



# Pfizer Animal Health

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## **Importance of Controlling Leptospira**

**NEW YORK (March 24, 2008)** — *Lepto hardjo-bovis*, can cause a chronic infection of the kidney, abortions, stillbirths and weak calves in both beef and dairy herds and may affect overall reproductive performance. And although many perceive it may not be a problem, a recent study published in *Bovine Practitioner* found leptospirosis to be prevalent throughout the United States.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, this study showed that 42 percent of 67 herds had results compatible with infection with *Lepto hardjo-bovis*.<sup>1</sup> Results from a previously reported study also suggested 59 percent of U.S. dairy herds may be infected with leptospira.<sup>2</sup>

While *hardjo-bovis* detection methods are improving, it is still difficult to diagnose since the disease has no outward signs, which is one reason why it may not have been considered a problem. However, the lead author of the *Bovine Practitioner* study urges producers to control this infectious reproductive disease, whether the herd has it or not.

"It's not necessary that *hardjo-bovis* be diagnosed," said Steven Wikse, DVM, Texas A&M University. "You want to keep it out if it's not there and if it is there, you want to control it. If your herd is not meeting its reproductive goals, you should consider implementing an infectious disease program."

A disease management program could include vaccination of the herd and any animals subsequently added to the operation. Producers should also consider working with their local veterinarians to adjust biosecurity and management practices.

Pfizer Animal Health provided financial support for the recent study and supports continued research of *Lepto hardjo-bovis*.

# # #

1 Wikse SE, Rogers GM, et al. Herd prevalence and risk factors of *Leptospira* infection in beef cow/calf operations in the United States: *Leptospira borgpetersenii* Serovar Hardjo. *Bov Pract* 2007;41(1):15-23.

2 Bolin CA. Bovine Leptospirosis is prevalent in U.S. dairy herds. *Bov Vet* 2003;Feb:14-15.

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