



ADVISORY TO ALL LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS

RABIES AND BLACKLEG VACCINATION FOR CATTLE STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

As a result of the ongoing cattle disease crisis presently being experienced throughout the country, BAHA strongly recommends for all cattle farmers to vaccinate their cattle against Rabies if they have not been vaccinated in the last year and against Blackleg if they have not been vaccinated in the last six months.

Rabies is a highly fatal disease that affects all mammals. The disease is always fatal but can be prevented through vaccination. Affected animals will usually show nervous signs and aggressive behavior. Most animals will show excessive salivation as swallowing becomes impossible. Avoid coming in contact with animals showing these symptoms and immediately call BAHA Officers.

Blackleg is a highly fatal disease of young cattle. In most cases the animal is found dead without being previously observed sick. The speed with which blackleg kills usually makes individual treatment useless. It is caused by the spore forming, rod shaped, gas producing bacteria *Clostridium chauvoei*. The spores of the organism can live in the soil for many years. The first sign observed is usually lameness, loss of appetite, rapid breathing and the animal is usually depressed and has a high fever. Characteristic swellings develop in the hip, shoulder, or elsewhere. First the swelling is small, hot and painful. As the disease progresses, the swelling enlarges and becomes spongy and gaseous. If you press the swelling, gas can be felt under the skin. The animal usually dies in 12 to 48 hours.

Blackleg is almost entirely preventable by vaccination. The most commonly used clostridial vaccination in cattle is the 7-way type which protects against seven types of Clostridia organisms. Farmers are encouraged to use the seven-way Blackleg vaccine available at most farm supply stores.

Additional information can be obtained from livestock officers of the Department of Agriculture in the districts, BAHA animal health officers, Belize Livestock Producers Association and Registered Veterinarians.

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