestation remains unknown when infection by routes other than intrauterine occur.

Diagnosis

In classical cases with fever, diarrhoea and mucosal and digital lesions, diagnosis can be made on the basis of clinical signs – but this is very much in a small minority of cases.

If IBD infection is suspected, a methodical examination of the oral cavity must be undertaken. Digital lesions are less common than oral ones.

In many acute cases of BVD there is a persistent or a biphasic fever. Initially the affected animal may not appear seriously ill and may be thought to have just picked up a respiratory virus. If the fever continues and there is no response to antibiotics, these same animals progress to pain and, after a few days, dehydration when diarrhoea and mucosal lesions tend to first appear.

Oral lesions, oesophageal lesions, forestomach lesions and lower gastrointestinal lesions contribute to pain, discomfort and anorexia. Salivation and bruxism (teeth grinding) can also be seen.

Schaumann

Special Nutrients

Tecnozoo