

The Case of the Cow Leandra and Her Daughter Jamaicana

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The case starts with a call from a dairy farmer requesting a reproductive control service, specified on the day of the visit. We arrived at a farm with 80 adult cows, animals that had given birth at least once, 16 heifers under one year old and 22 heifers over one year but under 32 months. The farmer hired us to perform a reproductive control on the herd. We started by taking data, case history... It seemed that the number of young animals was small for the number of adult cows. After asking the farmer about the young animals, he told us that many calves were dying in the first two months of life due to problems of diarrhoea and pneumonia. Breeding management was not ideal, but it did not appear so bad as to have such a high mortality rate. The age of first insemination is 16 months, as the heifers do not reach the desired size and weight at an earlier age. "They do not become pregnant well and have irregular cycles", the farmer told us. He has heifers that were inseminated and then entered oestrous two or three months later. He did not use a pregnancy test, so he is not sure if the cause is really that they did not become pregnant or if he has a problem of embryonic death or abortions. As for the cows, he tells us a similar story. They do not become pregnant and they do not cycle normally, oestrous that does not coincide with three-week cycles and many cows that are believed to be pregnant re-enter oestrus two or three months later.

With all the animals identified and their reproductive status updated, we started with a periodic control: one visit every 14 days. After four visits, it was clear that the cows became pregnant better than the farmer had told us. We began to perform a pregnancy test 24 days after insemination and we reconfirmed these cows after 14 days, at the following visit. We subsequently reviewed these pregnant cows at 57 days of gestation, with two objectives: learn the sex of the foetus or foetuses and observe their vitality or viability. The result was that the cows become pregnant, but when we went to reconfirm the pregnant cows, 37% of the cows had suffered a loss of gestation or embryonic death. We learned that we had cows that abort.

During this period, we detected that heifers that had given birth and entered the yard for lactating cows all suffered from a serious infection during their first week in this yard, with a significant increase in heart and respiratory rate, dyspnoea and a significant increase in body temperature. After a four-day treatment with NSAIDs and antibiotics, their vital signs began to normalise but they did not fully recover. Their normal feed intake and corresponding production did not recover until at least 20 days since the start of lactation. The cows that had been dry outside the lactating cow yard also suffered a similar infection when they gave birth and were introduced to the lactation yard. However, their symptoms were less spectacular and they recovered before the first-time heifers.

All this led me to suspect the presence of the BVD virus in the herd, and I returned to ask the farmer if he had ever performed any tests for diseases related to reproductive changes. The farmer's response was unique: "I have never looked, but there is one thing that I didn't tell you: I stopped vaccinating more than a year ago because that vaccine that they say works for abortion doesn't do anything, they continue aborting or getting pregnant just as poorly". Based on a friend's referral, he vaccinated the herd with a polyvalent vaccine against BVD, IBR, parainfluenza and syncytial virus, revaccinating every 6 months for two years. This had the farmer convinced that his problem was not BVD, because if his problem was BVD the vaccine would have had to have solved it. It was not effective and he stopped using the vaccine.

To confirm my suspicions and taking into account that the farmer did not want to spend much money on a study of abortion causes, blood was drawn from 17 heifers aged between 6 and 19 months who had never been vaccinated against BVD. The blood was sent to the laboratory and a serology was ordered with the aim of ruling out other causes. The results were clearly positive for the BVD antibodies in 70% of the animals. The hypothesis began to be confirmed, there was a high circulation of the BVD virus in the animals on the farm (IMAGE 1).

We took a milk sample from the tank, where there was milk from all the lactating cows, to perform PCR and look for the presence of BVD antigens. The milk PCR indicated the presence of the BVD antigen in the lactating cows, which gave us two possibilities regarding the lactating cows: either there were cows in the viraemia stage

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who were excreting the BVD antigen in milk or we had a BVD persistently infected cow among the lactating cows (IMAGE 2).

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the BVD antigen in the cows that were negative. Of 80 cows, 77 were positive for P80 antibodies in blood and 3 negative. One of the negative cows was positive for the BVD antigen in blood. This led us to think that the cow Leandra 7580, a 49-month old cow, might possibly be persistently infected with BVD (IMAGE 3).

She was apparently a normal cow. She did not show any alterations that would make one think that she could be a persistently infected cow, but the farmer considered her the bad one of the herd. He thought that it was due to the fact that she was sick many times as a calf and that caused a delay in her growth, which is why she was much smaller than the others. She is a cow who suffered an abortion as a heifer, this delayed her first birth to the age of 28 months. When we detected her she had given birth 96 days previously and was producing her second lactation. The calf from her second birth died in its second month of life, due to repeated infections that dogged her since she was born. The farmer treated the calf with antibiotics and NSAIDs, but in the end it died. However, the calf from the first birth was alive. She was among the 17 heifers whose blood had been tested, number 0151 (Jamaicana). She became pregnant at 15 months of age and had the best body condition and size of the heifers in her same batch. Her laboratory tests were positive for P80 antibodies.

In all, there were several things that were not normal: an animal resulting from a persistently infected cow is another persistently infected cow and should not present P80 antibodies in her blood. It was also not normal that she was the best heifer of the batch or that she had exemplary reproductive behaviour.

Ten days after taking the first samples, another blood sample was drawn from both mother and daughter and sent to the laboratory. A P80 antibody and BVD antigen test was ordered for both (IMAGE 4).

The result was the same. The mother presented the BVD antigen with high levels similar to the first sample drawn, and the daughter continued to be positive for P80 antibodies and negative for the presence of the antigen in her blood. It seemed that we had found a daughter resulting from a persistently infected mother who did not present the antigen in her blood and had seroconverted, as she presented P80 antibodies.

Twenty-three days after the first extraction, another blood sample was taken from the cow and genotyping was ordered to learn which serotype it was and to confirm the presence of the BVD antigen. The result regarding the presence of the antigen and antibodies was the same. It was BVD type 1 (IMAGE 5).

In all three tests performed, with a 23-day interval between the first and the last, the cow showed high levels of the BVD antigen, which confirmed that this was not a transitory viraemia since the cow had similar titres in all three tests. If this was a transitory viraemia, they would not be similar. They would have been falling and in the last sample extracted normally there would be no BVD antigen in the cow's blood. The cow was persistently infected, only we had one thing that in theory was impossible: the serology of her daughter.

We decided to draw one last blood sample from the mother, before putting her down, and another from the daughter to send to the laboratory for a maternity test, which would confirm whether they were truly mother and daughter. The result was negative, she was not her daughter. The farmer mixed them up when identifying the animals. Two calves were born that day and they were very similar to each other. The partner calf to the false daughter, the true daughter, died in her first months of life due to infection, the daughter from the persistently infected cow's first birth. This maternity test is what definitively demonstrated that the cow was persistently infected, since the resulting calves had to be persistently infected (IMAGES 6 AND 7).

We ended up testing all the animals on the farm to be sure that there were no other persistently infected animals in the herd. We did not find any other persistently infected cows. Blood was drawn from the calves between the ages of 6 and 9 months to see if they had P80 antibodies in their blood. This would indicate to us whether or not the virus was circulating. The calf born 26 days after putting down the persistently infected cow was the first to not have P80 antibodies in her blood. The calves who were born later continued to be negative (IMAGE 8).

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ID NETKER	ED.CLIENTE	TIPO HUESTRA	ELISAND BVD	ELISAS BVD BDpB0 *	rtRT-PCR Pesti-	
NICROBI	OLOGIA/INMU	NOLOGIA				
	one entera / Odd	aceo k				
AGINAK/M		Chemeroezeroek				
	MUESTREO:	Cliente/Bezeroak				
IOTA/ESPE		BOVINO - ABEL				
ANEARMIN		ERENTZIA/REFEREN		Stone DE D		
	15	RTEERAKO TX	STENA / INF	ORME DE S	ALIDA	
norme ame	to por NEIKER (instituto Vasco de Inv	estigación y Desa	(oriengA offern		
interip Sal			39710	MEDIO CUI	DEYO (CANTABRIA)	
Integra/Sal		12/2014	Paseo	La Ventilla, 13	SOLARES	
Sameaffr	k./Nº Reg.	0,14.06015	VETER	RINARIOS ASOC	HADOS, S.C.	



	-		-	-	_				
	itente:	VETERINARIO	S ASOCU	1005 S.C					Entrada: 30/01/2015
	ción.	PASEO DE LA	VENTILLA	A, 13 - 397	10 SQLAP	RES CA	ANTABHIA		
ropi	etario.							Cód.:	CEA
M	iestra:	15M01534	I.M.	R/ 3			Especie:	VACUNO	Raza: FRISONA
mb	ora:	JAMAICANA					Nº Regist		C.I.B.:0151
xo:		HEMBRA	Fed	na Nac.:	26/05/20	13	Tipo de M	Muestra: SA	NGRE ENTERA
									IM R. Beethinson in Marina Parties
	Lo	CI.	MUE	STRA	PAD	ORE	MAD	RE	Cód. Análisis: F1501064
Ê	-	11818		262	260	266	260	266	DADDE
H	-	11824	182	188	178	188	178	180	PADRE 08M19908
1	100	12113	135	135	125	139	125	137	FRAM5694028588 JOCKO BESN
4	CS	RM60	96	102	98	102	92	102	
-	ETI	H10	219	219	219	225	213	225	NO COMPATIBLE
6	ETH	1185	228	232	228	233	228	238	MADRE IISMO153
7	ETH	1225	140	150	148	150	148	148	ESPH3903363143
8	ETH	13	117	117	117	127	117	129	LEANDRA
9	ILST	r\$006	288	292	288	294	294	294	NO COMPATIBLE
10	INR	A005	137	139	137	137	137	139	NO COMPATIBLE
11	INR	4023	206	206	210	210	210	210	18 - Carlos
12	INRA	4063	172	172	170	172	170	170	((Brithemateular))
13	SPS	115	254	256	245	252	248	248	1200/1
4	TGL	A122	151	163	149	183	143	163	CAG CODE SHOP
5	TGL	4126	115	115	117	117	117	117	Lugo, 13 de Febrero de 2015
6	TGL	227	83	87	57	\$ 7	81	97	4
7	TGLA	153	162	162	156	168	160	166	D

The farm abutted other cattle farms and there was the possibility that the BVD virus would return to pose a risk for the herd. As it was free from persistently infected cows, we made the decision to vaccinate all animals over 9 months with a new live vaccine that contains serotypes 1 and 2, BOVELA.

Those under 9 months were not vaccinated for economic reasons. The farmer was convinced that all these vaccines were useless and until that age the calves were isolated from other animals on this or the adjacent farms. They had contact with the animals on the farm during their lactation period, since they were raised with milk from their cows.

For the following 9 months, blood was drawn from all newborn calves, before taking the colostrum, to see if they presented the BVD antigen in order to prevent a persistently infected cow from entering the herd.

After this period, animals began to be born from cows who had already been vaccinated with Bovela. We stopped drawing blood from the newborn calves as the vaccine prevented the formation of persistently infected animals.

We are currently continuing to draw blood from a few sentinel heifers before being vaccinated and the results continue to be negative for the presence of P80 antibodies in blood. The herd's mortality is much lower, the number of calves born is higher, and the heifers are inseminated

mite	ente	VETERINARIO	S ASOCIAL	DOS S.C.					Entrada: 30/01/2015
	ión:	PASEO DE LA	VENTILLA	13 - 397	I SOLAR	ES CAR	TABRIA		
	tario:	PASEODET	-	-				Cód	CEA:
	estra:	15M01535	LME	2.4		1	Especie	VACUNO	Raza: FRISONA
	e.	LEANDRA					N ^s Registr	0	CI.B. 2007580
0:		HEMBRA	Fech	a Naca	03/10/201	0	Tipo de M	luestra: s	ANGRE ENTERA
									(16.0 January Prov
	LO	CI	MUES	TRA	PAD	RE	MAD	RE	Cód. Análisis: F1501065
1	100	11818	260	266	260	266	266	266	
2	BN	11824	178	180	178	188	180	160	FRAM5684028588
3	BN	12113	125	137	125	139	127	137	JOCKO BESN
4	CS	RM60	92	102	98	102	92	102	COMPATIBLE
5	ET	H10	213	225	219	225	213	219	COMPATIBLE
6	ETI	H185	228	238	228	233	238	238	MADRE 08M276
7	ETH	1225	148	148	148	150	140	148	ESPH3902638360
8	ETH	13	117	129	117	127	125	129	PAGIENCIA
9	ILS	TS006	294	294	288	294	294	294	COMPATIBLE
10	INR	A005	137	139	137	137	137	139	COMPATIBLE
11	INR	A023	210	210	210	210	202	210	(Change)
12	INR	A063	170	170	170	172	170	172	(Europer analocular)
13	SPS	115	248	248	248	252	248	256	1 and
4	124.0	A122	143	163	149	16.7	143	143	Constance what
5	1000	A126	117	117	117	117	117	117	Lugo. 13 de Febrero de 2015
	120.00	A227	81	07	97	97	81	91	11th

Sarrera/Entrada Irteera/Salida	teg. 0.15.03524 10/07/2015 14/07/2015		RINARIDS ASOCIADOS, S.C. La Ventilla, 13 - SOLARES MEDIO CUDEYO (CANTABRIA)
informe emitido por	NEIKER (Instituto Vasco de	Investigación y Desa	irrollo Agrano)
	IRTEERAKO T	XOSTENA / INF	FORME DE SALIDA
ABEA/PROPIETAR	O ERREFERENTZIA/REFE	RENCIA:	
MOTA/ESPECIE:	BOVINO - ABE	FLGORRIA	
LAGINKETAMUEST			
LAGINAK/MUESTRA	and a second sec		
	tera / Odol osoa		
MICROBIOLOG	A/INMUNOLOGIA		
ID.NEJKER ID.	CLIENTE TIPO MUESTR	A ELISANS BVD	ELISAB BVD BDp80 *
			sopau -
8166 00/100	Kimple antera	Neg	helpes -
001/00 3918 882.00 4268	Konpre entera Sampre entera	Neg	
			Treg
002.00 4268	Sample enters		Transj POS
002.00 4268 903.00 4595	Sangra entara Sangra entara		Neg XOS XOS
002.00 4268 003.00 4555 004.00 8524	Sangre enters Sangre enters Sangre enters		Neg NOS Neg
802.00 4268 003.00 4566 004.00 8824 005.00 4512	Sangra ordana Sangra ordana Sangra ordana Sangra ordana Sangra ordana	 Neg 	Ting POS VOB Nog POS
882.00 4268 903.00 4595 904.00 8824 905.00 4512 906.00 4120	Kangre entara Sangre entara Sangre entara Sangre entara Sangre entara	Neg Tog	749 705 703 749 764 744
802.00 4268 903.00 4595 904.00 8824 905.00 4512 906.00 4120 907.00 4122	Sangar entara Sangar antara Sangar antara Sangar antara Sangar antara Sangar antara	Neg Nog Nog Neg	free KOS YOB Teg FCS Keg Free Free
882.00 4268 903.00 4555 904.00 8824 905.00 4513 907.00 4135 907.00 4122 906.00 8829	Surge entro Sangta entro Sorge entro Sorge entro Sorge entro Sorge entro	Neg Nog Nog Nog	Trig X05 Y08 Trig Y04 Trig Y05 Y05 Hig
882.00 4268 993.00 4595 994.00 8824 905.00 4512 907.00 4120 907.00 4122 908.00 8829 909.00 8829	Sangae entara Sangae entara Sangae entara Sangae entara Sangae entara Sangae entara Sangae entara	Nag Area Nag Nag Nag Nag	744 205 200 744 744 744 744 745 745 745 745 745 745

at younger ages as they reach the necessary size and weight earlier. The abortion and embryonic death rates are insignificant and very rare. When animals are introduced to the field for lactating cows, they have a better start to lactation, since they no longer suffer the acute episodes of viraemia, the immune system does not undergo immunosuppression caused by a viral infection or continuous viral reinfection and they better overcome the normal state of immunosuppression that lactating cows undergo during birth/postpartum.

