



Brucellosis

Contact your nearest state/private veterinarian/animal health technician for further information

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agriculture,
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Department:
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What is brucellosis?

Brucellosis is a disease that spreads quickly in livestock (cattle, sheep and goats) and is caused by bacteria (germs). People can also get brucellosis and this disease can make humans very sick.

What are the signs of brucellosis in livestock?

- Pregnant animals may lose their pregnancy (abort) at late term (calves/lambs/kids born dead).
- Calves/lambs/kids which are born alive are very weak and usually die shortly after birth.
- A drop in milk production.
- Livestock may develop large swellings on their joints, especially the knees (hygromas).
- Bulls/rams have decreased fertility or even become sterile, resulting in less cows/ewes becoming pregnant.



How do livestock become infected?

- By licking the aborted calf/lamb/kid.
- By eating/drinking food or water that contains the germs.
- Calves/lambs/kids become infected by drinking milk which contains the germs.

How do people get brucellosis?

People get brucellosis by drinking raw milk (milk that is not boiled or pasteurised) that contains the germs.

By picking up and throwing away aborted calves/lambs/kids.

By accidentally injecting themselves with the brucellosis vaccine used for livestock.



What are the symptoms of brucellosis in people?

At first you may think you have flu.

The signs are:

- Nausea
- Fever
- Headache
- Pain in the muscles and joints
- Coughing and cold sweats, especially at night
- Depression
- Weakness and tiredness.

Go to your nearest clinic if you think that you may have brucellosis

How can brucellosis be prevented?

In people

- Drink only pasteurised or boiled milk.
- Always wear protective clothing (gloves, overall, mask) when handling (picking up and throwing away) aborted calves/lambs/kids.

How can brucellosis be controlled in livestock?

- Injecting cattle, sheep and goats with a vaccine against brucellosis. This will result in a decrease in the number of pregnancies being lost because of brucellosis.
- According to law, all female calves (heifers) between 4 and 8 months of age must be vaccinated against brucellosis.
- No bulls or bull calves may be vaccinated against brucellosis. Contact your state vet, private vet or animal health technician if you think your livestock have brucellosis.

