

Feedlot BVD PI Screening Protocol



The screening protocols are designed to keep Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) persistently infected (PI) calves from causing production losses for the feeding operation. All beef operations can benefit from a BVD control plan involving testing, proper vaccination, biosecurity and good animal handling and welfare management.

Option 1 – Arrival Testing Plan

Designed for yards wanting to identify all PIs at arrival, which have not been purchased as BVD PI negative. Identifying and eliminating PIs early can realize benefits of reduced disease and lowered treatment costs for the operation

1. All cattle that have not been previously tested negative for BVD PI should have an ear notch or blood sample taken at processing.
2. All cattle need to be identified individually and matched to the sample taken.
3. Samples should be sent frequently to the lab for analysis. If possible, keep the sampled group in a separate pen without contact with other animals or shared water tanks and feed sources until the test results are known.
4. Positive PI calves should be removed immediately from the group as PIs shed virus in large amounts continuously and spread the virus to other cattle.
5. PI positive cattle should be isolated in a separate part of the yard. Care should be taken to avoid spreading the virus from these calves to other calves in the yard.
6. A confirmatory sample should be taken from the PI positive animal 3 weeks after the original test.
7. Negative second test calves were acutely infected and can be returned to the home pen or group. An acute calf is one that was infected by a PI, but was able to clear the infection.
8. Positively confirmed PI cattle can be railed after processing and treatment withdrawals are clear. Some operations elect to finish PI animals separately. Approximately 30-50% of PIs will die prior to reaching optimal finish weight. We do not recommend marketing the animal.

Option 2 – Surveillance/Source Plan

Designed for yards wanting to identify sources of BVD PI animals. This plan does not identify all PIs as many PI animals are not treated and stay healthy.

1. All deads and chronics should have a sample taken and frozen.
2. All cattle need to be identified individually and matched to the sample taken.
3. Pens experiencing high levels of respiratory disease are at risk and should be sampled.
4. Samples can be frozen for up to 30 days.

A system should be developed to identify which buyers, sale barns or operations are sending PI cattle. Information should be sent to them about ways that they can implement a BVD control program.

Animal Profiling is committed to working with the industry to assist in a program designed to stop PIs from limiting production.