



# SPCA CERTIFIED

## Herd Health Planning for Beef Cattle

The following Tables 1 & 2 are provided as examples of minimum response and treatment plans and are not exhaustive. Consider additional information, conditions and protocols specific to your operations.

**Table 1. Animal Health Response Plan**

Trigger for Investigation	Response Plan
Calf mortality pre-weaning exceeds 5 % per calving season  Cattle (post-weaning) exceeds 2 % per year	Specimens collected and submitted to vet/lab or call vet
An unexplained mortality	
Onset of clinical signs of disease such as fever, reduced appetite, diarrhea, coughing and nasal discharge, an animal separated from the rest of the herd, lethargy etc.	a) if one animal is affected:  b) if more than one animal is affected:
An unexplained change in feed / water consumption	a) if one animal is affected:  b) if more than one animal is affected:
Other:	

**Table 2. Treatment Protocols**

Illness / Condition	Clinical Signs	Treatment Protocols	Preventative protocols / when to call a vet
Note: All medications used are under the recommendation and authority of the consulting vet			
Calf Scours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Viral</li> <li>▪ Bacterial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Diarrhea (loose, watery consistency to feces)</li> <li>▪ Feces may have blood and mucus</li> <li>▪ Dehydration</li> <li>▪ Weak</li> <li>▪ Inappetent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Isolate</li> <li>▪ Hydration</li> <li>▪ Maintain body temperature</li> <li>▪ Antibiotics as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Non or poor response to treatment</li> <li>▪ Deaths</li> <li>▪ IV hydration required</li> </ul>
Navel infections / joint ill  (usually young animals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Navel swollen, red or abscessed</li> <li>▪ Swollen joints</li> <li>▪ Fever</li> <li>▪ Lameness</li> <li>▪ Inappetent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drainage, compress</li> <li>▪ Supportive medication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multiple or non responsive cases</li> </ul>
Coccidiosis  (animals tend to be older than typical scours age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Diarrhea with blood and mucus</li> <li>▪ Depressed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appropriate medication</li> <li>▪ Hydration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nonresponsive cases</li> <li>▪ Outbreaks</li> <li>▪ Confirm diagnosis</li> </ul>
Pinkeye  (primarily in pastured animals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Painful, runny eye</li> <li>▪ Cloudy, opaque, reddish cornea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appropriate antibiotic topical, under the eyelid or by I.M. injection</li> <li>▪ Dust and fly control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Out of control outbreak</li> <li>▪ Non-responsive cases</li> <li>▪ Confirm diagnosis</li> </ul>
Respiratory disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Depressed</li> <li>▪ Inappetent</li> <li>▪ Fever</li> <li>▪ Abnormal discharge from nose and eyes</li> <li>▪ Cough</li> <li>▪ Laboured breathing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Isolation pen</li> <li>▪ Appropriate course of antibiotics, NSAIDS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outbreaks</li> <li>▪ Non-responsive cases</li> <li>▪ Post mortems</li> <li>▪ Preventative protocols including vaccinations</li> </ul>

Dystocia (difficult calving)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cow / heifer is in labour but not progressing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assist if stage 2 labour is prolonged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish protocols with veterinarian to determine when and how to intervene</li> <li>▪ Veterinary assistance for difficult birthing / caesarians</li> <li>▪ Breeding, genetics, nutritional programs</li> </ul>
Retained placenta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Failure to expel placenta within 24 hours of calving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Untreated cows usually pass membranes in 2-11 days</li> <li>▪ If systemic illness then treat with appropriate systemic antibiotics and NSAIDS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Non-responsive or multiple cases</li> <li>▪ Determination if there is an infectious or nutritional cause</li> </ul>
Milk fever i.e. Hypocalcemia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Usually shortly after calving</li> <li>▪ Heavy milk producer</li> <li>▪ Weakness</li> <li>▪ Paralysis</li> <li>▪ Low body temperature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More common in dairy breeds</li> <li>▪ I.V. and S.Q. Calcium salts</li> <li>▪ Supportive treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Non-responsive cases</li> <li>▪ Multiple cases</li> <li>▪ Consult on nutritional management</li> <li>▪ Blood test</li> </ul>
Uterine infection i.e. Metritis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Abnormal vaginal discharge post calving</li> <li>▪ May have had retained placenta</li> <li>▪ Sometimes systemically ill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appropriate use of prostaglandins</li> <li>▪ Possible use of systemic antibiotics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consult regarding infectious or nutritional causes</li> <li>▪ Intrauterine therapy</li> <li>▪ Multiple cases</li> </ul>
Mastitis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Abnormal milk</li> <li>▪ Reduced milk production</li> <li>▪ Hot, hard, painful udder (1 or more quarters)</li> <li>▪ Systemic illness</li> <li>▪ Bawling calf</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Determine if practical to treat</li> <li>▪ Strip out quarter(s) frequently</li> <li>▪ As appropriate, intramammary and systemic antibiotics</li> <li>▪ Supportive therapy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Determine appropriate antibiotic therapy</li> <li>▪ Diagnosis and treatment stubborn or multiple cases</li> </ul>

Lumpy jaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bony swellings on jaw bones</li> <li>▪ Can affect ability to eat and reduce body condition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I.V. sodium iodide (usually vet administered)</li> <li>▪ Some are responsive to injectable tetracyclines</li> <li>▪ Reduce exposure to coarse and prickly feeds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Administration of I.V. sodium iodide</li> <li>▪ Diagnosis</li> <li>▪ Non-responsive cases</li> </ul>
Wooden tongue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hard, swollen, painful, protruding tongue</li> <li>▪ Drooling</li> <li>▪ Inability to eat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I.V. sodium iodide (usually vet administered)</li> <li>▪ Some are responsive to injectable tetracyclines</li> <li>▪ Reduce exposure to coarse and prickly feeds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Administration of I.V. sodium iodide</li> <li>▪ Diagnosis</li> <li>▪ Non-responsive cases</li> </ul>
Bloat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sudden distress</li> <li>▪ Hypersalivation</li> <li>▪ Distended abdomen, especially left side</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stomach tube into rumen</li> <li>▪ Anti bloat medications</li> <li>▪ Severe emergency cases: trochar appropriate region of most distension left flank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Severe cases</li> <li>▪ Outbreaks</li> <li>▪ Surgical cases</li> <li>▪ Discussion of pasture / feed management associated with legumes vs. obstructive cases (e.g. lodged feed)</li> </ul>
Grass Staggers Hypomagnesemia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Most commonly seen in spring on lush fast growing pastures</li> <li>▪ Apprehension</li> <li>▪ Tremors</li> <li>▪ Stiff gait</li> <li>▪ Staggers</li> <li>▪ Collapse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ S.Q. magnesium salts</li> <li>▪ Nutritional supplementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stubborn or multiple cases</li> <li>▪ I.V treatment</li> <li>▪ Nutritional consults</li> <li>▪ Blood tests</li> </ul>
White Muscle Disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Calves showing stiffness walking</li> <li>▪ Recumbency</li> <li>▪ Sudden death</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vitamin E and Selenium injections</li> <li>▪ Preventative and / or treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unexplained calf deaths</li> <li>▪ Blood tests</li> <li>▪ Feed and soil analysis</li> <li>▪ Nutritional management and supplementation</li> <li>▪ Post mortem diagnostics</li> </ul>

Foot rot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lameness in 1 or more feet</li> <li>▪ 1<sup>st</sup> sign is swelling at interdigital space and coronary band</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I.M. antibiotics</li> <li>▪ Move to dry pastures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If need lesion locally treated</li> <li>▪ Consultation on multiple cases</li> <li>▪ Isolation</li> <li>▪ Prevention</li> </ul>
Other lameness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lameness in 1 or more feet / legs</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Determine if foot or leg</li> <li>▪ Diagnosis and management of conditions such as laminitis, abscesses, etc.</li> </ul>
Clostridial diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Different clostridial bacteria cause different clinical signs with most resulting in death</li> <li>▪ Blackleg: sudden gassy swelling in muscle</li> <li>▪ Tetanus: uncontrollable muscle spasms in contaminated surgical wound (e.g. castration)</li> <li>▪ Enterotoxemia</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clinical diagnosis</li> <li>▪ Post mortems</li> <li>▪ Vaccination strategies</li> </ul>
Other			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consultation for diseases and conditions not covered here</li> </ul>