Eye cancer in cattle

E P. Meyer

Follow this and additional works at: https://researchlibrary.agric.wa.gov.au/journal_agriculture4

Part of the Beef Science Commons, Eye Diseases Commons, and the Veterinary Pathology and Pathobiology Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://researchlibrary.agric.wa.gov.au/journal_agriculture4/vol10/iss7/4

This article is brought to you for free and open access by Research Library. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of the Department of Agriculture, Western Australia, Series 4 by an authorized administrator of Research Library. For more information, please contact jennifer.heathcote@agric.wa.gov.au, sandra.papenfus@agric.wa.gov.au, paul.orange@dpird.wa.gov.au.
EYE CANCER IN CATTLE

E. P. MEYER, B.V.Sc., Veterinary Surgeon

THE CONDITION known as eye cancer occurs in all ages and breeds of cattle but is most common in certain strains of the Hereford breed that have non-pigmented or mottled eyes and eyelids. A yearly incidence of up to 5 per cent can occur in susceptible herds.

Incidence of the disease also varies with age, being most common in cattle aged seven and over.

Cancerous growths can occur at all sites and tissues of the body. In cattle, cancers are rare except the type that involves the eye and its surrounding structures.

In simple terms, a cancerous growth is the uncontrolled growth of tissue which has a tendency to spread. With cancer eye this growth starts at the surface of the eye or cornea, at the lower or upper eyelids or at the inner third eyelid. It is thought to be due to the irritating effect of the ultra-violet light of sunlight on the unpigmented eye tissues.

In its early stages the growth appears as a reddish pea-shaped nodule, which enlarges to invade and destroy the eye and surrounding structures. The whole mass becomes exposed to mechanical damage and secondary bacterial infection, producing an ulcerating foul-smelling wound, that frequently becomes struck by blow-flies.

Secondary cancerous growths can spread to the lymph glands of the head and to the internal organs such as the lung and liver.

Surprisingly, some cows stay in good body condition despite an ulcerated infected and destroyed eye. However, severely affected cows generally become unthrifty, lose condition and eventually become emaciated. Death occasionally occurs because of the extensive secondary infection.

Usually only one eye is affected with the cancerous growth, but occasionally both eyes have the condition.

Recognition

Several conditions can be confused with cancer eye, the most common being grass seed penetration. Cows found with a discharging eye are often found under close examination to have a grass seed under the eyelids, causing mechanical irritation.
This has to be carefully removed to relieve the condition.

Pink eye infection can also be confused with cancer eye, but usually a number of cows are affected at the same time, often in both eyes. Pink-eye infected animals recover in about three weeks even without treatment.

**Action—on the farm**

No drugs are available that can halt the progressive cancerous growths. Surgical removal at the early stages, provided all the cancerous tissue is removed, can effect a cure.

The farmer has two alternatives: Recognise affected cows with cancer eye as early as possible and send to market immediately or have the growth surgically removed by a veterinary surgeon. If the cow is valuable or in an advanced stage of pregnancy, surgery is usually successful and economically sound, provided the growth is not too extensive.

**Action—at the abattoir**

Cows that are presented for public sale affected with obvious eye cancer are ordered to be sold for slaughter only.

If the growth is extensive and associated with fever or severe emaciation then the animal is unfit for human consumption and the carcass is condemned. The head and tongue of affected cows are automatically condemned on the slaughter floor as slaughtermen will not handle them. The whole carcass is condemned if on inspection cancerous growths are found in the internal organs.

**Prevention**

The only known way of prevention in susceptible strains of cattle is by cross-breeding to bring in eye pigmentation in the offspring. Slaughtering at an early age in susceptible strains of cattle will also decrease the herd incidence of cancer eyes.

---

**IS YOUR “JOURNAL” GOING TO THE CORRECT ADDRESS?**

Nearly 20,000 copies of the Journal of Agriculture are posted each month to addresses in Western Australia and throughout the world.

With a mailing list of this size there are many changes of address, cancellations and new subscriptions. Most of the changes of address are notified but others are only discovered when copies of the Journal are returned undelivered.

The task of keeping the mailing list up to date is complicated by the number and frequency of changes and the fact that editing, printing and despatching are not all done on the same premises.

Changes of address notified by mail or by telephone are immediately listed for appropriate action but sometimes changes cannot be made effective before despatch of the next issue.

Subscribers who notify a change but still receive a subsequent issue at an old address are assured that their notification has been received and is being dealt with.
# BULK WAREHOUSE SALES

91 JAMES STREET, PERTH - PHONE 28 5047

## PYE VACUUM CLEANERS
- **4 YEAR GUARANTEE**
- **MEMBERS PRICE $42.50**

## PYE 2-BRUSH POLISHERS
- **MEMBERS PRICE $26.50**

## PHILIPS Fringe 23” TV
- **. $170**

## ASTOR RADIATORS
- **. $3.75**

## SUNBEAM DELUXE SHAVERS
- **$21**

## NECCHI
- Fully Automatic Portable Sewing Machines
- **$135**

## H.M.V.
- Record Player
- **$52**

## SPEEDIE
- Electric Blankets
  - 3 heat
- **$6.50**

## A.W.A.
- Hair Dryers
- **$18**

## SUNBEAM
- Auto Toasters
- **$22**

---

**VULCAN OIL HEATERS**

**BEST PRICES IN W.A.**

- **G.E. Lightweight Irons $6.95**
- **H.M.V. Transistor - Best country performer $44**
- **SUNBEAM Steam & Dry Irons $10.50**
- **ASTOR 8 Trans. Car Radios $45**
- **SUNBEAM 11” FRYPANS $17**
- **HECLA Electric Kettles $10.95**

---

5 piece Chrome Kitchen Settings . . . **$34**

---

...Please mention the “Journal of Agriculture of W.A.” when writing to advertisers

---

*Journal of Agriculture, Vol 10 No 7, 1969*
WESTLAND SHEARING SHEDS

STANDARD OR CUSTOM DESIGN – YOU HAVE THE CHOICE....

Yes! We have 20 standard, time proven, Shearing Shed designs. But still, we have a custom design service. We realize that many farmers want their own innovations. Right from your initial inquiry you are dealing with the manufacturer direct, saving you a logical three figure sum, simply by cutting out the middle-man profit. Other logical advantages are that you are dealing with tradesmen specialists and not salesmen. Your instructions are treated personally by the man on the job and not by a remote agent miles away from the factory. For all your building requirements contact us—our 15 years' experience in steel building is your guarantee to complete satisfaction. We fly to all parts of the State and could be in your area soon. For our rural building specialist to call and see you on your property and assist with ground levels, internal layouts or for illustrated literature and price list —phone or write, we gladly accept reverse charges.

MACHINERY SHEDS  PACKING SHEDS  COTTAGES & QUARTERS

HAY SHEDS  GARAGES  PLANT SHEDS

QUALITY STEEL BUILDINGS
MANUFACTURED AND ERECTED BY

MANCO PTY. LTD.

PHONE 65 2699  AFTER HOURS 24 2540

DISPLAY CENTRE 137 ALBANY HIGHWAY VICTORIA PARK

Please mention the "Journal of Agriculture of W.A." when writing to advertisers