



Diseases of Hogs Characterized by Nervous Signs

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CIRCULAR A-431

SEPTEMBER 1963

DISEASES OF HOGS CHARACTERIZED BY NERVOUS SIGNS

A number of diseases of hogs are first indicated by nervous signs which show involvement of the central nervous system.

A few samples can be used to illustrate the various agents that will cause deranged actions on the part of the affected animal:

Rabies, listeriosis, pseudorabies, hog cholera, chemical poisoning, such as arsenic and salt, certain toxic plants, chemicals used as herbicides and pesticides.

With so many different causes for the development of signs of nervous involvement the necessity of a correct diagnosis is obvious, if a satisfactory control program is to be started.

The length of time required for a diagnosis depends on how much information the owner can furnish to the veterinarian.

Diseases, such as rabies and pseudorabies, are caused by filtrable viruses and may affect all species of mammals. Usually, only a few animals are involved. The signs of rabies may be aggressiveness, or depression and paralysis. Most cases of rabies in hogs are caused by bites by infected skunks.

Control of rabies is best accomplished by vaccinating all dogs and cats while they are young. Hogs that have been bitten by any animal suspected or proved to have rabies should be slaughtered immediately.

Skunks should be eliminated from areas where livestock is housed.

Pseudorabies is transferred from animal to animal by the susceptible animal being bitten by an infected

one. The outstanding sign of pseudorabies is the infected animal biting itself at the site of the wound.

There is no vaccine for pseudorabies. The disease appears always to be fatal. Any animal tearing at an area of a wound should be isolated and examined by a veterinarian. People may be infected with this virus.

Listeriosis, a disease caused by a specific organism, Listeria monocytogenes, is an infection of both mammals and birds. The method of spread is not known. Usually, there are few cases in a herd. Most of the animals showing signs of listeriosis die. Since little is known about the manner of spread, specific information cannot be offered. Sheep appear to be more susceptible than hogs, so it is recommended that sheep and hogs be kept separate.

Hog cholera is another disease caused by a filtrable virus that is infectious only to hogs. When this disease is present in a herd, death losses are high, often approaching 100 per cent of the herd. In many outbreaks of hog cholera the nervous signs are few or absent.

Control of hog cholera is best handled by vaccination of all hogs.

Chemical poisonings are quite common in hogs and the signs may vary with each type. The non-organic chemicals most frequently encountered are lead, arsenic and thallium.

Many organic chemicals, such as the herbicides, pesticides and chemicals used for the preservation of wood can cause poisoning. Some cause derangement of the nervous system. The diagnosis may have to depend on the history and the availability of the chemicals. In some instances chemical methods may be used to determine the chemical involved.

The signs of the disease, such as body temperature, appetite, ability to walk naturally, aggressiveness or paralysis, all constitute the points to look for when the post mortem examination is made. In this examination every organ should be examined for changes from normal.

The report to the diagnostic laboratory should be clear and concise, but should furnish all of the information obtained on the case.

On the basis of this information the laboratory personnel will then determine which procedure to follow. The procedure will depend on the type of specimens submitted, the history and the condition of the specimens.

The case history usually gives the veterinarian the first lead on what to look for.

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FEB 9 1960		
GAYLORD 234		PRINTED IN U. S. A.