



Bovine Digital Dermatitis (BDD)

There is a new disease of the feet of cattle, with multiple cases emerging in dairy herds across New Zealand. **Bovine Digital Dermatitis (BDD) is a highly contagious disease that you should be aware of** and able to recognise, to prevent it becoming widespread in your herd.

BDD is a very contagious disease causing pain in the interdigital space and above the heel bulbs. While it is thought that individual cases may have been present in New Zealand since the 1980s, the disease appears to now be changing and spreading, and we are starting to see many more cases in new herds across New Zealand.

BDD is so contagious that a single diseased foot has the potential to infect a whole clean herd.

What do the lesions look like?

BDD goes through several stages in its appearance. Most commonly, the skin in the area above the heel bulbs or between the claws is affected. Early on, the lesion is round to oval, moist, and mottled grey in appearance. When the area is cleaned up, the tissue looks red and raw, and is prone to bleeding ("strawberry footrot"). It has a foul odour and is very painful; the cow will lift her foot if you touch it or spray it with a high pressure hose. However, usually there is no swelling in the foot, and at this stage, lameness can be minimal. Older lesions start to look like warty growths with matted hair growing from the base ("hairy heel warts"). The disease can progress to underrunning of the sole, erosion of the heels, and ultimately lameness can be quite severe.



Diagnosis

If you suspect you have a case of BDD in your herd, contact your local Anexa vet to take a sample for confirmation.

As this is an emerging disease in New Zealand with the potential to become a really serious problem, we are carefully monitoring its spread and would like to be made aware of all new cases.





Bovine Digital Dermatitis (BDD) Continued...

What should I be doing?

Since BDD is very contagious, you should be aware of its existence so that if you get a case you can identify and treat it promptly before it spreads within your herd.

The most commonly seen presentation is the standing animal that flicks its foot repeatedly for no obvious reason.

Spraying the hose along the backs of cows' feet in the shed and observing for very painful responses is another way to keep a good lookout.



Treatment

Treatment involves cleaning and spraying with an antibiotic spray. When multiple animals are involved, footbathing may be a more practical treatment. Contact your local Anexa vet for advice.



Prevention

There are many factors that contribute to the development of BDD. **The most important prevention is biosecurity: stopping the spread from cow to cow.** If you have a case it is advisable to check the whole herd. While bacteria are thought to be the cause, good foot hygiene is also important; muddy tracks and feed pads have all been implicated in the spread of BDD.

By knowing what to look for, you can stop BDD in its tracks before it becomes a serious problem in your herd. Talk to your Anexa FVC vet today for more advice.

For further information on this topic contact your local clinic | anexafvc.co.nz

Coromandel
P: 07 866 8556

Huntly
P: 07 828 7660

Matamata
P: 07 888 8068

Ngaruawahia
P: 07 824 8630

Paeroa
P: 07 862 8815

Rototuna
P: 07 853 0027

Te Kauwhata
P: 07 826 3581

Gordonton
P: 07 824 2103

Maramarua
P: 09 232 5891

Morrinsville
P: 07 889 5159

Ngatea
P: 07 867 7256

Raglan
P: 07 825 8390

Te Aroha
P: 07 884 8014

Thames
P: 07 868 7005

