

# Eight Ways to Get More Johne's Disease in Your Herd

Source: Steve Mason, Research Associate

It is very likely that at least one cow in your herd has Johne's Disease (JD). The following are several ways that you can increase that number and, if your herd happens to be JD-free, there are ways that you can increase the probability of bringing it onto your farm:

1. Buy cows and replacements from public auctions or from herds whose JD status is unknown. Like the game of 'Russian roulette', if you do this enough times, sooner or later you will bring home an infected animal capable of infecting the rest of your herd.
2. Give visitors free access to your calves – don't worry if their clothing or footwear are contaminated with manure from other farms. When conducting a farm tour, take visitors through the cow barn before visiting the calves. This strategy will increase their opportunity to transfer infected cow manure to the calf area.
3. Don't worry about isolating cows in a clean, well-bedded pen before calving. If a calf is dropped in an area with plenty of cow manure, it has a very good chance of picking up MAP, the bacteria that cause JD. Allowing cows to share a calving pen is also a good strategy for increasing the calves' opportunity to become infected.
4. Leave newborn calves in the calving pen with their dams until you get around to separating them. The longer the calf spends with its dam, the more opportunity it will have to lick mom and nibble on manure-

contaminated bedding. In this way, if mom has JD, junior can get it too. Don't wash off the cow's udder and flanks - you are liable to remove some rich sources of contamination.

5. Feed pooled colostrum to newborn calves. Even if a calf's own dam doesn't have JD, by pooling colostrum from a number of cows, you'll increase the likelihood that the colostrum will contain MAP. Feeding unpasteurized milk from cows of unknown JD status can also help to get MAP into your calves. Bulk tank milk is particularly effective since all your cows can contribute bacteria.
6. House calves in close proximity to cows. This will improve the chances for calves to be infected with MAP even if there is no direct contact with mature animals.
7. Don't bother to thoroughly wash bottles and pails after feeding calves and allow multiple calves to use the same dirty milk and feed containers. Otherwise, you will decrease the opportunity for MAP to spread between calves.
8. After slogging through slurry in the cow barn, don't clean your boots before entering calf pens. Cow manure-contaminated boots are a great way to introduce JD into your replacement herd. Using the same shovel and fork for cleaning out cow stalls and calf pens is another good way to infect calves.

There are other ways to increase the prevalence of JD in your herd. The key objective should be to maximize the exposure of calves to MAP-contaminated colostrum, milk and cow manure.



**milking**  
TIMES

## wanted

Wanted Holstein bull calves and steers, from baby to 1200 lbs. Competitive pricing. Will pick up or deliver.  
**Phone 403-635-1415.**

Raising cows. Changed from milking to raising cows. We would like to raise your heifers for you. Strict health and feeding programs for best results. Hank Overveen. Ponoka area.  
**Phone 403-783-3648.**

Wanted to buy two week old up to 250 lb. bull calves for good price.  
**Phone 403-380-0124.**

**GROOVIN' GORD**



## CJ Concrete Grooving

- Concrete surface milling - scarify, planing, resurfacing
- Alley scraper groove - new construction and existing floors
- Safety grooving - diamond and one-way
- Rubber floor grooving - diamond and one way

## Prompt, Professional Service Gordon Borne

Phone: 403-808-6984  
www.groovingord.com

Toll-free 1-877-476-6846  
Email: gord@groovingord.com

Please send advertising, comments and suggestions to:  
Alberta Milk  
Phone: (780) 453-5942 Toll-free in Alberta 1-877-361-1231  
Fax: (780) 455-2196  
E-mail: cblatz@albertamilk.com

