

Reports from Workshop Groups and Discussion

The objective of this session was to allow group discussion of abattoir specimens and the suggested terminology and classification of foot lesions in cattle. Following these discussions the seminar was reconvened and a spokesman for each of the four groups presented a summary of their findings. There was general agreement in most areas but where opinion was divided the results of prior pathological examination enabled a quick verdict. There was no unfavourable comment on terminology.

Specimen A Subcutaneous abscess on fetlock joint.
No discussion — Diagnosis and treatment straight forward.

Specimen B Wire tourniquet just above coronary band with periostitis and infection of surrounding soft tissues.

Comment — Steffert:

Specimen illustrates the way in which horn overgrowth can result from abnormal use of leg, i.e. horn overgrowth secondary to condition affecting limb above the hoof.

Specimen C Deformed claw — corkscrew overgrowth.
General consensus was that the condition was heritable and that affected animals should be culled.

Comment — Morris:

Abaxial wall of hoof curved outwards from the coronet and inwards at the point of contact with the ground usually enables this condition to be differentiated from a simple overgrowth. In young animals where the lateral claws on the hind feet are distinctly narrower than the medial ones and where the axial surface is concave corkscrew overgrowth will often develop in later life — say at 2-3 years of age.

Question — Fielden:

Are the changes primary or secondary?

Answer — Steffert:

Evidence shows that changes are primary and that there is a rotation of the 2nd phalanx in relation to the other phalanges. This can be detected at an early stage.

Comment — Morris:

Trimming is not successful in reversing the deformity.

Specimen D Pododermatitis traumatica — white line disease with under running of horn of abaxial wall.

Comment — Steffert:

Treatment — remove all affected horn, apply astringents, and banadage — essential to keep dry either by use of “boot” or use of stable particularly if valuable animals involved.

Specimen E Deformed claw — simple overgrowth of lateral claw.

Comment — Morris:

Major difference between this specimen and previous

corkscrew overgrowth can be seen by looking at the conformation of the abaxial wall. In this case it is set at a normal angle with no tendency to roll under. The possibility of pododermatitis aseptica diffusa (laminitis) was discounted because the other claw was perfectly normal.

Question — Ward:

Condition of paper thin soles in cows during prolonged wet spell — how should these be treated?

Comment — Morris:

Due to excessive wear of softened horn control by reduced road work and perhaps use of footbaths.

Comment — Steffert:

Have to remove damaged horn, bandage and apply astringents; confine to handy paddock and make real effort to keep hoof dry with use of “boot”. Bandage helps prevent formation of granulation tissue. (Boots made from car inner tube tied around fetlock)

Comment — Morris:

Environmental conditions should be looked at — surface of race yards and approaches to cow sheds etc. Avoid steep grades — re-route raceways to cowshed. Concrete race near shed and keep clean. This will help to minimise the length of time the cows are standing in wet muddy conditions.

Comment — Wallace:

Metalex or Footgard paste under banadage found to be very useful.

Comment — Jackson.

That at a previous seminar it was stated that a lot of the “footrot” seen in N.Z. was a *B nodosus* infection.

Comment — Morris:

No documented evidence of this in N.Z. Only very recently documented in the U.K. although recognised in Holland and Australia for some time.

Comment — West:

Dr. Brian Cooper has isolated *B nodosus* from cattle feet in N.Z. and the lesions were apparently very similar to those described overseas (Dermatitis interdigitalis contagiosa).

Question — Stone:

Could Mr Steffert describe the weight distribution on the hind claws in animals with “cowhocks”.

Answer — Steffert.

In an animal that is naturally cowhocked the foot is twisted so that there is more weight than normal on the lateral claws than on the medial claws. With normal stance weight distribution is equal.

Must distinguish between primary cowhock affecting the foot and a foot condition which will predispose the animal to cowhocks.

Question — Cartridge:

With regard to corkscrew foot I am somewhat disturbed that the evidence for it being an inherited disease is not good. Along with many other practitioners I have recommended culling of these animals and relatives. Could Mr Morris enlarge on this condition and suggest a cause if not an inherited condition.

Answer — Morris:

I also think that condition is inherited and advise culling of affected animals. There is however no good documented evidence that I'm aware of that shows that the condition is inherited or that there is even an inherited predisposition.

Comment — Wallace:

Some studmasters are quite happy to use a bull with feet similar to Specimen E.

Comment — Cartridge.

I have seen a condition in some A1 bulls which looks similar to corkscrew foot where the toes cross over but I consider this is due to lack of exercise. There is an excess of growth on the sole which can be trimmed off and this restores the foot to a normal conformation.

Comment — Fielden:

Dangerous to be too dogmatic about a suspected inherited disease without real evidence.