



# VIBRIOSIS FACT SHEET

## What is Vibriosis?

Vibriosis is a reproductive disease of cattle caused by the bacterium *Campylobacter fetus*, resulting primarily in extended calving patterns and lower pregnancy rates. *C. fetus* lives solely within the reproductive tract, and survives on the prepuce and penis of bulls and within the vagina of cows. The largest population of organism is found in bulls, particularly older bulls.

## Spread of Disease

This disease is transmitted through the act of mating. It is highly contagious and spread from infected bulls to cows and then from cows to uninfected bulls in the same joining period. After a brief period of proliferation in the vagina, the infection travels to the uterus, where it interferes with pregnancy implantation. After this embryonic loss cows will return to service (recycle). This cycle may repeat several times before pregnancy develops normally. This pattern of embryonic loss and then return to service will present as an extended joining pattern, or in most instances in our district as a poor pregnancy rate, with many of the pregnancies late in the joining period. Late term abortion may also present, and this occurs when some infection is still present during the pregnancy.

In an epidemic scenario, i.e. when introduced to heifer mobs or cow mobs for the first time the pregnancy rates will be less than 10% in a 6 week joining and from 40-60% in a 9 week joining. In an endemic scenario, i.e. where cow mobs have been previously exposed to vibrio, pregnancy rates will be down 10-20%.

## Diagnosis

Following a suspicious pregnant testing result, and thorough consideration, vaginal swabs from a small number of the cows in question will determine the presence of Vibriosis within the mob.

## Control in an Outbreak

Duel consideration will be made to the specific case at hand, but will be based around, revaccinating and disinfecting bulls. Vaccination of breeding females may also become a necessary component to assist in eradication.

## Eradication

Eradication will involve control of an outbreak as above. Vaccinate all breeding animals for the first two years, followed by vaccination of heifers and bulls for a further two years. After this time annual vaccination of bulls at bull testing will be continued.

## Prevention

Vaccination of all bulls at bull testing is the cornerstone of an appropriate Vibriosis prevention plan. The other major component is strict bull biosecurity, after obtaining your bulls from highly reputable breeders with a full vaccination history.



**For more information about VIBRIOSIS feel free to  
contact one of the vets at  
HVC on (02) 60362374.**