



Labeling lameness

Determine the type of lameness affecting your herd in order to provide the most effective treatments and prevention methods.

Lameness	Root of problem	Characteristics	Common causes	Common treatments	Prevention
Infectious	Hairy wart (digital dermatitis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Painful lesions on the soft tissues between the claws and the heel, although occasionally it occurs on other soft parts of the foot. Depending on the severity, cows often walk tenderly on the affected hooves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of proper preventative footbath routine More prominent in poor hygienic conditions in housed dairy herds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual cases with the symptoms of digital dermatitis should have their feet lifted and examined, and treated topically. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routine footbaths or a proper topical spray/foam routine in heifers and dry cows and milking cows
Infectious	Heel erosion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizable by the damage to the surface of the bulb of the heel. Actual evidence of mobility problems due to the condition may not be present unless it becomes severe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly observed in poor hygienic conditions in housed dairy herds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routine footbathing or a proper topical spray/foam routine as well as routine hoof trimmings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routine footbaths or a proper topical spray/foam Routine hoof trimmings
Infectious	Hoof rot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reddened tissue above the hoof and between the rear claws. Acute swelling of interdigital tissues and around the hairline of both hooves. In some instances, fever can be present. Foul-smelling discharge, toes possibly spread outward. If left untreated, swelling may progress upward from the foot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bacteria enter the hoof via compromised interdigital skin, causing infection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the case, foot soaking and/or antibiotic therapy under veterinarian supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routine footbaths or a proper topical spray/foam routine
Non-infectious	Sole hemorrhage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slight to significant red (or blue) coloration of the sole Not to be confused with natural black pigmentation of claw horn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excessive standing More common on thinner cows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hoof trimming and blocking, if applicable Comfortable and adequate stalls to encourage lying time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stall comfort Adequate number of stalls per cow Good-quality cow tracks are essential Regular, competent foot trimming
Non-Infectious	Sole Ulcer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infection forms where the sole meets the heel bulb, in the underlying tissues Very painful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often occur when the soft tissues inside the sole are damaged and normal horn cannot be produced for a number of reasons. Excessive standing is the most common cause. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trimming by hoof trimmer to relieve pressure Possible application of a block 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stall comfort Adequate number of stalls per cow Good-quality cow tracks are essential Regular, competent foot trimming
Non-infectious	Thin sole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sole is thin and flexible when pressure is applied Caused by insufficient length of the toe, excessive wear or over trimming Minimum claw length of 3 inches (does not apply to heifers or animals that weigh less than 900 pounds) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excessive walking on abrasive surfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubber tracts/flooring Possible application of a block 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubber tracts/flooring Move pen closer to the parlor to avoid excessive walking
Non-infectious	White line lesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occurs when the sole separates from the side wall of the hoof, allowing foreign material to penetrate and infect the white line region Often develops into an abscess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often due to poor flooring surface Common with cows that make sharp turns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Properly paring of lesion Possible application of a block 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routine hoof trimmings Proper walking surfaces Avoid sudden change of direction and rapid pivots due to flow pattern
Non-infectious	Physical injury/ Pinched nerve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caused by swollen joints, broken bones, muscle damage or tendon damage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improper stalls Calving injuries Improper cow handling Bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case by case, based on the injury and severity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee training on cow handling and care Well-maintained facilities