



TRICHOMONIASIS

FACT SHEET

WHAT IS TRICHOMONIASIS?

Cattle Trichomoniasis or “trich” is a reportable, sexually transmitted disease of cattle caused by the protozoan *Tritrichomonas foetus*.

Trichomoniasis primarily affects beef cattle, however cases have been seen in dairy cattle. Bovine trichomoniasis is not transmittable to humans.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

While bulls do not show signs of trich, female cattle may display evidences of the disease.

When trich is introduced into the reproductive tract of females, it can cause inflammation of vaginal and uterine mucosa resulting in early pregnancy loss and late-term abortions. Cows can still conceive during the few weeks it takes for the uterine infection to develop. Other reproductive abnormalities such as pyometra, endometritis, or the development of mummified fetuses can occur.

TRANSMISSION

Transmission of the disease occurs during natural breeding, and both male and female are capable of infecting the opposite sex. Once a bull is infected, it remains so for life, but most infected cows will eventually clear the infection.

During breeding, organisms from the surface of the penis are left in the vagina where they multiply and invade the uterus to create an infection.

Cows may naturally clear the infection. The recommended length of time of sexual rest is 120-150 days to allow for immunity to build. After clearing the infection, cows can rebreed and carry a fetus to term. The period of immunity is short and will not protect subsequent pregnancies if the cow is re-exposed to an infected bull.

DIAGNOSIS

Authorized veterinarians test bulls for trich by applying suction to a pipette while vigorously scraping the epithelium in the preputial fornix and

the distal 1/3 of the penis. Alternatively, douching with saline or lactated Ringer’s solution (without preservatives) can be used.

There are testing options for female cattle, but they are not proven to be reliable.

REPORTING TRICHOMONIASIS

Trichomoniasis is listed as a reportable disease to the TAHC. The Texas Administrative Code, Title 4, Part 2, Chapter 45 requires that all confirmed cases of trich be reported to the TAHC within 24 hours of diagnosis. Reports can be made to a TAHC region office or to the TAHC headquarters at 1-800-550-8242.

TRICHOMONIASIS CONTROL PROGRAM

In order to protect Texas cattle from trich, the TAHC has regulations and an established control program intended to prevent the spread of disease amongst the cattle industry.

For more information about the Trich Control Program and movement requirements, visit: <https://bit.ly/36BdadO>

PREVENTION

The most effective management practice is to cull all infected bulls and replace them with virgin certified bulls or to ensure that all bulls servicing herds receive a negative trich test prior to breeding. Infection is prevented by exposing only uninfected bulls to uninfected females.

There is currently one vaccine available that has been proven to reduce the shedding of *T. foetus*. Studies have shown that vaccinating cattle prior to breeding increases calf crop in trich infected herds.

Producers interested in vaccinating or testing their herd are encouraged to contact their private veterinarian or a veterinarian on the [TAHC Bovine Trichomoniasis Certified Veterinarian](#) list.