

THEILERIOSIS

An emerging risk

Theileria orientalis Ikeda is an emerging parasite in the U.S. that is spread by Asian longhorned ticks (*Haemaphysalis longicorn*) and causes infectious anemia in cattle.

The Asian longhorned tick is an invasive pest that has been spreading throughout the United States. It has been found in 19 states including these in our region: Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas and Alabama.

The parasite infects wild and domestic animals including cattle and sheep. Infections can lead to animal death, illness, decreased milk production and major economic loss.

Theileria does not pose a threat to human health.

Cattle that recover will become carriers for life and can spread the parasite to new ticks and other animals.

They may later show clinical signs again, including anemia, abortion and death.

Mortality ranges from 1-50%.

There is no known treatments or vaccine in the U.S.



TRANSMISSION

Transmission may occur through:

- Asian longhorned tick bite
- re-use of needles
- castration, dehorning, branding (or other surgical) equipment that was not cleaned and sanitized between each animal

CLINICAL SIGNS

Clinical infection is similar to Bovine Anaplasmosis. Clinical signs are:

- anemia
- weakness
- loss of appetite
- pale gums
- difficulty breathing
- late term abortion

REPORT SUSPECT CASES

Suspect cases of the Asian longhorn tick infestation and Theileriosis should be reported to your veterinarian and the Mississippi Board of Animal Health at 601-359-1170 or msstatevet@mdac.ms.gov.



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PREVENTION

Prevent ticks from entering herd

- Restrict movements of grazing cattle
- Inspect new animals before herd introduction
- Limit wildlife exposure to herd

Detect ticks early

- Routinely check cattle for ticks
 - Head, neck, flanks and under the tail
- Cattle with decreased weight, lethargy, pale gums and patchy hair should be checked for ticks.
- Know when and where Asian longhorned ticks are active, most commonly March-August.

Isolate sick animals

- Cattle exhibiting signs of infection should always be isolated from other livestock
- Contact your veterinarian immediately

Manage Populations

- Keep pastures mowed short. Leaving pastures ungrazed will not control ticks as they can survive more than a year without feeding.
- Use acaricides approved for ticks on cattle (sprays, pesticide-impregnated ear tags, backrubbers).
- Continue to monitor animals and tick populations. As tick populations begin to rebound, mow again and/or apply another acaricide.

BIOSECURITY

Protect yourself from ticks by using insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane diol, or 2-undecanone.

When handling livestock, do not use farm medical instruments like needles on multiple animals. Clean and sanitize tools and devices before and after use on each animal.

MISSISSIPPI

Are livestock in Mississippi at risk? YES

The tick affects all livestock; however, the disease is most prevalent in cattle. Sheep can be asymptomatic carriers.

Mississippi weather supports the lifecycle of ticks. Though our state does not have any reported cases of Asian longhorned ticks, it has been detected in our neighboring states.

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