

## Georgia Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program Producer Guidelines

These are guidelines for producers interested in participating in the Georgia Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program (GVBJDPC). More VBJDCP details can be read in the Uniform Program Standards for the Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program APHIS 91-45-014

1. To achieve and maintain a GVBJDPC program herd, an annual risk assessment and approved herd management plan is required. This can be done by a State or Federal animal health official, or a Johne's Certified Veterinarian.

a. Minimum biosecurity measures should be in place to reduce exposure to manure or milk from cattle of unknown Johne's disease (JD) status. Care is needed to prevent exposure to other susceptible species (*e.g.*, sheep, goats, farmed deer, camelids, and non-program cattle). The herd management plan should address the following biosecurity measures:

- Ensure that animals added to the herd come only from low-risk or known-status herds and from known sources (do not purchase from sale yards). Record the source and manage additions as higher risk animals unless you have evidence to the contrary.
- Minimize exposure of young stock to manure from adult animals, including other susceptible species. How the exposure is minimized will vary depending on management of the cattle located on the premises.
- Minimize exposure of livestock to susceptible animals that are infected or have been exposed to infected animals.
- Never feed calves unknown sources of colostrum. Never feed calves unknown sources of milk unless it is pasteurized.
- Minimize exposure of feed, water, equipment, and vehicles to manure.

b. Minimum management practices for dairy herds; the herd management plan should include or discuss the reasons for not including the following management practices:

- Keep maternity area clean and dry and separate from other adult animals.
- Immediately separate each newborn calf from adult animals.
- Provide colostrums from a single identified cow; do not use pooled colostrum.
- Feed calves colostrum from a test-negative or healthy low-risk animal.
- Feed calves milk replacer or pasteurized milk.
- Keep calves and heifers free from exposure to the manure of mature cattle and house by age and separate from older animals.
- Separate clinical suspects from maternity and young stock. Record all clinical suspects.

c. Minimum management practices for beef herds; the herd management plan should include or discuss reasons for not including the following management practices:

- Keep calving areas as clean and dry as possible.
- Minimize the density of cow and calf pairs as much as possible.
- Use feeding practices that reduce manure contamination of feed and feeding areas as much as possible.
- Provide colostrum from the calf's dam or from another single source that is from a test-negative or healthy low-risk animal.
- Raise weaned replacements, separated from older animals.

2. All cattle must be individually identified using an identified method approved by producer's State animal health agency. For herds enrolled as a Johne's Program Level 1, 2, 3, or 4, this needs to be an official ear tag or other official identification.

3. An GVBJDPC Johne's program Level herds are defined as;

Level 1 = The owner/manager has an approved herd management plan and the herd is test negative by a screening test or official JD test on at least 30 randomly sampled eligible animals.

Level 2 = The owner/manager maintains or updates the approved herd management plan and the herd is test negative by a screening tests or official JD test on at least a statistical subset of all eligible animals.

Level 3 = The owner/manager maintains or updates the approved herd management plan and the herd is test negative by an official JD test on at least a statistical subset of all eligible animals.

Level 4 = The owner/manager maintains or updates the approved herd management plan and the herd is test negative by a screening tests or official JD test on at least a statistical subset of all eligible animals.

Monitored = The owner/manager maintains or updates the approved herd management plan and the herd is test negative by a screening test on at least 30 randomly sampled eligible animals. The status of the herd remains as a Johne's Program Level 1, 2, 3 or 4 but the years the herd has been monitored at that program level is recorded.

Level A = The owner/manager has an approved herd management plan and the herd is test negative by a screening test or official JD test on at least 30 randomly sampled eligible animals.

Level B = The owner/manager has an approved herd management plan and the herd has less than 5% test positive results by screening or official JD tests on whole herd testing of all eligible animals.

Level C = The owner/manager has an approved herd management plan and the herd has greater than 5% and less than or equal to 15% test positive results by screening or official JD tests on whole herd testing of all eligible animals.

Level D = The owner/manager has an approved herd management plan and the herd has greater than 15% test positive results by screening or official JD tests on whole herd testing of all eligible animals or at least one animal is positive on a screening test with less then the whole herd tested.

Management = The owner/manager maintains an approved herd management plan which is updated annually.

4. A herd will remain at any level for up to 14 months from their herd program anniversary date. To continue their program participation, the herd owner must reapply with a copy of negative test results, an updated herd management plan, and an agreement to follow the VBJDCP requirements. If a herd owner wishes to renew or advance but is waiting for confirmation of screening test results and therefore cannot meet the 14-month deadline, he or she can send the State Designated Johne's disease Coordinator (DJC) a letter stating their intent to renew or advance.

5. All levels can be maintained by achieving negative screening test results on 30 randomly selected animals 36 months or older every 10 to 14 months. The year this level was achieved should continue to be noted since continued monitoring increases confidence the herd is not infected.

#### 6. Herd Additions and Replacements

For the Johne's Program Level herds A, B, C, and D, herd additions should come from herds with an approved herd management plan in place.

For the test negative component of the VBJDCP, the owner/manager must comply with herd addition/replacement rules summarized below.

a. Purchased heifers and bulls less than 2 years of age may be added to the herd, provided that:

1) For Johne's Program levels 1 and 2:

The animal was purchased from a herd with a test-negative level that is equal to or higher than the herd it is entering,

OR

The purchased animal is tested with an official JD test in the next herd test after it reaches 24 months of age. The herd will not lose its status if additions that are test-positive are removed from the herd within 30 days after the positive test along with any progeny and have a follow up epidemiological study by the DJC. The addition animal reaches herd status and becomes part of the herd after a negative test result on the herd test.

2) For Johne's Program levels 3 and 4:

The animal was purchased from a herd with a test-negative level that is equal to or higher than the herd it is entering,

OR

The purchased animal is from a herd one level below the status of the purchasing herd and is tested with an official test at 12, 18 and 24 months of age and is tested in the next herd test after it reaches two years of age. The herd will not lose its status if additions that are test-positive are removed from the herd within 30 days after the positive test along with any progeny and have a follow up epidemiological study by the DJC. The addition animal reaches herd status and becomes part of the herd after a negative test result on the herd test.

OR

If the addition animal is more than one level below the herd's current status, the herd will be demoted one status level. The addition animal must be tested with an official test at 12, 18, and 24 months of age and tested in the next herd test after it reaches two years of age. The herd will not lose its status if additions that are test-positive are removed from the herd within 30 days after the positive test along with any progeny and have a follow up epidemiological study by the DJC. The addition animal reaches herd status and becomes part of the herd after a negative test result on the herd test. Subsequently, the herd may advance in the status program by following the testing protocol for that level.

b. Purchased or replacement animals two years of age or older may be added to the herd provided that:

1) For Johne's Program Level 1 or 2 herds:

The animal was purchased from a herd with a test-negative level equal to or higher than the herd it is entering;

OR

The animal has a screening test within 30 days before entering the test-negative level herd with negative results, and fecal samples from each addition animal have been collected and submitted between 30 days before and 30 days after arrival for an official JD test and the herd addition is tested on the next herd test. The herd will not lose its status if additions that are test-positive are removed from the herd within 30 days after arrival, along with any progeny, and have a follow up epidemiological study by the DJC. The addition's status will remain at its entry level until it has tested negative at the next herd test.

2) For Johne's Program Level 3 and 4 herds:

The animal was purchased from a herd with a test-negative level that is equal to or higher than the herd it is entering;

OR

The herd of origin has a test-negative level of one level below and the purchased addition has a screening test with negative results within 30 days before entry into the program herd, and fecal samples from each animal added have been collected and submitted between 30 days before and 30 days after arrival for an official JD test. The herd will not lose its status if additions that are test-positive are removed from the herd within 30 days after arrival, along with any progeny, and have a follow up epidemiological study by the DJC. The addition's status will remain at its entry level until it has tested negative at the next herd test;

OR

If the addition is more than one level below the herd's current status, the herd will be demoted one level, and each addition must have an official test on fecal samples between 30 days before and 30 days after arrival and the herd addition is tested on the next herd test. The addition's status will remain at its entry level until it has tested negative at the next herd test. The herd will not lose its status if additions that are test-positive are removed from the herd within 30 days after arrival along with any progeny, and have a follow up epidemiological study by

the DJC. Subsequently, the herd may advance in the status program by following the testing protocol for that level.

c. Heifers raised off the premises must be raised with the proper biosecurity measures in place and with animals at an equal or greater test-negative level.

d. Test-negative program herds may use semen and embryos from other cattle herds, provided that the semen used is processed according to Certified Semen Services' standards and the embryos are processed according to International Embryo Transfer Society protocols. Embryo transfer recipient cows must meet herd addition requirements.

## 7. Testing:

a. Herds must be retested within 10—14 months from the anniversary date.

Available testing strategies are:

- Random 30 samples – thirty blood or fecal culture samples are collected from 30 randomly selected test eligible animals (3 years of age or older)
- Whole Herd Sample – all test eligible animals are tested
- Statistical Subset – Number of samples randomly collected for a 95% confidence of detecting at least 1 infected animal if the true prevalence is 2 percent (see chart in Uniform Program Standards for the Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program APHIS 91-45-014)

Available testing methods:

- Screening test – serology (blood) test done in an approved laboratory
- Official JD test – organism detection test (fecal culture, DNA probes) done in an approved laboratory

b. The cost of sample collection and submission to a laboratory will be borne by the owner (unless produce incentives are available.)

c. Test samples must be submitted to a laboratory approved by the National Veterinary Services Laboratories and the laboratory must participate with and pass the NVSL check test program.

d. An accredited veterinarian must perform the test sample collection and verify the samples collected to the animal identification.

e. The herd test sampling procedures must be approved by the DJC for a VBJDCP herd. Vaccinated herds will be eligible for the test-negative program levels after vaccination has been discontinued. Vaccinated herds must use an Official Johne's disease test for all status levels. All testing must be done by an official JD test until enough non-vaccinated natural additions qualify for serology testing. The number of non-vaccinated animals will be the sample size required for that size herd for a statistical subset for serology.

f. If an animal is determined to be a suspect or positive for Johne's disease on a screening test, a fecal sample must be submitted for an Official Johne's disease test from that animal within 45 days. Failure to retest the animal within 45 days, or the detection of *M. avium* subspecies *paratuberculosis* in samples will result in the loss of any test negative status.

g. In the event an Official Johne's disease test is found to be positive, the herd status will be removed for test negative herds. The herd owner/manager may appeal the positive results to an official Johne's disease test with a written statement to the DJC within 30 days of the positive result requesting an appeal, and then at his or her expense arrange for an accredited veterinarian to;

- 1) Conduct a necropsy of the animal with culture and histopathology of the ileum and of the mesenteric and ileocecal lymph nodes; OR
- 2) Conduct a full thickness biopsy of the ileum and biopsy of the mesenteric or ileocecal lymph nodes with histopathology and culture of tissues and a fecal culture sample taken at the time of biopsy; OR
- 3) Submit six separate fecal cultures from the animals on samples collected between 30 and 45 days apart with all six cultures being negative.