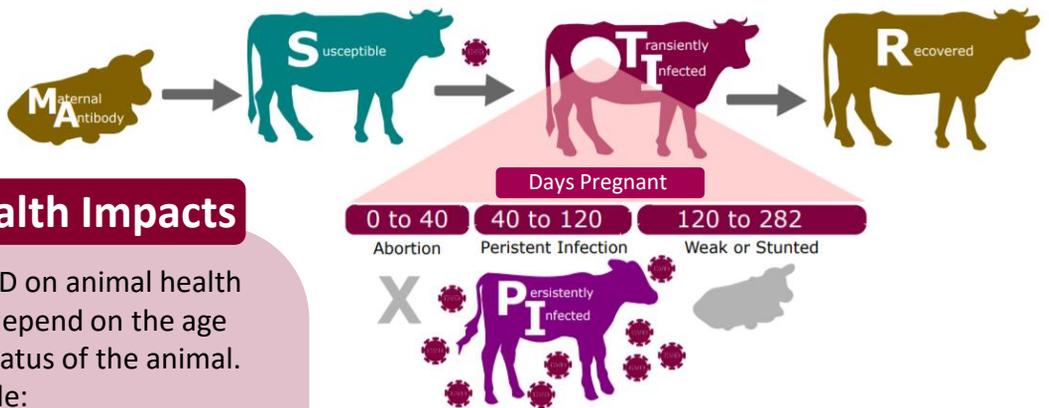


Bovine viral diarrhoea virus (BVD) has the ability to spread virtually undetected between animals and herds. The negative effects on herd performance are varied and can cause significant economic and production losses.

Infection Dynamics

- Susceptible animals are exposed to the virus through contact with other infected cattle or contaminated objects.
- Susceptible animals then become transiently infected (TI) and shed low levels of virus for a period of 2 to 3 weeks before recovering and gaining lifelong immunity
- Calves born to immune or vaccinated dams gain maternal antibodies via colostrum ingestion which can protect the calf against BVD infections for up to 10 months of age
- If the virus crosses the placenta of a TI animal and infects the unborn calf before its immune system has fully developed, the calf may be born Persistently Infected (PI) with BVD.



Animal Health Impacts

The effects of BVD on animal health and production depend on the age and pregnancy status of the animal. Effects can include:

- Poor growth
- Reduced fertility
- Abortions
- Stillbirths
- Birth defects
- Decreased milk yields
- Increased susceptibility to other diseases
- Premature culling and death

Persistent Infection

PI calves shed large quantities of BVD virus for life and are largely responsible for maintaining BVD in a population. Some PIs may appear small, weak or stunted while others appear healthy and no different to their herd mates.

PIs often die young. Those that do survive to enter the herd either are culled within a few years due to low production or develop fatal Mucosal Disease. PI dams will always give birth to PI calves.

Trojan Dams

Susceptible dams that become infected between 40 and 120 days of pregnancy are at risk of creating PI calves. These dams are called 'Trojan dams' and are the reason why purchasing pregnant cattle is a major risk factor for introducing BVD into your herd. There are currently no diagnostic tests that can accurately identify a PI calf before birth.