

MILL CREEK VETERINARY SERVICES
Herd Health Tips

Neospora/Protozoal Abortion Update

A recent study has **definitely** concluded that Neospora can be carried by dogs and transmitted to other animals (i.e. cows) when they consume feed contaminated with dog feces. Neospora is a disease causing parasite which is the most common cause of infectious cattle abortions in California.

If a dog is shedding Neospora and the contaminated feed is mixed into the ration, then the entire herd is potentially exposed to neosporosis and could suffer an abortion epidemic. New research suggests that the risk of neosporosis epidemics could be greatly reduced by keeping animal feed off limits to dogs/coyotes. One recommendation is to fence-off bulk feed areas as well as limit dog/coyote access to cattle feed.

- There are now two identified methods of transmission of infection:
- 1) vertical/transplacental transmission from dam to calf in the uterus (an infected cow can have a live "healthy" calf born that is infected with neospora who can then abort when she gets pregnant)
 - 2) horizontal transmission from infected host (canine/dog)

More research is continually being done on this common cause of abortion in dairy cattle. Not all questions are answered yet.

If you have any questions, consult your veterinarian.