

Neospora caninum Testing

ABOUT: Neosporosis is a disease caused by the parasite *Neospora caninum*. In cattle, it is a leading cause of abortion, especially during the middle months of pregnancy. Dogs (and other canids) are the main carriers of the parasite and can pass it to cattle when parasite eggs in their feces contaminate feed, water, or pasture.

SYMPTOMS: In cattle, there are usually no signs before or after abortion; pregnancy loss can occur from 3 months to term, most often between 4-6 months. Calves may be born weak or stillborn.

PREVENTION: Keep dogs and other canids away from cattle feed, water, and calving areas, and avoid contaminated food or water. Test cattle regularly to identify carriers, as the disease can pass from mother to calf.

GETTING TESTED: Cattle can be tested with a simple blood test by collecting at least 2 ml of whole blood in a "red top" vacuum tube. Keep the sample refrigerated, ship it with an ice pack, and test within 2 weeks of collection.

Neospora caninum samples are processed and results reported on Tuesday.

