

Information sheet on Johne's

What is Johne's? Johne's (pronounced "YO-knees"), is a contagious slow growing bacterial gastrointestinal disease caused by the bacterium for *Mycobacterium avium subspecies paratuberculosis* (MAP). Johne's can be **transmitted between cattle, sheep and goats**.

Why be concerned about Johne's?

Johne's is related to leprosy and tuberculosis and may create a risk as a reservoir for these diseases. It is also implicated in Crohn's disease.

What happens to a goat with Johne's?

The gastrointestinal tract is damaged, so the goat becomes chronically thin. No matter how much food is fed, they eventually **starve to death**.

How does Johne's spread in the herd?

Most common transmission of the disease is:

- **Infected milk/colostrum.**
- **Manure** in contaminated feed, water and milk.
- In utero.
- Infected cow colostrum.

How could a goat herd get Johne's?

- **The main way is purchasing infected animals, that includes goats, sheep, or cows!**
- Property was already infected with Johne's, MAP is very hardy and can survive for up to **11 months in soil** and **17 months in water**.
- Buying hay from an infected farm- Johne's Bacteria has been found on forage that was fertilized with Johne's-contaminated manure. **Research estimates 70% of dairy cow herds in Canada are infected with Johne's!**

How to prevent Johne's?

Buy (goats, sheep or cattle) from a reputable breeder who has several years **of whole herd negative Johne's test**.

Avoid buying forage from farms that use manure fertilizer that is not tested clear of Johne's.

Is there a cure for Johne's? No

Should all herds be tested?

Ideally all herds should be screening for Johne's. This would help mitigate the spread of the disease.

What happens if the test is positive?

Work with your vet on protocols to mitigate or eliminate Johne's over time.

Here is a great resource to start: [Click here](#).

What type of Testing is there for Johne's?

PCR - tests for MAP (live or dead genetic material in manure or tissue samples). PCR is slowly replacing fecal culture testing.

Fecal culture- tests for live MAP in manure

Both PCR and Fecal testing are the most accurate and expensive. Samples can be pooled to reduce cost. This means **individual samples from ALL your goats are sent in**, then **the Laboratory pools the samples**

Blood or Milk test (ELISA)- test for antibodies to MAP. This test is convenient if you are already sending in blood samples for other testing such as CAE. A positive test should be confirmed with a PCR or Fecal Culture test.

Not sure what test to use?
[Check out this link](#)

For more Information on Johne's prevention check out these links:

[Johne's Disease for Goat Owners](#)
[JOHNE'S INFORMATION CENTER](#)