



# Cattle Producer's Handbook

Animal Health Section

650

## Control or Eradication of BVD from a Beef Herd

*Clell V. Bagley, DVM; Douglas S. Hammon, DVM, Ph.D., Utah State University;  
and James J. England, DVM, Ph.D., University of Idaho*

Bovine virus diarrhea (BVD) is caused by a virus, which is present in many beef herds, and is an extremely costly disease. Acute outbreaks may occur in animals not previously exposed to BVD, resulting in respiratory or digestive disease, weight loss, and production loss. BVD suppresses the immune response of cattle and enables other diseases to have a greater impact on the herd, even without causing an acute outbreak.

BVD is a cause of severe reproductive losses including early embryonic death, abortion, birth defects, and persistently infected calves. New strains of BVD may be introduced into the herd through purchase of breeding animals, which may cause a serious BVD outbreak.

### Forms of BVD

- Benign infection/subclinical
- Persistently infected (PI)
- Fatal mucosal disease
- Reproductive failure
  - Decreased follicular development
  - Abortion: early embryonic death
- Birth defects
- Respiratory disease
- Weak calf syndrome/immune suppression
- Diarrhea



Fig. 1. A BVD, PI calf on the left, and a normal appearing herd mate on the right, which also could be a PI calf.