A study of heart diseases without clinical signs of heart failure in 47 cattle

Submitted by Dan Van Arsdall on Tue, May 31 @ 1pm

In this retrospective study, features of 47 cattle suffering from heart disease (HD) without clinical signs of heart failure (HF) were reviewed. The most common reasons for referral were respiratory problems (n = 14), anorexia (n = 13), fever (n = 10), and lameness (n = 9). Thirty-nine animals were tachypneic. In 31 cases, cardiac auscultation revealed abnormalities. The final diagnoses were bacterial endocarditis (BE; n = 19), congenital heart disease (CHD; n = 18), pericarditis (n = 8), cardiomyopathy (n = 1), and lymphoma (n = 1). Echocardiography was performed in 39 cases. Gross pathology examination confirmed the echocardiographic diagnosis in 4 of 5 cases of pericarditis, 6 of 6 cases of BE, and 4 of 6 cases of CHD. Short-term prognosis was guarded with 19 cases (40.4%) being discharged. Premature death within 2 mo after discharge (n = 5), early culling because of poor breeding performance (n = 5), and normal productive life in the herd (n = 5) were observed in the cases that were followed. Echocardiography may be the most sensitive tool for the antemortem diagnosis of heart disease in cattle.

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