Johne’s disease is a chronic intestinal infection that many herd managers struggle with. According to the National Institute for Animal Agriculture, the disease is costing U.S. dairy producers an estimated $200 million annually in reduced milk production. Dairy farmers with infected animals may be losing as much as $227 per head. The milk ELISA testing is a fast, convenient, and budget conscious way to screen and monitor Johne’s disease in a herd.

Johne’s disease can be difficult to pinpoint within a herd, making testing a useful tool in managing the disease. The cyclical nature of the disease causes the symptoms to appear when conditions are right. Controlling Johne’s is a two prong approach that consists of testing and management. Developing a plan with a local veterinarian is key to success. Regular testing for Johne’s with milk ELISA testing allows can help managers identify existing problems within the herd. With careful management, herd managers can help reduce the risk for further infections within the herd.

The milk ELISA tests conducted by AgSource allow the laboratory to detect an antibody response to *M. paratuberculosis*, the bacteria that causes Johne’s disease, in milk samples. The test has a sensitivity of 51% meaning that the test has the ability to correctly identify 51% of infected animals. While this may seem low, it has similar results to other methods such as blood serum ELISA testing. The test also has specificity of 99%, meaning that the test has very few false positives.

Talk with your DHI Field Technician or call 1-800-236-0097 to find out more about milk ELISA testing for Johne’s disease.
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