

Bvdconsult: An Internet-Based Tool for BVDV Prevention and Control

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Infection of cattle with bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV) is responsible for a variety of economically important syndromes in beef herds. It may be that BVDV is one of the more controllable and preventable contagious infections of cattle because of our understanding of BVDV epidemiology, the availability of efficacious vaccines and diagnostic methods. Unfortunately, many veterinarians and cattle producers fail to understand or apply appropriate BVDV biosecurity or biocontainment actions, and therefore, BVDV remains a costly infection of cattle. BVDConsult (Collaborative, Online, Novel, Science-based, User-friendly, Learning, Tool) is an internet-based tool (<http://129.130.128.84/openlabyrinth/mnode.asp?id=qf4jesn1rx7jqajxhq>) for helping cow-calf producers and their veterinarian design individualized BVDV control and prevention programs. BVDConsult is the result of a multi-organization (AVC, AABP, NCBA) effort to apply BVDV biosecurity and biocontainment principles in a user-friendly format that emphasizes the key management decisions that affect program success. The interface is a series of questions and subsequent responses that mimic a conversation between a veterinarian and a cattle producer. Based on the responses to questions on the willingness of the producer to perform specific management practices, the program provides recommendations specific to the individual herd. For BVDV-infected herds, the tool can help to create a plan to remove infected cattle and establish a strategy to reduce the likelihood of the herd becoming re-infected. For uninfected herds, BVDConsult can help the producer and herd veterinarian minimize the likelihood of introducing BVDV and reduce the impact if the herd is exposed. Alternatively, the tool can help producers understand why their current practices may not be effective. Six to 10 questions are asked depending on the responses given and a printable report records the plan of action and comments on its likely effectiveness for BVDV control or prevention. Extension veterinarians can play a pivotal role in creating awareness and encouraging use of BVDConsult.