

Lameness in Beef Cattle

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How do cows become lame?

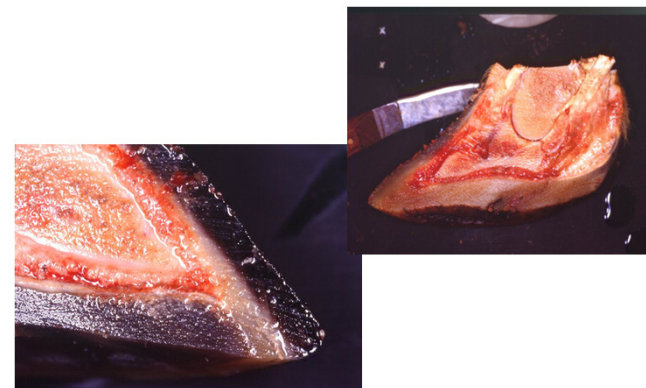


Why does it matter?



- Economic costs
 - Reduced dlwg/ milk production
 - Reduced fertility
 - Increased culling
- Labour costs
 - Treatment time
 - Extra husbandry
- Welfare costs
 - Freedom from pain and discomfort

How do cows become lame?



Claw Lesions



- White line disease



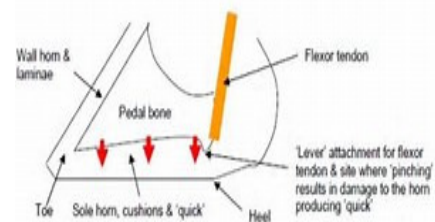
Not only cows that are affected!

- Soft underfoot condition
- Stony areas when gathered
- White line disease ascending into joint
- Burst out at coronary band

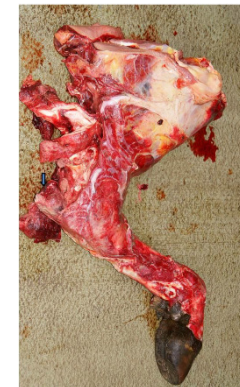


- Solar ulcers

- Ulcer = exposure of sensitive tissue



- Inappropriate diet for age and stage of calves
- Lack of minerals
- Low calcium
- Bone fractures



Infectious Lesions



- Digital Dermatitis
 - Bacterial infection of skin
 - Very contagious
 - Spread in slurry
 - Responsive to treatment
 - View has a herd problem
 - Can be spread on hands and knives



- Foul
 - Deeper skin infection
 - Between cleats
 - Often swollen coronary band
 - Bacteria (fusobacterium necrophorum) produces toxin that eat away at skin



Heel Erosion

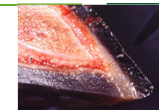
- Standing in wet conditions
- Allows other infections to establish
- Imbalances hoof
- Could lead to solar ulcers



Lameness – not always feet!



- Laminitis
 - Inflammation of the laminae
 - Too much blood = rapidly produced horn
 - Overgrown claws
 - Softer horn
 - Damage to blood vessels
 - Leakage of blood → sole haemorrhage





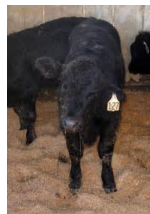
- How does laminitis occur?
 - High energy feed causes toxins to build up in blood stream
 - Sudden changes in feeding eg at calving
 - → blood vessels in feet become damaged
 - Loose faeces
 - Risk periods
 - Calving
 - Turn out/ housing.



- Joint ill
 - Bacteria enter from gut, lungs or umbilicus
 - Travel to joints → joints become infected → pus produced → swollen joint and very lame.
 - Colostrum
 - Hygiene at calving.

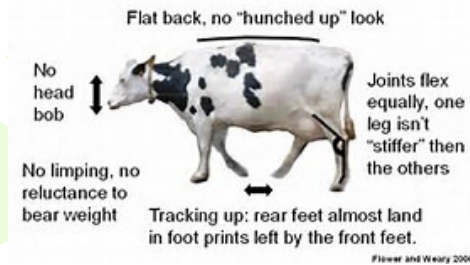


- Mycoplasma Bovis
 - Pneumonia in calves
 - Ears drooped due to middle ear infection
 - Reservoir of infection in adult herd
 - Mastitis
 - Swollen joints



Recognising Lameness

Clues to Look For When Examining A Cow For Lameness





Prevention Claw Lesions



- Diet
 - Important in fattening stock
- Are your cows comfortable?
 - Lying time should be about 14 hours/ day
 - Enough space?
 - Do the cows fit the housing?
- Minimise foot trauma
 - Look after tracks/ gateways
 - Tight turns/ dead ends in shed?

Look closer to home



- **What** is making your cows lame?
- What groups are affected most?
- Are the causes infectious or not?
- **When** are the risk periods?
 - Housing or turnout?

RECORDS!

Prevention Infectious Lesions



- Identify areas of slurry pooling
 - Maintain slats, water troughs etc
 - Increase frequency of yard scraping
 - Don't overstock
 - Maintain areas around water troughs outside
- Footbathing
 - Every 1-6 months
 - 5% formalin
 - Use a pre wash bath first
 - Remember youngstock

Bulls



- Avoid laminitis by sourcing direct from breeder and not purchasing bulls that have been fed for sales
- Are your bulls fit to work?
 - Routine foot trim 10 weeks before breeding season
 - Do earlier if getting fertility tested
 - Sperm take 60 days to mature – any interruption could affect sperm quality for 60 days.



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Acknowledgments



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