

BACILLARY HEMOGLOBINURIA OR RED WATER (CLOSTRIDIUM HAEMOLYTICA)



Source: Lagneaux et al., 2021

CAUSES

- *Clostridium haemolyticum* produces a toxin that damages the liver of infected animals, who are predisposed by conditions such as liver flukes.
- Disease is seen most frequently in summer, especially in areas where liver flukes are also present.
- The *C. haemolyticum* organism occurs naturally in soil. Irrigated or poorly drained pasture with alkaline soils are most frequently affected.

RED WATER DISEASE IS CAUSED BY THE BACTERIA, CLOSTRIDIUM HAEMOLYTICUM.



Source: Abramowicz et al., 2022

CLINICAL SIGNS

Time between moving onto problem pastures and clinical signs is about 7-10 days. In some cases the first sign is sudden death, but affected animals more often:

- Go off feed.
- Stop milking.
- May show signs of abdominal pain, such as arched back and reluctance to move.
- Have dark red urine, reflecting the impact of liver damage OR may be jaundiced (i.e. whites of their eyes will appear yellow).

AS TREATMENT IS OFTEN UNSUCCESSFUL, PREVENTION IS KEY FOR MANAGING RED WATER DISEASE!

TREATMENT

Antimicrobials and supportive care can be used to treat sick animals, but treatment is often unsuccessful.



VACCINATION

Some clostridial vaccines contain *C. haemolyticum*, which can be administered in at-risk herds prior to high risk periods, such as movement to previously affected pastures.

At-risk cattle that have not been previously vaccinated or have unknown vaccine history should be given a booster series (i.e., 2 vaccines, 3-6 weeks apart), as per label directions. Cattle that have been previously vaccinated should be vaccinated annually.

PREVENTATIVE MANAGEMENT

Snail control around livestock drinking water sources in affected areas can help reduce risk of liver flukes.

