

**DAIRY FARM
MANAGEMENT
BASICS**

A Farm Management Course by
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Bovine Virus Diarrhea (BVD) - Article 36

Bovine virus diarrhea (BVD) is a costly disease that is prevalent in many dairy herds. It is a disease that producers need to be very concerned about for a number of reasons

- 1 BVD is a complex disease that can cause serious outbreaks, death and great economic losses. The virus can live in almost every tissue of an infected animal's body, and produce a wide range of symptoms, some of which are:
 - abortions and mummified fetuses.
 - early embryonic deaths and repeat breeders.
 - birth defects.
 - calf mortality at an early age.
 - diarrhea.
 - fever.
 - respiratory problems.
 - poor doing calves and cows.
 - immune suppression and increased susceptibility to other diseases and problems.
2. The disease is very contagious, and the virus is shed in almost all of an infected animal's excretion and secretions, and can be spread in a variety of ways:
 - exposure to clinically infected and non-clinically infected cows within the herd.
 - exposure to infected cows at auctions, fairs, etc.
 - purchase of infected cattle.
 - infected colostrum, semen, etc.
 - contaminated equipment (needles, hoof trimming tools, dehorers, etc.).
 - biting insects.

3. Persistently infected (PI) animals can be the major source of infection in the herd!! These animals are non-clinical, they appear normal, and they can be shedding large doses of the virus. They need to be identified and culled from the herd immediately

The goal should be to work with your veterinarian to establish a BVD control and prevention program for your herd, and then implement that program with great diligence. Some ideas for considerations are

- 1 Vaccinate
 - Vaccinate calves at 6 months of age and again at 12 months with a MLV BVD vaccine. After that, revaccinate every 12 months. NOTE: do not use MLV BVD vaccine on pregnant cattle.
 - Killed vaccines can be used, but they are not as effective as a modified live vaccines (MLV). However, they can be administered to pregnant cattle. At 6 months of age, calves will need two doses of the killed vaccine, given 2 to 4 weeks apart, and another two-dose shot about six months later. After that, heifers and cows should receive booster shots about twice a year.
- 2 Protect newly purchased cattle, other incoming cattle, and your resident herd from each other
 - Protect the resident herd from incoming cattle (purchased cattle, contracted heifers, show cattle, etc.) with a good vaccination program (see item 1, above). Allow enough time for cattle to mount an effective immune response. For a MLV program, allow 2 weeks from the last shot to the time that incoming cattle arrive, allow 4 weeks for killed vaccine programs.
 - Also protect incoming cattle from the herd they will be moving into with a similar vaccination program -- preferably before they arrive, if possible. Don't take a chance and trust someone else's word or a signed statement that they have been "properly protected". That's not to say they are dishonest; their idea of protection may differ from that of yours, or their recollection of facts may be less than accurate.
3. Test purchased cattle for persistent BVD infection, and then test the calves they were carrying to see if any of them are persistently infected. If possible, test the animal and get the results before these animals arrive at your farm. Keep the purchased cattle isolated until test results are known.
4. If you have a lot of reproductive problems and other unexplained or unsolvable problems, consult your veterinarian about the possibility of screen testing the herd for persistently infected BVD animals, and depending upon these results, the need for testing every animal in the herd.
5. Sell all persistently infected cattle for slaughter.

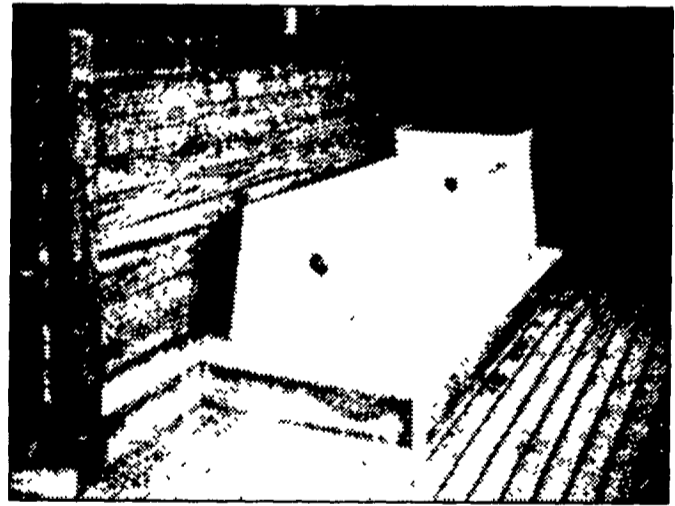
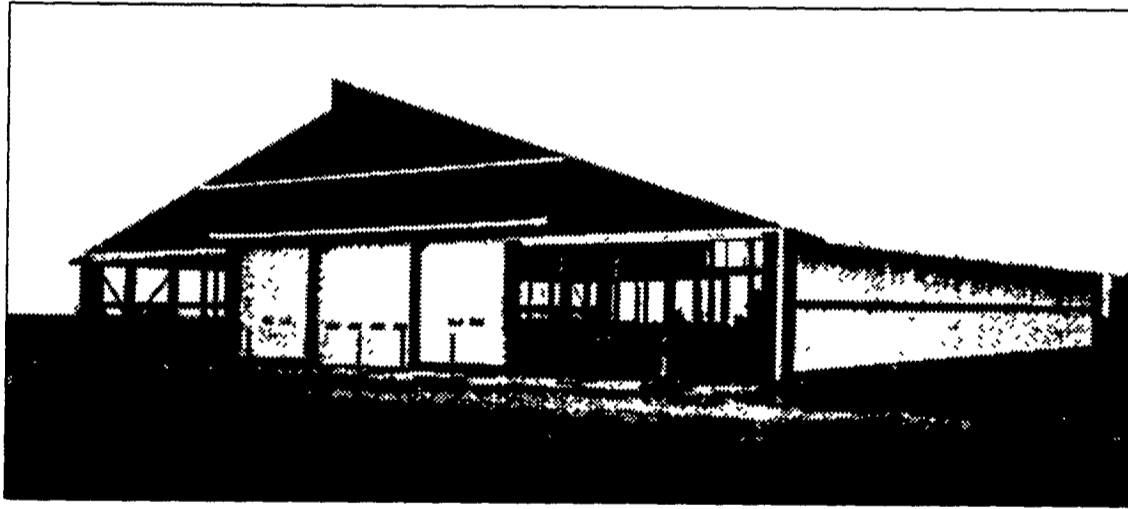


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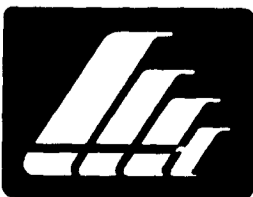
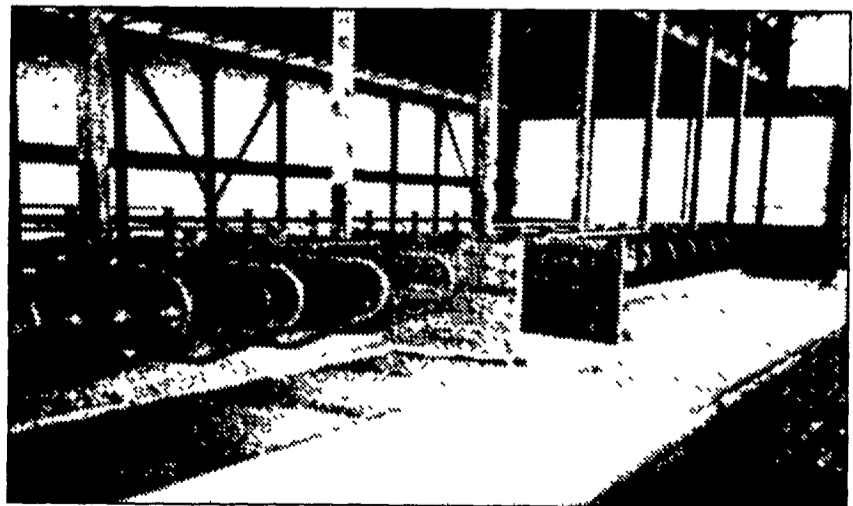
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