



Farm Animal Council of Saskatchewan Inc.

Cancer Eye

To avoid unnecessary suffering for the affected animal, and to protect your economic investment, learn to identify and treat this disease early.

If not detected early, Cancer Eye will eventually cause severe trauma and suffering to the animal. **Producers should deal with this problem on the farm.** Your management short-falls should not be passed on to others such as auction markets, order buyers or slaughter facilities.

Causes

- The cause is unknown but may be genetic. Ultra-violet light is known to be a factor.
- All breeds are at risk, but Cancer Eye appears most often in white-faced cattle that lack pigment around the eye.

Symptoms

- To check for early stages of Cancer Eye, pull down on the cow's lower eyelid and look for any abnormal tissue growth. This is best done when the animal is in a chute, so combine eye checks with another activity such as fall pregnancy checks or spring vaccination.

Correct Diagnosis Is Important

- Cancer eye can be mistaken for pinkeye and therefore, treated inappropriately.
- To obtain a correct diagnosis, and prognosis for surgical treatment, contact your veterinarian.



Cancer Eye



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Pinkeye

HOW TO TELL CANCER EYE FROM PINKEYE

Condition	Cancer Eye	Pinkeye
Eye	White/pink tissue growth; tumors usually on the third eyelid, rarely on the eyeball	General swelling inside; white of eye is red; lesions on the eyeball
Tearing	Yes	Yes
Pain	Not in early stages	Yes
Eye spasms	No	Yes, will hold eye shut
Age of animal	> 5 years	Any age
Seasonal	No	Yes, summer
Treatment	Surgery/culling	Antibiotic

Source: Cattlemens Magazine October 1995

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Early and Middle Stages

- In the early stages, immediate surgery or liquid nitrogen treatment of tumor are the choices. If the animal is a cow with calf, consider surgery (tumor or whole eye) and cull after weaning. Another option would be sale for slaughter. The likely result would be rail grade with possible head condemnation.

Advanced Stage

- Advanced stages will result in partial or whole carcass condemnation without compensation.

Action

- Check animals regularly. Early detection and treatment can reduce animal suffering and offer more choices for return on investment.
- If cancer eye is not detected until the last stages, the animal should be destroyed at the farm level and not even transported to the auction market or packer.



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502 - 45th Street West, 2nd Floor, Saskatoon, SK S7L 6H2
 Phone: 306-249-3227 Fax: 306-244-4497
 e-mail: facs@sasktel.net
 website: www.facs.sk.ca

FACS represents the livestock industry in advancing responsible animal care and handling practices in agriculture.

Associate Memberships are available from \$50.00 – \$199.99 + GST.
 Active Memberships start at \$200.00 + GST
 Receipts are issued for all memberships.

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