



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Bluetongue in cattle

Know the signs

Bluetongue is a vector-borne disease caused by infection with bluetongue virus. The virus is mainly spread by biting midges which are active between the spring and early winter. Onward transmission of the virus via midges is temperature dependent and is greatest during early summer and the autumn. Peak cases usually occur in September. There are many strains of the bluetongue virus, with BTV-3 and BTV-8 being confirmed in the United Kingdom. Vaccination is available – please talk to your vet.

Bluetongue is a notifiable disease and must be reported by law. You are not permitted to move any animal showing these clinical signs and if you see any of these signs you must report it to APHA.

Clinical signs to look out for in cattle

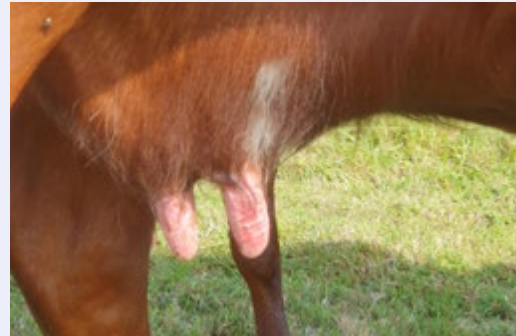
- lethargy
- crusting and erosions around the nostrils and muzzle
- conjunctivitis and excessive tear staining
- redness of the mouth, eyes, nose
- reddening of the skin above the hoof and between the cleats
- nasal discharge
- reddening and erosions on the teats
- fever
- milk drop
- not eating
- abortion, foetal deformities and stillbirths

Adult cattle may be infectious for several weeks while showing little or no sign of disease. They are often the preferred host for biting midges (the vector of bluetongue virus).

Clinical signs in calves

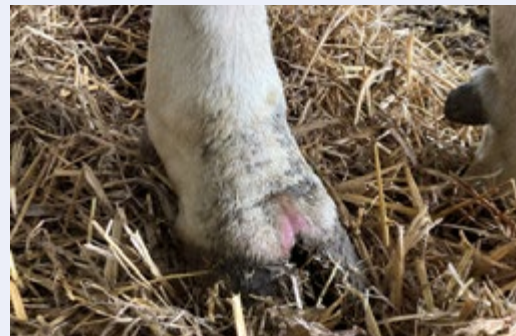
Calves can become infected with bluetongue virus before birth if the mother is infected while pregnant. Signs of infection include:

- calves born small, weak, deformed or blind
- death of calves within a few days of birth
- stillbirths



Reddening and erosions on the teats

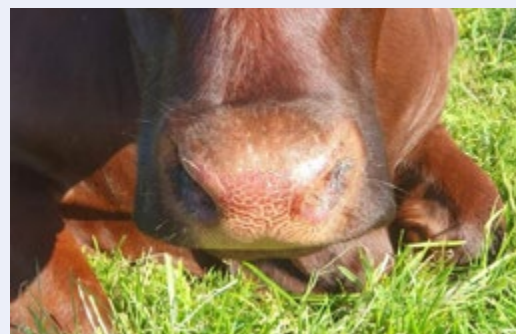
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Red interdigital cleft



Ulceration in nostrils



Crusting around nostril

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Find out more information and how to report bluetongue by visiting www.gov.uk/bluetongue

