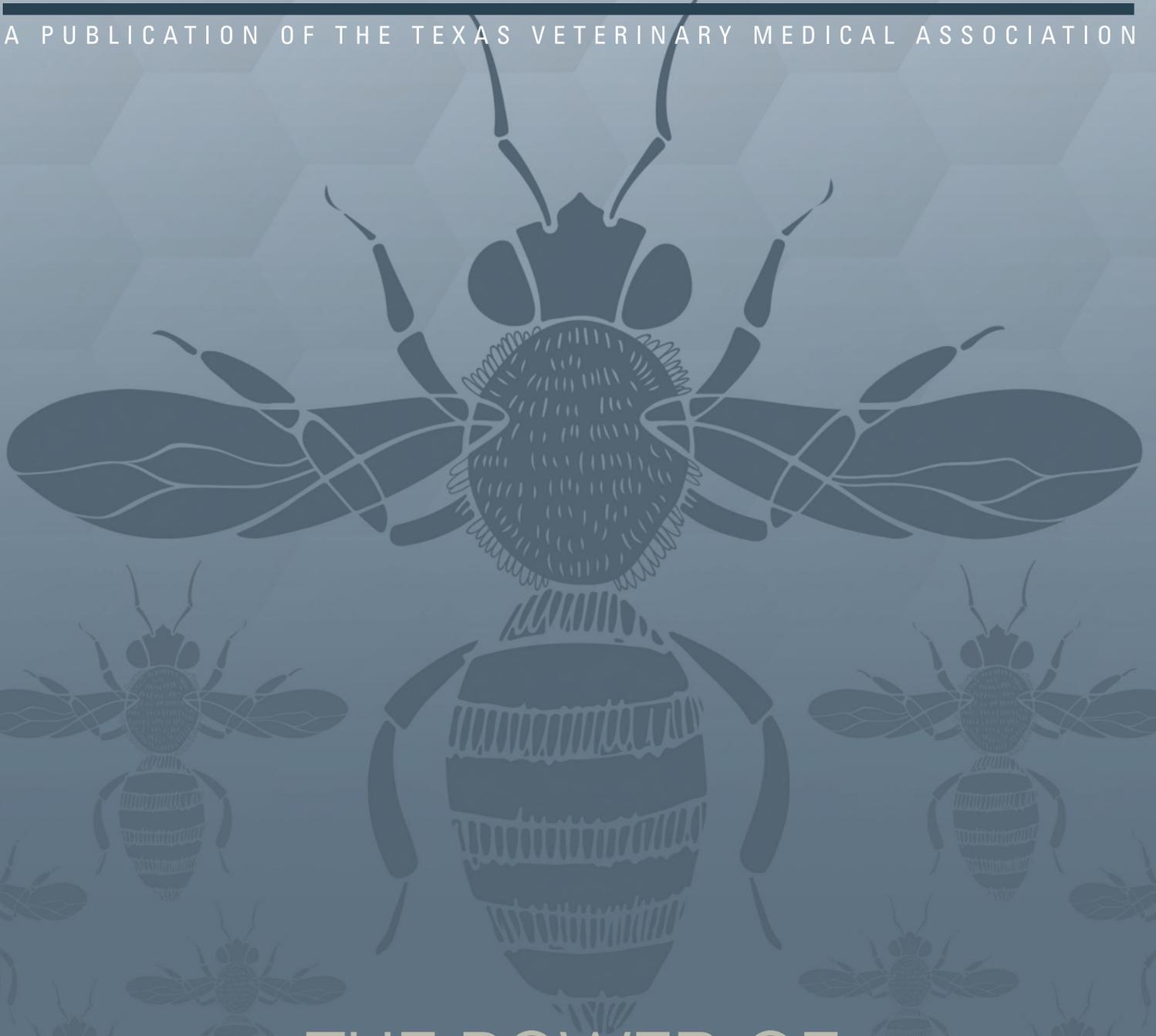


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# TEXAS

# VETERINARIAN

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# TAHC SEEKING INPUT ABOUT BOVINE TRICH



Andy Schwartz, DVM  
Executive Director,  
Texas Animal Health  
Commission

Working Group recommendations follow:

1. Restrict female cattle in Trich-positive herds for the period of time the bulls in the herd are under quarantine. TAHC field staff and epidemiologists shall review individual cases to determine which cows and heifers should be restricted.
2. Develop educational materials focusing on the role cows and heifers play in maintenance of the disease within a herd and in spreading the disease to bulls in other herds if moved or sold for breeding.

The working group understands that restricting the movement of females only while bulls are quarantined will not prevent infected females from spreading the disease once that quarantine is released. However, the working group recognized that limiting female restrictions to the length of the bull's quarantine is a manageable first step that emphasizes the role female cattle play in controlling the disease in Texas.

It is important to note that this working group recommendation is not a current rule proposal. TAHC is seeking your valuable input as an individual interested in the health of cattle herds in Texas. Any response will be considered by the Trich Working Group at their next meeting.

To provide feedback, please email [comments@tahc.texas.gov](mailto:comments@tahc.texas.gov) and include "Trich and Female Cattle Feedback" in the subject line of your email. Please submit feedback by October 1.

The TAHC appreciates your time, consideration and comments regarding the working group's female cattle recommendations. [iv](#)

**T**he Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) is seeking input from all segments of the cattle industry affected by Bovine Trichomoniasis (Trich), a venereal disease of cattle that causes early embryonic death and results in production losses due to decreased calf crops and repeat breeding. In 2009, the Texas cattle industry requested that TAHC establish a regulatory program to address the disease. The TAHC formed the Bovine Trichomoniasis Working Group, which meets at least annually to evaluate the program and make recommendations to TAHC for regulatory changes.

Since its formation in 2009, the working group has discussed the role female cattle play in the maintenance and transmission of the disease. This year, the working group is considering recommendations to TAHC regarding potential regulatory changes to address this risk.

By Kimberly Hencken, DVM,  
Field Veterinarian, Texas Animal Health Commission

This is an important development in the Trich program as the rules to date in Texas have focused on bulls only. Due to the significance of this development, your feedback regarding female cattle Trich regulations is requested.

While it is commonly stated that most cows and heifers will clear Trich infection with 120 or more days of sexual rest, the working group recognized the detrimental impact of females not clearing the infection and potentially spreading the disease. In making its recommendations, the working group considered the lack of a reliable Trich test for females and also recognized the critical role producer and veterinary education and outreach plays in the success of a disease control program.

The 2017 TAHC Bovine Trichomoniasis

# A Challenge to Become a Mentor

**M**y son and I are very close. We talk or text every day. I have tried to impart a bit of my knowledge to him over the years, hoping not to overwhelm or underwhelm him with my experiences. I always told him, “The first step in avoiding a trap is to know of its existence.” It is my job as his father to let him live vicariously through my life experiences and hopefully avoid my mistakes. My father did it. I did it. I hope he does the same for my grandchildren. We are not interfering. We are caring.

After more than 30 years in veterinary medicine, I also think it is my job to share experiences with my younger colleagues to help them to avoid problems or professional pitfalls. Call it “preaching.” I love the veterinary profession. It has been my life for more than two-thirds of my years on this planet. I think the older generation has a responsibility to pass on institutional knowledge to all those following in our professional footsteps. Granted, technology and scientific advances are serving to humble some of us “gray beards,” but experience can be an incredible ally. Having said that, I would challenge all of us who hire new graduates to embrace the role of a true mentor, not just giving those new DVMs a set of clinic keys and a slap on the back as we leave on that “well-

deserved” vacation.

Practice is difficult. The knowledge base to be successful in our industry is challenging to achieve. Institutional knowledge is slipping away as our society and culture become more specialized. We can't rely on the veterinary schools to provide everything the new DVM needs to be successful. College curriculums are updated yearly in an effort to deal with the expansion of knowledge. Our profession continues to evolve and at an increasing pace. Helping those who work with us and for us will serve to strengthen the profession and improve all of our chances to succeed. Take the time to communicate meaningfully. Offer advice and be prepared to critique, not criticize. It is amazing how the same group of words can either build or break a spirit, depending on how they are delivered.

Our veterinary schools have done a very good job at providing clinical education and skills. I think they are doing a better job at providing practical knowledge than they were when I went through. But they only have the students for a short amount of time before they are asked to take the national and state

boards and begin their practice career. Knowledge by the truckload is waiting to be experienced in practice.

The regulatory side of veterinary medicine is also out there, waiting to be applied by the new practitioner. Once again, veterinary schools are stepping up their efforts to provide education about regulations and rules in the classroom prior to the students' exit from the safe and friendly confines of their hallowed halls. Once the new graduate starts practice, expectations are that they are fully aware of these rules. They should be able to navigate their way through all the ever-changing rules and regulations without any direction or assistance, right? Unfortunately, I have observed otherwise. We should not be setting them up for failure and, in doing so, hurting our own practices. Instead, we need to offer them instruction based on our knowledge and own experiences. Making mistakes on your own isn't necessarily the best mode of teaching. Having an employer who is willing to help improve the new practitioner's skills will add up to a friendlier and happier work environment, and it often leads to the all-important issue of employee retention.

Again, I challenge practitioners to develop their newly hired talent by supporting them through a solid mentoring approach. Get to know them, discover their professional goals and help them reach those goals. In doing so, not only will you gain a great employee but also a valued colleague. **TV**

## How to Contact TAHC or Texas VS

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