

Flint Hills District

Agriculture & Community Development

JULY 2021

DIFFERENTIATING PASTURE LAMENESS IN BEEF CATTLE

By A.J. Tarpoff, DVM, MS, Beef Extension Veterinarian

During the summer grazing month many producers run into issues with lame cattle. The effects of lameness may show itself by decreased fertility, weight loss, decreased performance, and increased labor and medicine costs. It has been estimated that 88-92% of lameness in cattle stems from the foot. Several issues could be the culprit, but we will review some of the common causes and the key differences between the clinical signs. It is a good idea to contact your local veterinarian to create a treatment plan for these conditions prior to the grazing season.

Lameness with Swelling:

The first way to determining the cause of lameness is to observe obvious swelling. The swelling most commonly effects the lower limb, indicating the area of inflammation just above the hoof. It is important to distinguish if the swelling is symmetrical (equal on both sides of the foot), or asymmetrical (only effecting one side). Swelling may also be noticed effecting single or multiple joints in both calves and cows.

Footrot is a common disease process that occurs in pasture cattle. Footrot is a bacterial infection of the foot that manifests itself with symmetric swelling encompassing the lower limb just above the hooves. Upon closer inspection, producers will notice a crack in the skin between the hooves and a foul pungent odor. Injectable antibiotic treatment is typically very rewarding when treated in the early stages of the disease. With delayed or late treatment of cases, however, deeper structures of the foot (tendons, joints, even bone) may become involved. Delayed treatment often requires extended therapy, and leads to increased cull rates from the herd.

It is always important to closely inspect symmetric swelling cases in the pasture settings. Wire, bale wrap, or other foreign bodies can wrap around and entrap the lower foot causing very similar symptoms as footrot. If the swelling has a well demarcated line horizontally across the foot, further investigation is warranted. The entrapping foreign body must be removed.

Single sided or asymmetric swelling of the foot often indicates a more serious condition in cattle. This type of clinical sign is often the result of deep structure issues. Puncture wounds, sole abscesses, or chronic infections can cause single sided joint, bone, or tendon infections. Extensive footwork on a tilt table or under sedation is often indicated in these cases. Contact your veterinarian when these cases are identified.

Lameness with no Noticeable Swelling:

Obvious lameness to one or more limbs with no noticeable swelling can often be challenging to diagnose appropriately. One of these conditions is called Hairy Heel Warts, also known as Digital Dermatitis, or Strawberry Footrot. These animals often display obvious lameness and will attempt to walk on the "tippy toe" of the foot. Upon closer observation you will notice wart like growths or bright red scab lesions below the dewclaws and above the heel bulbs of the foot. Topical treatment with an astringent or antibacterial solution is warranted for this condition.

The last condition we see more commonly in newly arrived stocker calves, is called toe tip necrosis (toe abscesses). These animals often appear with shifting lameness of the back legs. They will usually stand in strange orientations to protect and get pressure off of the damaged tow. The rear, outside hooves are most often affected. Treatment of these consists of picking up the feet and using hoof testers to confirm the conditions. Then the toes are slightly opened with hoof nippers to release the pressure. Without opening the toes, healing will not occur.

Lameness can be challenging to diagnose in a field situation, but understanding the subtle differences will help with proper and timely treatment. Visit with your veterinarian about any non-responsive lameness issues. Further diagnostics and treatment may be indicated.



"Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to it's liberty and interests by the most lasting bands."
 -Thomas Jefferson

A Family Affair

Break out the sunscreen and head to the fairgrounds, because it is finally fair month! I am so excited to see what kind of projects the 4-Hers have been working on this year and cannot wait to see their smiles when they are back in the community building looking at each others exhibits. The fair was always the big summer event in my family. During my time as a 4-Her, I would spend countless hours with my mom and dad working on projects. My mom would help me come up with new recipes to try and assist me when things were just not going my way. Then, it was down to the barns where dad would be waiting with the steer of heifers, ready to twist a tail when needed. I cannot forget about my sister who not only had projects of her own, but always wanted to hear my advice because "she wanted to be like me." 4-H and the fair are not just individual activities, they are a family affair.

As you prepare to bring your animals to the county fair, be sure to follow these tips from Amanda Marney to ensure your family and livestock have a successful fair week.

- Don't bring any visibly sick animals to a show or fair.
- Keep unused equipment and feed bagged or covered to reduce the risk of contamination.
- During the fair, keep animals as comfortable as possible to help reduce stress. Provide adequate bedding and plenty of air movement. Also, make sure clean water is always available and that your animals get the same feed as they do at home.
- Keep wheelbarrow tires, pitchforks and feeding equipment clean and free of manure.
- Clean and disinfect all items at the end of the fair before taking them home.
- Properly dispose of unused bedding, hay and feed after the fair. Do not bring them home.

Remember 4-Hers, your family is there as a guide and a helping hand. Remember to thank them for all they do to help you be successful in your projects. To all my 4-Hers and 4-H families, thank you for making the best better.

Best,

Shannon

(Agriculture/4-H Agent)

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-Mailing list: Know someone who should receive this newsletter? Call the office to have them added at (620)767-5136 or email Shannon at spscencer@ksu.edu.



July 4-H Fact



A.B. Graham started a youth program in Clark County, Ohio in 1902. This is considered the birth of 4-H in the United States.



External Parasites of Goats

Courtesy of Justin Talley– Dept. of Entomology and Plant Pathology– Oklahoma State University

Arthropod pests limit production in the goat industry in many ways. External parasites feed on body tissue such as blood, skin and hair. The wounds and skin irritation produced by these parasites result in discomfort and irritation to the animal. Parasites can transmit diseases from sick to healthy animals. They can reduce weight gains and milk production. In general, infested livestock cannot be efficiently managed.

Biting Lice– The goat biting louse (*Bovicola caprae*), Angora goat biting louse (*B. crassipes*), and *B. limbata* are the three main species found on goats. All three species live on the skin surface and feed on hair, skin and detritus. Eggs hatch in nine days to 12 days and on average, the entire life cycle is completed in one month. Biting lice of goats are distributed worldwide with winter populations being the most severe. Optimal control can be achieved with a residual insecticide spray with retreatment in two weeks after the initial treatment.

Horn Flies– Horn flies are primarily a pest of cattle, but occasionally seen on goats, especially when goats are co-grazing a pasture with cattle. Both male and female horn flies take blood from the host and feed from 20 time to 30 times a day. Horn flies continually stay on the animal and only leave the animal for short periods to lay eggs. Typical feeding areas on goats include the back, side, belly and legs. Horn fly populations begin building up in the spring and last until the first frost.

Keds– Keds, more often called sheep ticks, are actually a wingless fly. They spend their entire life cycle on sheep or goats, transferring between animals by contact. Sheep keds, *Melophagus ovinus*, are primarily a pest of sheep, but occasionally are found on goats.

Adults are grayish-brown, six-legged, and 1/4-inch long with a broad, leathery, somewhat flattened, unsegmented, saclike abdomen covered with short spiny hairs. Sheep keds can live up to six months, during which time the female produces around 10 to 15 young at the rate of one every eight days. Reproduction is continuous, though slow during the winter, producing several generations per year. They crawl on the skin and feed by inserting their sharp mouthparts into capillaries and sucking blood, much like a mosquito. This feeding results in considerable irritation, which causes the animal to rub, bite and scratch. Another effect observed from animals infested with keds is the condition known as “cockle.” Hide buyers downgrade skins with “cockle” because it weakens the hide and discolors them. Keds usually do not cause great damage if the animal is fed on a highly nutritious diet, but goats grazed throughout the year on pasture or range may acquire heavy burdens of keds during winter months and early spring. In addition, keds in large numbers can cause anemia, which can weaken the animal and make it more susceptible to other diseases. Sprays, dips and hand-dusting with insecticides are all effective methods for controlling sheep ked.

A comprehensive management plan for external parasites on goats will be variable and unique to individual goat operations. The key to a successful parasite management program is continual monitoring of the herd. The combined approach of an integrated pest management program is the most economical and environmentally sound tactic. The overall goal of a sound external parasite program is to manage the pests in a manner that reduces stress to the animals, as well as reduce the risk of pathogen transmission from the parasites



CRABGRASS CONTROL

This is the time of year when people really notice crabgrass infestations. By far the best way to control crabgrass is to prevent it by maintaining a good, thick lawn. Crabgrass is an annual that must come up from seed each year and the seed must have light in order to germinate. If a lawn is thick enough that sunlight does not reach the soil, the crabgrass will not germinate. Under Kansas conditions it is not easy to maintain such a lawn; so many gardeners do the next best thing and apply a crabgrass preventer in the spring. Crabgrass preventers kill the seed as it germinates. Most do not have any effect on crabgrass that has already come up. If we are too late to apply a preventer, we do have other herbicides that will kill crabgrass plants including Ortho Weed-B-Gon Max + Crabgrass Control, Fertilome Weed-Out with Crabgrass Control, Monterey Crab-E-Rad and BioAdvanced Lawn Weed & Crabgrass Killer. Each contains quinclorac, which is a crabgrass herbicide, as well as other active ingredients that control broadleaf weeds. Quinclorac is an excellent crabgrass killer that controls not only crabgrass but also has good activity on foxtail and certain broadleaves such as bindweed, black medic and clover. However, it does little to nothing to goosegrass.

Fortunately, crabgrass starts declining about the middle of August. This is about the same time that cool-season grasses such as tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass start to come out of their summer doldrums. By the first of September, the crabgrass will be less noticeable. Therefore, a small infestation is best ignored. Remember that crabgrass is a warm-season annual and will be killed by the first frost. (Ward Upham)





K-STATE

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Upcoming Events

The following are area or Statewide Agriculture, and/or Community Development/4-H events.

For more information on these events please contact the Extension Office

July

1– North Central District Horse Show– Salina

4– Happy 4th of July!

5– Offices Closed

9-10– Bob Hines Swine Classic– Manhattan

9-11– Tri-County Free Fair– Herington

17-26– Morris Co. Fair– Council Grove

25-29– Chase Co. Fair– Cottonwood Falls

August

12– Morris Co. 4-H Carcass Dinner– Council Grove

14– 4-H State Horticulture Contest– Manhattan

21-22– Kansas Livestock Sweepstakes– Manhattan

