



It is easier to keep “trich” out of a herd than to control it after it enters the herd.

Contact your veterinarian for advice or to schedule testing. The University of Nebraska Veterinary Diagnostic Center (402-472-1434) provides diagnostic testing.

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Roots.

Nebraska Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Protection
P.O. Box 94787
Lincoln, NE 68509
402-471-2351

nda.nebraska.gov/animal/diseases/trich



Trichomoniasis and Your Cattle Herd

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Roots.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

What is Trichomoniasis or “Trich?”



Trichomoniasis is a Sexually Transmitted Disease

The disease causes infertility, abortions and delayed calving in cows and heifers. Hence, it can be economically devastating to a herd.

Trich is caused by a motile, complex, three-haired, single cell organism (protozoa). It survives in the microscopic folds of the bull's penis and internal sheath and colonizes in the vagina, cervix and oviducts in cows.

Bulls spread trichomoniasis from cow to cow during natural service. Certified AI semen is considered safe.

Signs in the Herd

- ☑ Repeat breedings.
- ☑ Extended calving season.
- ☑ Early abortions.
- ☑ High percentage of open cows.
- ☑ Pyometra (pus-filled) uterus in 1% of cows.

“Trich” in the Cow

The cow, once infected during breeding, does not appear ill, but may show a subtle vaginal discharge 1 to 3 weeks later.

However, the protozoa attaches to the lining of the reproductive tract and the resulting inflammatory process kills the embryo.

“Trich” in the Bull

There are no visible signs in the bull, nor will “trich” affect his sexual behavior. The organism lives in the folds of the penis and inside the sheath. As the bull ages, the skin folds increase and deepen in the penis and sheath, creating additional places for the organism to thrive. Therefore, older bulls (over 3 years) are more likely to become chronically infected than younger bulls.

In the cow or heifer, the organism lives in the vagina and uterus until her immune system eventually destroys it.



Immunity develops after several months but is short lived, so a cow or heifer can become infected again with subsequent breedings.

Preventive Measures

- Use virgin or tested bulls.
- Maintain ‘closed’ herds.
- Avoid purchasing open or first trimester bred cows.
- Repair fences.
- Keep a short breeding season.

Infected Herds

- Get veterinary advice.
- Consider artificial insemination.
- Test all bulls & sell positives to slaughter.
- Cull open cows.