



Satisfaction - solving complex problems

In this newsletter we've featured two different case reports where botulism is the main suspect despite a history of vaccination. And the labs have provided info for a new resource page on the best samples to send if botulism is on your differential list. I welcome your thoughts/tips around botulism cases that we can share.

Don't miss the opportunity to send in cases as NABS SDIs – it's very satisfying to get to the bottom of more complex disease events, and the allocated funds are there to cover any extra time involved.

So far this year we have only seen about 30% of the NABS SDIs we originally guesstimated from private practice – is this because there has been less disease to see than usual? or fewer calls from producers? or missed opportunities to submit as SDIs? I'd be interested to know your thoughts.

Cheers Kev

Newsletter #6 (26 November 2018)



Two different cases of ongoing, unexplained deaths where botulism was high on the list

Case A - 16 out of 600 brahman breeder cows died over several weeks in August 2018. The cows were in BCS ~ 2.5. They became lethargic, lay down and died within a couple of days. Deaths occurred in only one paddock (100 km²) within the vicinity of one particular watering hole. The cows had been vaccinated for botulism.



Case B - Investigations in September 2018 occurred as 12 out of 370 brahman 2-year old bullocks in good condition died over several weeks. They showed gradual paralysis, inappetence, inability to swallow, recumbency for several days, then death. They were reported vaccinated at times varying from 1 to 2 years ago.

[Find out more](#)

Botulism - tips and traps

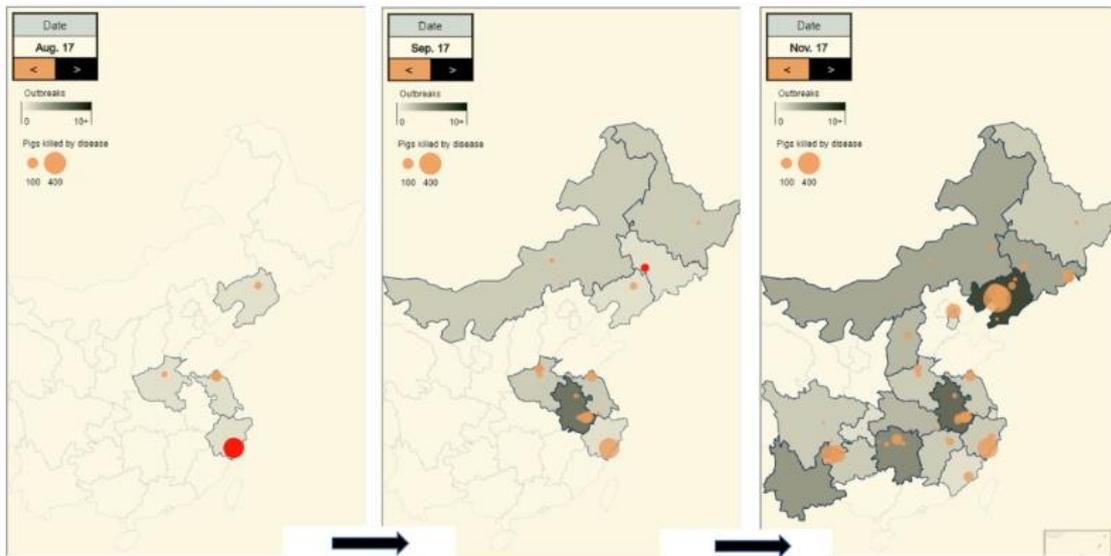
Despite vaccination? Vaccination works well for types C and D, but botulism should still be on the differential list (if it looks right clinically). Reasons include:

- Cattle with good protection may still succumb to an overwhelming challenge
- Some cattle may have missed out - logistics oversights
- Re-vaccination may be overdue
- Vaccination procedures may have been inadequate
- Type B can also occur, with rotting plant material (rather than animal carcasses).

Recent work on Bovine Ephemeral Fever (BEF) has highlighted its clinical similarities to botulism - it can also cause tongue paresis. BEF can now be ruled out with much greater confidence by collecting spleen and haemal node for PCR for the virus. BEF virus persists much longer in these tissues than in blood.

[Differentials for paralysis/death](#)

[Best samples to send](#)



ASF spread in China Aug to Nov 2018,
images Gao Baiyu (Caixin Global Ltd)

African Swine Fever - moving and dangerous

ASF is a highly contagious viral disease of pigs. With its emergence in China (August 2018) and its rapid spread since, it could soon become widespread and endemic in South East Asia. It is a real and present risk for Australia.

ASF has never occurred in Australia. If it arrived, you would NOT want to miss it.

[More info](#), including a link to a presentation by Dr Chris Oura (ex-Pirbright) with an excellent description of ASF and why we should be prepared for it.

NABS Masterclass 2019

The next NABS Masterclass will be held in Darwin, Fri 22 / Sat 23 February 2019.

This is an opportunity to build your networks, get info on priority diseases for Northern Australia and hone skills in disease investigation. With everything from case study discussions to knife sharpening, should be a great session.

Each veterinary practice signed on to a NABS SDI package has an offer of two places, but you have to nominate soon. Other places may be available, but they will be limited, so register now.

[Nomination form](#) here.

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Happy to help

Let me know anything you'd like covered here or on the website

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Newsletter sent on Kevin's behalf from the team at Harris Park Group
