

Lumpy skin disease

Lumpy skin disease is a viral disease that affects cattle and buffalo. The disease has never been recorded in Australia, but internationally it is spreading rapidly.

WHAT IS LUMPY SKIN DISEASE?

Lumpy skin disease is a viral (*Capripoxvirus*) disease of cattle and buffalo.

Affected cattle will likely develop a fever, appear depressed and go off their feed. Excess salivation, conjunctivitis and swollen lymph glands may also occur. The animals may develop large, firm nodules (up to 5 cm in diameter) in their skin. These can be found all over the body, but particularly on the head, neck, udder, scrotum and perineum.

In severely affected animals, lesions can also develop in the respiratory and gastrointestinal tract, and pneumonia can develop. Death rates in infected cattle are usually around

1-5% but have been reported to be as high as 75%.

Decreased milk yield, as well as damage to hides and adverse effects on reproduction reduce production in affected animals.

The virus is highly host specific and does not cause disease in humans. There is no risk from consuming beef or dairy products.

HOW DOES THE VIRUS SPREAD?

Lumpy skin disease is spread primarily by biting insects such as flies and mosquitoes, and possibly ticks.

It can also be transmitted by fomites (e.g. contaminated equipment), and in some cases, from animal to animal.

WHAT IS THE RISK OF LUMPY SKIN DISEASE OCCURRING IN AUSTRALIA?

The recent detection of lumpy skin disease in Indonesia, and ongoing spread throughout other neighboring countries, is very concerning.

The risk of an incursion of lumpy skin disease is now considered to be relatively high, and preparedness activities are being prioritized at both national and state levels.



WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF AN INCURSION IN AUSTRALIA?

The potential economic impact of a lumpy skin disease incursion would be considerable due to the disruption of trade in livestock and livestock products, as well as costs associated with disease control and eradication.

Lumpy skin disease would be costly and challenging to control or eradicate should it reach Australia. Like other insect-borne diseases, unless an incursion of lumpy skin disease is detected early, its eradication would be difficult.

Australia's current response policy for lumpy skin disease is to eradicate the disease in the shortest possible time, by the destruction of infected animals and contaminated products, quarantine and movement controls, insect vector control and other activities. A vaccine against lumpy skin disease is not currently available (or its use permitted) in Australia.

WHAT DO I DO IF I SUSPECT LUMPY SKIN DISEASE?

Lumpy skin disease is a notifiable disease. All suspected cases must be reported to Agriculture Victoria on the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline (**1800 675 888**) or to Agriculture Victoria Animal Health and Welfare staff immediately.

ACCESSIBILITY

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