

# **Handbook for Veterinarians and Dairy Producers**



**A guide for Johne's disease  
risk assessments and management plans  
for dairy herds**

**For use by veterinarians with dairy clients  
to improve biosecurity and reduce pathogens**

**Approved for distribution and use by the National Johne's Working Group  
a subcommittee of the Johne's Committee  
of the United States Animal Health Association**

For explanation and/or instructions on how to complete this document, refer to the Instruction Handbook entitled, "How to Do Risk Assessments and Management Plans for Johne's Disease".

## Acknowledgements

This handbook is an evolution from previous editions of the “Johne’s Disease Planning for Prevention and Control for Dairy Herds – Manual for Veterinarians” that was used to complete risk assessments and develop management plans to prevent or control Johne’s disease in cattle herds for the Voluntary Bovine Johne’s Control Program.

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## Current Herd Health Status and Concerns (Filling out this page is optional)

Collecting this information will provide information that is important to consider when implementing the elements of the Johne's disease prevention or control plan. This format is designed to show the farm's performance-limiting health issues and the level of concern that the owner has for them. Many of the health and production problems brought to light by information on this page may be already addressed by the owner. The final Johne's management plan should blend in with these current performance-limiting health issues and concerns.

Fill in requested information, circle choice or specify the incidence (or level of concern for problem) by checking your choice (U, 1, 2 or 3) in the box next to listed disease.

U= unknown incidence or problem

2= Moderate incidence, may be need attention

1= OK, low incidence, not a current problem

3= Significant incidence, unsatisfactory, needs attention

Calf Feeding Practices				
Avg. hrs. to 1 <sup>st</sup> colostrum				
Amount 1 <sup>st</sup> colostrum fed				
Colostrum source (Individual / Pooled)				
Total no. colostrum feedings				
Feed unpasteurized milk, pasteurized milk, milk replacer				

Calf Disease Incidence or Level of Concern				
Pre-wean mortality (Last 12 mos.)				
Calf vigor				
Calf growth				
Protocol for keeping feed and feeding equipment sanitary				
Scours	U	1	2	3
Pneumonia	U	1	2	3
Other	U	1	2	3

Heifer Disease Incidence or Level of Concern				
Heifer growth (poor / good)				
Age at freshening (months)				
Breeding program				
Pneumonia	U	1	2	3
Digital dermatitis	U	1	2	3
Coccidiosis	U	1	2	3

Milk Quality and Udder Health				
Bulk tank SCC				
Bacteria count / SPC				
Number mastitis cases per month				
Recent culture and sensitivity results				

Reproduction Program				
Heat detection rate				
Conception rate				
Pregnancy rate				
Herd average DIM				
Abortions / yr (% herd)				
Embryonic loss				
Method of insemination				

Lameness incidence or level of concern				
% of cows with obvious lameness				
Foot trimming schedule				
Digital dermatitis	U	1	2	3
Laminitis	U	1	2	3
Abscesses	U	1	2	3
Foot Rot	U	1	2	3
Other	U	1	2	3

Infectious Dis. Incidence				
Johne's	U	1	2	3
Salmonellosis	U	1	2	3
Neosporosis	U	1	2	3
BVD	U	1	2	3
Respiratory disease	U	1	2	3
BLV	U	1	2	3
Clostridial disease	U	1	2	3
Leptospirosis	U	1	2	3
Other	U	1	2	3

Metabolic Dis. Incidence (fresh cows last 6 mo)				
Milk fever	U	1	2	3
Retained placentas	U	1	2	3
Ketosis	U	1	2	3
Mastitis	U	1	2	3
Metritis	U	1	2	3
DAs	U	1	2	3
Acidosis	U	1	2	3
Stillborn / dystocia cases	U	1	2	3
Other	U	1	2	3

Culling Incidence				
Cull Rate % last 6 months				
< 60 DIM	U	1	2	3
Deaths	U	1	2	3
Mastitis	U	1	2	3
Reproduction	U	1	2	3
Lameness	U	1	2	3
Low production	U	1	2	3
Other	U	1	2	3





**Risk Assessment Scores** (based on visual observation of each environment and owner responses)

Estimate the risk for fecal/oral and colostrum/milk disease spread, or gap in farm's biosecurity, for each management practice. Follow the logical order. **Observe Proper Biosecurity!** Note how current management conditions differ from past. Ideally producer & veterinarian score risks independently. Then compare & discuss relative importance in development of management plan. See Step 4 in the 'How to Do' instructional handbook, pages 2 -5 for guidelines to completing area risk assessments.

A. Calving Area Risk Factors (Place an X in the box to the right of the management practice that most closely signifies the risk for that item.)	0.	1 V. Low	2. Low	3.	4.	5 Moderate	6.	7.	8. High	9.	10. V. High
	1. Multiple animal use [Single pen → Dense crowded group]										
2. Manure build-up risk for calf ingestion [Clean dry → Dirty wet]											
3. Area also used for sick cows [Never → Always]											
4. Presence of JD clinicals / suspects [Never → Always]											
5. Manure soiled udders / legs [Never → Always]											
6. Calves born in other cow areas [Never → Always]											
7. Time calves stay with dam [<30 minutes → >24 hours]											
8. Calves nurse dam [Never → Most or all]											

Notes / Current vs. Past

Maximum score = 80. Your herd score is \_\_\_\_\_. Consider the impact of JD prevalence on ability to reduce risks.

Estimate the risk for spreading Johne's in the calving area: **Very Low    Low    Moderate    High    Very High**

B. Pre-Weaned Heifer Risk Factors	0.	1. V. Low	2. Low	3.	4.	5. Mod.	6.	7.	8. High	9.	10. V. High
	1. Fed pooled colostrum [Never or JD negative → High risk cows]										
2. Fed colostrum from individual cow to several calves [As 1. above]											
3. Fed unpasteurized pooled milk [JD negative cows → High risk cows]											
4. Possible manure contamination of colostrum or milk: at harvest, utensils, traffic or people [None any source → Frequent many sources]											
5. Possible manure contamination of calf feed or water: by cows, traffic splatter, equipment or people [As 4. above]											
6. Direct cow contact or potential manure contamination of calf pen by cows, traffic splatter, equipment or people [As 4. above]											

Notes / Current vs. Past

Maximum Score is 60. Your herd score is \_\_\_\_\_. Consider the impact of JD prevalence on ability to reduce risks.

Estimate the risk for spreading Johne's in pre-weaned calves: **Very Low    Low    Moderate    High    Very High**

Notes / Current vs. Past

C. Post-Weaned Heifer Risk Factors	0.	1. V	2.	3.	4. Mod.	5.	6.	7. V
	1. Direct cow contact or pen contamination with cows' manure [None → Always]							
2. Possible manure contamination of feed: refused cow ration, stored feed, equipment, cows, traffic splatter, people or runoff [Never → Frequently]								
3. Potential for contamination of supplied or natural water: shared with cows, traffic splatter, runoff or people [Never → Frequently]								
4. Share pasture with cows [Never → Frequently]								
5. Manure spread on forage and fed same season [Never → Frequently]								

Maximum Score is 35. Your herd score is \_\_\_\_\_. Consider the impact of JD prevalence on ability to reduce risks.

Estimate the risk for spreading Johne's in post weaned heifers: **Very Low** **Low** **Moderate** **High** **Very High**

D. Bred Heifer Risk Factors	0.	1. V Low	2.	3. Mod	4.	5. V High
	1. Direct cow contact or pen contamination with cows' manure. [None → Always]					
2. Possible manure contamination of feed: refused cow ration, stored feed, equipment, cows, traffic splatter, people or runoff. [Never → Frequently]						
3. Possible manure contamination of water sources: shared with cows, by cows, traffic splatter, runoff or people. [Never → Frequently]						
4. Share pasture with cows [Never → Frequently]						
5. Manure spread on forage and fed same season. [Never → Frequently]						

Notes / Current vs. Past

Maximum Score is 25. Your herd score is \_\_\_\_\_. Consider the impact of JD prevalence on ability to reduce risks.

Estimate the risk for spreading Johne's in bred heifers: **Very Low** **Low** **Moderate** **High** **Very High**

E. Cow and Bull Risk Factors	0.	1. Low	2.	3	4. High
	1. Possible manure contamination of feed: when fed or stored, by equipment, traffic splatter, runoff or people [Never → Frequently]				
2. Possible manure contamination of water: by cows, traffic splatter, runoff or people [Never → Frequently]					
3. Direct access to accumulated or stored manure [Never → Frequently]					
4. Manure spread on forage and fed the same season [Never → Frequently]					

Notes / Current vs. Past

Maximum Score is 16. Your herd score is \_\_\_\_\_. Consider the impact of JD prevalence on ability to reduce risks.

Estimate the risk for spreading Johne's among cows: **Low** **Moderate** **High**

F. Sources of Additions and Replacements	None	Number of Animals				
		1-5	6-12	13-20	21-50	>50
1. Get additions or replacements from Level 2-4 Status Herd		0	2	4	6	8
2. From low risk herds, Level 1 or pre-tested herds		10	11	12	13	14
3. From single source non-tested or non-program herds		20	22	23	26	28
4. Multiple sources non-tested or non-program herds or markets		30	34	36	38	40

Comments

(Circle the square in each row that reflects management in the past 12 months. Include E.T. recipients and bulls)

Maximum Score allowed is 60 (If score is >60 place 60 in space). Your herd score is \_\_\_\_\_.

Estimate the risk from herd additions/replacements: **Very Low** **Low** **Moderate** **High** **Very High**

<b>Risk Assessment Summary</b> Completing this Table is optional.  However, calculating the herd scores for each area as a percent of the area's maximum score and as a percent of the herd's total score will highlight the top risk areas to address in the farm plan.	Risk Factor Areas	Maximum Score	Your Herd Score	Each Area Herd Score / Each Area Max Score (%)	Each Area Herd Score / Your Total Herd Score (%)
	Calving area	80			
	Pre-weaned heifers	60			
	Post-Weaned heifers	35			
	Bred heifers	25			
	Cows and bulls	16			
	Additions/Replacements	60			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>276</b>			



## List the risk factors of most importance identified by assessment

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**Building the elements of the testing strategy for Johne's management plan.** See Step 5 in the 'How to Do' handbook, page 8, for guidelines.

1. What is the testing scheme expected to accomplish and how will it help reach plan objectives?
2. What test (s) will be used?
3. Who will be tested?
4. When?
5. What decision (s) will be made on results? Consider higher vs. lower risk 'test-positive' cattle.

## Assembling the Johne's Disease Management Plan

See Step 6, pages 8 – 10, in the 'How to Do' handbook for guidelines.

Issues to integrate include:

1. The owner's Johne's management plan objectives (e.g., find out if JD is present, eliminate the infection from herd, prevent introduction into herd, establish official test-negative or low risk status).
2. List planned management changes for each area or management group brought to light by the risk assessment. If there are no changes planned for a specific area or group, simply list current herd management procedures.
3. Be certain to coordinate Johne's management procedures in this plan with other health / management objectives already in place. It may serve as an incentive for owners with low risk herds thinking of seeking official status. Especially note where these other objectives and health concerns will benefit from the Johne's management efforts that are outlined in the plan, (e.g., lower calf mortality or morbidity, healthier fresh cows, etc.). See Step 7, pages 10 and 11, in the 'How to Do' handbook for guidelines.
4. Before signing off on this management plan, be certain the overall strategy is comprehensive and effective enough to meet management goals. The plan should take current JD prevalence estimate into account for setting realistic goals. Proposed actions should be practical and feasible to implement and they may be applied in phases. Procedures should integrate with available resources and other farm management priorities. See Step 8, page 12, in the 'How to Do' handbook.

## Johne's Management Plan

**What are the objectives of the herd plan?**
 Determine status of herd
  Prevent JD introduction into herd
  Prevent further spread  
 Establish test negative status
  Reduce the infection in herd
  Other

Management practice to reduce identified risks for Johne's disease in this herd	How does practice benefit and/or integrate with existing health / management objectives	Priority Lo, M, or Hi	Person(s) in charge
<b>Testing strategy</b>			

Name of Johne's certified veterinarian or animal health official that completed risk assessment and herd plan \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_