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Cattle Health Management: Komari Disease (FMD)

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Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), locally known as Komari Noai, is a highly contagious and devastating viral infection affecting cloven-hoofed animals such as cattle, buffaloes, sheep, and goats. Caused by the 'Aphthovirus', it is characterized by fever and blister-like sores on the tongue, lips, and hooves. The disease spreads rapidly through direct contact and airborne transmission. While it rarely kills adult animals, the massive drop in milk production and the high mortality rate in calves lead to severe economic losses for farmers. Timely vaccination and strict hygiene are the primary methods of management.



Introduction

Cattle health management provides the structural care needed to keep livestock productive. Komari Disease is one of the most significant threats to the dairy industry. The virus is present in the exhaled air, saliva, milk, and feces of infected animals. Once a cow is infected, it suffers from severe pain, making it unable to walk or eat properly. This leads to a "lodging" of the animal's productivity, requiring immediate intervention and supportive care.

Key Objectives

- Disease Prevention: Implementing a strict vaccination schedule to build immunity.
- Controlling Transmission: Isolating infected cattle (Quarantine) to prevent the virus from spreading to the rest of the herd.
- Maintaining Productivity: Minimizing the reduction in milk yield through supportive therapy.
- Calf Protection: Preventing 'Tiger Heart' disease in calves, which occurs when they consume infected milk.
- Bio-Security: Maintaining a sanitized environment to kill the virus in the shed.

Materials Used for Treatment & Hygiene

- Potassium Permanganate (1%): Used as an antiseptic wash for mouth and foot lesions.
- Glycerin / Honey: Applied to mouth ulcers to soothe pain and facilitate healing.
- Neem Oil: Applied to foot lesions to prevent maggot infestation and act as a fly repellent.
- Bleaching Powder / Lime: Spread on the floor of the cattle shed as a disinfectant.
- Soft Gruel (Kanji): Easily digestible food like rice or millet porridge for animals unable to chew grass.

Symptoms

- High Fever: Body temperature rises sharply to 104-106°F.
- Excessive Salivation: Long, ropy strings of saliva hanging from the mouth.

- Blisters and Ulcers: Appearance of vesicles on the tongue, dental pad, and interdigital space of the hooves.
- Lameness: Severe pain in the feet causes the animal to limp or remain recumbent (lying down).
- Anorexia: Loss of appetite due to painful mouth lesions.



Conclusion

Komari Disease remains a major challenge for cattle farmers, but it is manageable through scientific practices. Vaccination twice a year (every six months) is the most cost-effective tool available. By combining medical treatment with proper shed hygiene and soft nutritional support, farmers can protect their livestock from the debilitating effects of FMD. Proactive health management ultimately ensures the sustainability and profitability of the dairy farm.

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