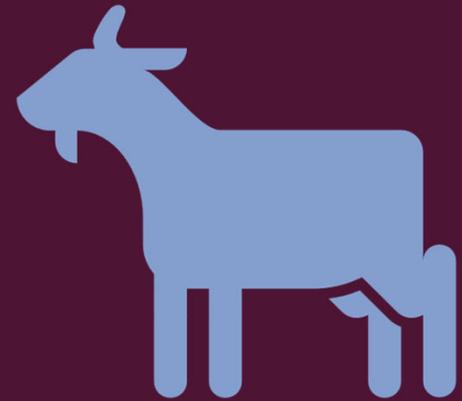


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# Q-FEVER IN GOATS

Signs, Spread, and Supervision



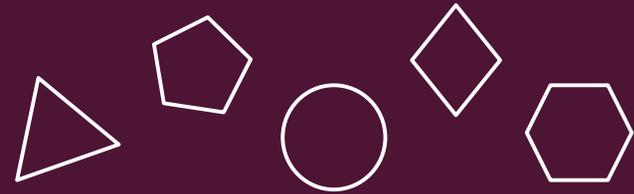
# WHAT IS Q-FEVER?



- Q-Fever is an infectious disease that occurs in goats, sheep, and cattle
- The disease is zoonotic, meaning it can be transferred from animals to humans
- Q-Fever is caused by bacteria called *Coxiella burnetii*
- It is not uncommon to find Q-Fever in many goat herds around America and worldwide

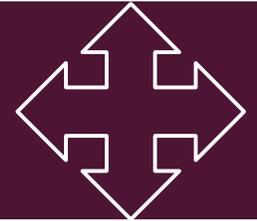


# SIGNS OF Q-FEVER



- Q-Fever is hard to identify in many goats, as most seem perfectly healthy
- The most noticeable signs that a goat is infected with Q-fever are abortions late into pregnancies and stillbirths
- Other signs may include retained placentas, infertility, endometritis, and weak kids

# HOW DOES Q-FEVER SPREAD?



Q-Fever is spread many different ways because *Coxiella burnetii* can live on many surfaces for long periods of time



- The bacterium exit the goat's body through feces, saliva, milk, and kidding discharges
- *Coxiella burnetii* then spread to other goats through contact with those excretions
- The bacterium is also spread easily through dust spores and ticks

# Q-FEVER SUPERVISION AND TREATMENT

- Testing the placentas of an animal suspected to have Q-Fever can be conducted by a veterinarian to determine the presence of the bacteria in a herd
- There is currently no vaccine that will prevent the full effects of Q-Fever nor keep it from spreading
- Tetracycline can be used as a treatment in pregnant animals and may help reduce the likelihood of abortion, however, it will not prevent spread of the bacteria



# PREVENTING Q-FEVER SPREAD IN GOATS



It can be difficult to keep Q-Fever from spreading among a herd from goat to goat, as many animals do not show any symptoms

- Cleanliness during kidding can play a large part in preventing spread if care is taken to contain all birthing tissues and fluids
- Regular cleaning of pens, barns, and milking areas will also assist in inhibiting spread from goat to goat
- However, there is no way to keep an infected goat from shedding the bacteria, making it difficult to fully prevent Q-Fever from spreading in a herd



# PREVENTING Q-FEVER SPREAD IN PEOPLE

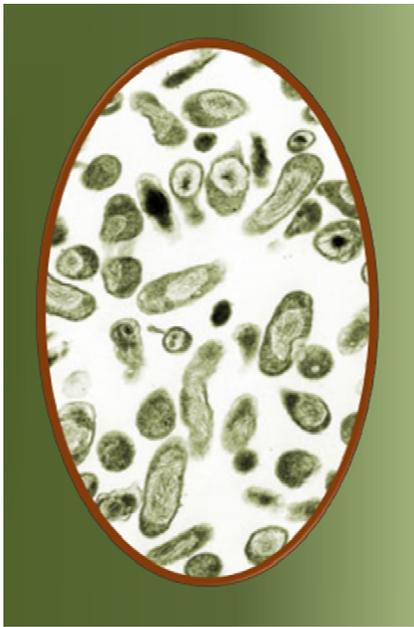


Q-Fever can spread several different ways from animals to people, and there are precautions that can be taken to prevent that spread

- When cleaning areas goats regularly occupy, wearing medical masks can reduce bacteria inhalation. Cleaning these areas during non-windy conditions will keep bacteria from spreading miles away
- Wearing gloves and medical masks during kidding will also prevent bacteria from contaminating people
- Pasteurization of milk before consumption kills *Coxiella burnetii* which keeps the milk products safe for consumption



# WHY IS Q-FEVER A GROWING CONCERN?



- *Coxiella burnetii* can remain active in certain environments for years
- The bacterium can also spread through dust spores to individuals miles away who have no contact with livestock themselves
- Because of the ease of an outbreak of the disease and the rate at which Q-Fever cases are occurring in the United States, an increasing number of people are becoming deeply concerned about the disease

## WHY IS Q-FEVER A CONCERN FOR PEOPLE?

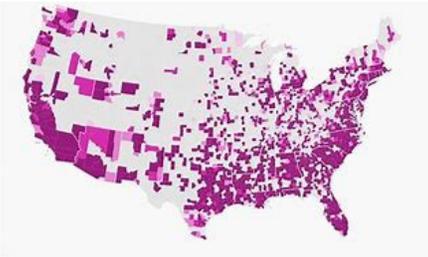
- Q-Fever, when transferred to humans, usually causes symptoms similar to the common cold or flu and often needs no treatment
- However, for those with preexisting health conditions, *Coxiella burnetii* can cause serious and sometimes life-threatening illnesses
- While precautions can be taken to keep Q-Fever from spreading on a farm during kidding and through milk, it is impossible to keep dust spores from spreading to people miles away on dry, windy days



# WHY IS Q-FEVER A CONCERN FOR GOATS?



- Because there is no cure or vaccine for animals, farmers are losing several animals each year to the disease
- While tetracycline can be used to reduce the number of stillbirths and abortions, it can be difficult to determine which animals need it as they show no symptoms, and thus is expensive for farmers to use on all animals every year
- Since most animals show no signs of illness, it continues to spread very easily, and the number of infected animals continues to rise worldwide



## IN CONCLUSION

- Q-Fever is a disease than can cause major problems in a goat herd and pose danger to human health
- Causing abortions, stillbirths, and other problems, Q-Fever is a threat that often goes unseen, as there are usually no other symptoms
- Q-Fever can be spread through feces, saliva, and ticks, but most often through contact with contaminated birthing fluids and tissues
- Tetracycline can be used to help reduce the effects of Q-Fever in pregnant goats
- Milk pasteurization will kill the bacteria before it is transferred to humans through consumption
- Overall, Q-Fever is a disease that must be carefully managed to prevent unnecessary deaths and illness

## SOURCES

- <https://waddl.vetmed.wsu.edu/animal-disease-faq/q-fever>
- <https://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/livestk/08022.pdf>
- <https://goats.extension.org/goat-q-fever/>
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