

Pulpy Kidney Disease In Cattle

Pulpy kidney disease is caused by *Clostridium perfringens* type D, a bacterium which is a normal inhabitant of the gut, but under certain situations, e.g., excess dietary carbohydrates, can proliferate and produce a toxin. This toxin is absorbed into the blood stream and can cause death quickly. It is a common and well known disease in lambs, but it is far less common in cattle, possibly because cattle are more resistant. However, SRUC Veterinary Services do occasionally diagnose pulpy kidney disease in cattle. The disease could potentially affect all ages, but it is mostly seen in calves less than 6 months old. Affected cattle may be found dead or show neurological signs for a short duration before death. As there are no specific findings on post-mortem examination, confirmation of the disease requires removal of the brain for microscopic examination. Predisposing factors for the disease are not well understood, but sudden dietary changes, and excess carbohydrates in the diet could increase the risk. The '7 in 1', '8 in 1' and '10 in 1' clostridial vaccines commercially available include protection against this disease.

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