



What's Up Doc?

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The Life and Times of a Trich Protazoa (Q & A on Trich Testing Bulls)

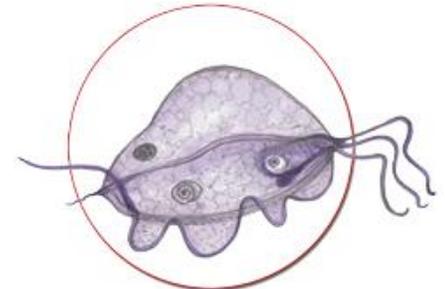
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What is trich?

Trichomoniasis or "Trich", as it is more commonly known as, is a venereal disease in cattle. The *Tritrichomonas foetus* protozoan parasite (a single cell organism) can and does cause a large economic loss for farmers and ranchers, which can lead to having an abundance of open/infertile cows, abortions, an extended calving season and even pyometras (uterine infections). Trich is a very easily transmitted disease because the organism lives in the lining of the penis and the prepuce. A bull contracts the disease from an infected cow then spreads the disease to any cow he breeds. The infected females can have early abortions. Once the cow has cleared the infection after a few heat cycles she may re-breed, causing the late calving/extended calving season. The cow can also become re-infected, since the immunity doesn't last. Bulls on the other hand should be culled if they test positive for Trich. There is no known cure for the disease in bulls.



Tritrichomonas foetus
(single-celled protozoan)

When should I test for Trichomoniasis?

Testing should be completed before buying a bull or prior to the beginning of your breeding season. Every bull that will have access to the heifers/cows should be tested. Testing cows is unreliable because they can clear the infection on their own in a few months. Trich tests are usually done on a bull at the same time as their annual semen evaluation, preventing the need for two trips through the chute. There are no outward visible signs of Trichomoniasis in a herd. The best prevention is annual testing followed by pregnancy checking cows in a timely manner.

How do you test bulls for Trichomoniasis?

Trich testing bulls is a fairly simple process, especially if they are already being run through a chute for a semen evaluation. A sample is typically collected by a preputial scraping. The veterinarian or technician uses a pipette to scrape cells from the prepuce inside the sheath and apply negative pressure to pull the sample into the pipette. Many times, they will draw small amounts of blood to be

sure they have scraped hard enough to disrupt the lining. This is normal since trich lives in the lining. The sample will be placed into a test tube with “transport media” and sent to the lab. The lab can run either a culture or a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR). PCR testing has been proven to be more accurate. Depending on why the bulls are being tested, samples can also be “pooled”. This means they can combine samples from multiple bulls in one test to help reduce cost. If a pooled sample were to come back positive, the bulls from that group would need to be tested individually. A PCR Trich test is considered the official test and is required for out of state travel with non-virgin bulls.

How to I prevent/control Trichomoniasis?

Annual testing of all breeding bulls PRIOR to breeding season is **very** important. When purchasing animals to add to your herd, stick to virgin bulls and heifers. Be cautious of buying cows that are not pregnant, this could indicate having been infected by trich. Keep fences in good repair to prevent neighboring animals from getting access to your herd. Also, a short breeding season (2-3 months) will allow you to quickly recognize a pattern of low conception within your herd. “Trichomoniasis isn’t a problem until it is one, then it causes many headaches and heartaches until the situation has been cleaned up” says Dr. Bott. There is no vaccination to prevent Trichomoniasis. The Trichomoniasis vaccine for females only reduces shedding of the protozoa but does not stop it completely.



What YOU need for the National Western Stock Show

Bovine: Official Individual Identification (USDA Silver metal tags, 840 tags, Brucellosis orange metal tag, or Brucellosis orange 840 tag)

Certified Veterinary Inspection (Health Certificate)

Bovine Viral Diarrhea test (BVD)

Sheep: Scrapie tag

Certified Veterinary Inspection (Health Certificate) with scrapie statement

Goats: Scrapie tag OR a registration tattoo with breed certificate

Certified Veterinary Inspection (Health Certificate) with scrapie statement

Rams 6 months of age or greater must be tested for Brucella Ovis within 30 days of showing

Pigs: Ear notch (Purebred pigs need registration papers to match the ear notch)

Certified Veterinary Inspection (Health Certificate)

Horses: Certified Veterinary Inspection (Health Certificate)

Coggins recommended

Health Certificates must be obtained within 30 days of entering the stockshow grounds.

Sale animals have additional testing requirements.

Call the front office to schedule your Health Certificate exam - 970-351-7045