Leptospirosos – A Zoonotic Disease

Leptospirosis infection (commonly called Redwater) causes abortion in cattle & can be transferred to humans.

Two strains of bacterium causing **Leptospirosis** in cattle - Leptospira hardjo & Leptospira Pomona - are **ZOONOTIC** which means they **can be transferred from animals to humans. Leptospirosis is usually transmitted by contact with infected urine.**

Leptospirosis is a cause of economic losses in farm animals. Many infected animals do not show signs of clinical disease. Leptospirosis is spread by the urine of infected animals & moisture is an important factor of the survival of the bacteria in the environment.

Redwater (red colored urine) in cattle, and particularly in calves, strongly suggests infection with Leptospira pomona. Calves as young as two or three weeks of age can become affected. Symptoms develop suddenly and include deep red urine, decreased activity, rapid breathing & anaemia. Young unweaned calves may be "off-colour" at one feed and dead before the next. Not all severely affected animals die, however, and the symptoms of redwater may pass after a few days.

Cows may abort in late pregnancy due to either Leptospira pomona or Leptospira hardjo infections. Abortion may occur without, or some weeks after, other symptoms of leptospirosis

Leptospirosis may also add indirectly to other problems in cattle, such as decreased milk production, increased susceptibility to the usual forms of mastitis, and poorer fertility. It can also be responsible for losses of condition as a result of persistent kidney damage

Prevention by Vaccination

'7 in 1' cattle vaccines are now available which provide combined protection against the clostridial diseases and leptospirosis. This vaccine is given instead of the usual '5 in1' vaccine as an annual vaccination. Vaccination of purchased cattle must not be overlooked.

For More Information

http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/health/specific/cattle/leptospirosis-cattle-herds