



## Season's greetings – welcome 2021

Hi all

Last NABSnet newsletter of 2020 – crazy year in so many ways. Thanks to everyone who has contributed to the SDI case reports, path challenges and technical topics in each edition.

From my point of view, I'm really uplifted over recent months with some excellent SDI investigations and outcomes with all states represented.

You all say that practice workload this year has been as busy as ever. Livestock agriculture is a good career through all circumstances, global pandemics included!

There are plans afoot to run the Masterclass as two online events next year. This is partly because COVID-19 restrictions are unpredictable and partly because it would be excellent to have this additional approach to connect across the whole of the north – so the plan is to use our new-found Zoom skills. Look forward to some really interesting content and still a chance to interact together. More below.

A happy, blessed and safe Christmas to all our vets across the north. Work doesn't stop we know, but enjoy the season. Then full steam ahead for 2021.

Cheers Kev

Newsletter #26 (15 December 2020)

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## 100 of 400 weaners sick and 14 dead in 3 days

In early November 2020, on a station in south Kimberley WA, 100 of 400 droughtmaster weaner steers were lethargic, lying down for long periods, off-feed and some were coughing. 14 had died in three days, triggering a call to the vets.

The investigation established that the animals had been mustered, weaned in yards and branded two weeks earlier. 400 of 1200 weaners were then trucked about 200 km and were now on centre pivots. Coughing, lethargy and serous nasal discharge was also reported in some of the weaners remaining at the source station but there had been no mortalities.

Post mortem examinations were performed on a recumbent steer on the destination station and two sick steers at the source station. The main finding from all was severe consolidation and congestion of the ventral lung lobes. One animal had adhesions extending to the diaphragm and one animal also had necrotic changes in the ileum.

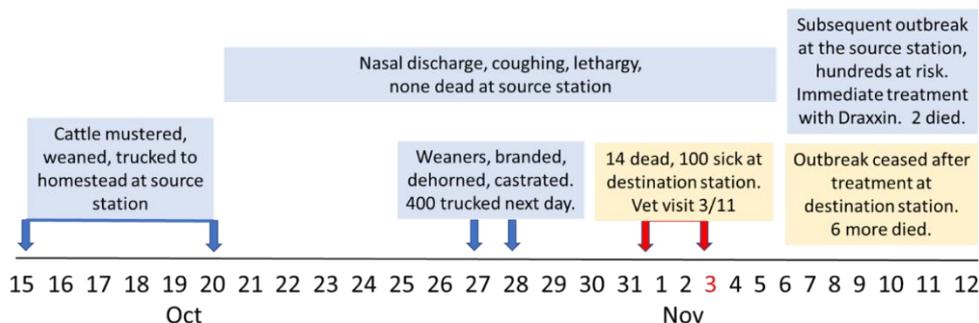
A full diagnostic sample set was sent to the lab (lung, heart, kidney, intestines, brain) – plus swabs of lung in Amies medium – with a field diagnosis of bronchopneumonia.



Histopathology and bacteriology confirmed the diagnosis of bacterial bronchopneumonia, isolating *Pasteurella multocida* and *Mannheimia haemolytica*. It was noted that the severe enterocolitis was consistent with salmonellosis.

Multiplex PCR did not detect any of the common respiratory viral pathogens (IBR, BRSV, PI3, coronavirus, pestivirus), so other stressors (overcrowding, stressful handling, heat, dusty conditions) were considered likely to have contributed to expression of disease in these animals.

The vet advised that all cattle showing any sign of respiratory distress should be immediately treated, with Draxxin KP as the drug of choice because of its efficacy for the pathogens involved, its prolonged action (which reduces the need to run ill cattle through the yard multiple times) and its anti-inflammatory action.



The owner took this advice and it was effective in stopping the outbreak on the destination station, with only another 6 animals dying. The same regimen was used with success at the source station where the situation subsequently deteriorated.

Go here for [recommendations for prevention](#)

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## Gross path challenge - what do you see?

Describe what you see in the picture below.

(from: Shirley Turner, BSL, photo from Doug McNaught, Qld DAF)



How did you go? - [Answer](#)

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## Masterclass 2021- online

Every year the NABS Masterclass has been a great opportunity for practitioners, government vets, pathologists and others in the frontline of biosecurity surveillance in the north to get together – to put names to faces and to share practical advice about doing disease investigations.

We are currently planning the Masterclass 2021 and with the uncertainty around travel restrictions, we've decided to opt for an online version.

This means it will be a different approach from the previous ones. We will be able to have some great content (ideas include featuring SDIs across the north, and following some from the field, through the labs). We will also keep a strong networking component. Likely to be two events each about 2 hours.

**Your feedback requested: which days / times in March 2021 would you prefer?  
Are there topics you would like covered?**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/nabsonline>

Lil Steadman is leading up the working party doing the planning and prep. Do contact her if you have any suggestions or requests.

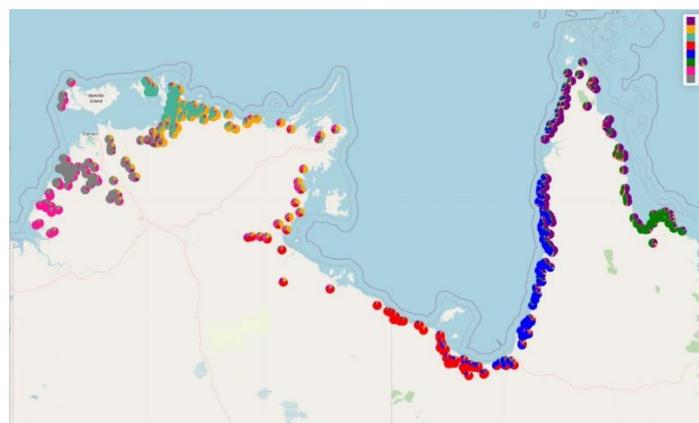


## Feral pig populations – biosecurity innovation project

A project led by Charles Darwin University (CDU) is developing tools to enhance surveillance of the northern Australian feral pig population and model potential patterns of disease spread if a new disease, such as African swine fever, enters northern Australia.

Feral pig samples from across northern Australia have been collected and the genetic information from 600 samples used to map the movements of feral pigs (either natural or human-assisted) across the landscape, the connectivity of pig populations, and the presence of any geographic barriers to pig movement.

The map shows the sampling location of feral pigs and their assignment to major genetic clusters. The map shows the sampling location of feral pigs and their assignment to major genetic clusters.



The project is continuing to look for samples until the end of February - if you can help please contact the research team at [feralpigmap@cdu.edu.au](mailto:feralpigmap@cdu.edu.au)

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## Key contacts for the NABS SDI network

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

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