

# Farm&Home

## Managing your herd’s pinkeye long before the first ‘bad eye’ of the season

Pinkeye, or Infectious Bovine Keratoconjunctivitis (IBK), is one of the most frustrating and costly diseases beef producers face. It negatively affects weaning weights, increases treatment costs and leads to discounts at sale due to corneal scarring. While it spreads quickly once it starts, the key to managing pinkeye lies in reducing risk—long before the first bad eye of the season.

### UNDERSTANDING THE DISEASE

Pinkeye is caused by a complex mix of bacteria, most notably *Moraxella bovis*, *Moraxella bovoculi*, and *Mycoplasma bovoculi*. These organisms can live harmlessly in the eye until certain conditions—like eye injury or irritation—trigger them to become aggressive. *M. bovis*, for example, uses hairlike pili to attach to damaged corneas and releases toxins that destroy

corneal tissue —leading to painful ulcers. New research shows that pinkeye involves more than just one bacterium, making vaccine development difficult. Some strains are considered harmless, while others are highly virulent and resistant to antibiotics.



ADAM THOMAS  
COUNTY EXTENSION  
AGENT FOR  
AGRICULTURE AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES

### REDUCING RISK STARTS EARLY

Reducing the risk of pinkeye begins with strengthening your herd’s natural defenses. Good nutrition, especially adequate levels of trace minerals like selenium and copper, is essential. Clean, cool water helps maintain hydration and tear production, which protects the eye. Avoid stagnant water sources and regularly clean automatic waterers. Environmental irritants are major contributors. Dust, ultraviolet (UV) rays, tall weeds and seed heads can all damage the eye, making it possible for bacteria to take

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hold. White-faced breeds like Herefords are more susceptible due to increased UV reflection to the eye’s surface. Providing shade and mowing pastures can help reduce these risks.

### FACE FLY CONTROL

Face flies are the primary transmitters of pinkeye bacteria. They feed on eye secretions and can spread infection from animal to animal. Unlike horn flies, face flies aren’t affected by systemic insecticides. Instead, use a combination of feed-through

insect growth regulators (IGRs), insecticide ear tags, dust bags and back rubbers strategically placed in high-traffic areas. Start IGRs in mid-spring, about 30 days before fly season, and continue until 30 days after it ends. Rotate insecticide products annually, based on mode of action (MOA), to prevent resistance. Aim to keep face fly numbers below 10 per head.

### RECOGNIZING SYMPTOMS AND ACTING FAST

Early signs of pinkeye may include excessive tearing, squinting and blinking. Prompt treatment is critical to prevent spread and minimize damage. Long-acting injectable antibiotics like oxytetracycline (LA-300®) or tulathromycin (Draxxin®) are effective and labeled for pinkeye treatment. In severe cases, eye patches or surgical procedures may be needed to protect the cornea. Topical fly repellents and isolating affected animals can also help reduce transmission. Always consult your veterinarian for treatment decisions and prescriptions.

### THE ROLE OF VACCINES

Vaccines can reduce the number and severity of cases but aren’t foolproof. Commercial vaccines work best when the strain in the vaccine matches the strain in your herd. When they don’t, custom-made (autogenous) vaccines may be more effective. Timing is key—start vaccinations 4-6 weeks before pinkeye season and follow up with a booster for full protection. Pinkeye is a complex disease, but control is possible with a proactive approach. Focus on nutrition, clean water, fly control and minimizing eye irritants. Work closely with your veterinarian to develop a treatment and vaccination plan tailored to your herd. With early action and consistent management, you can reduce the impact of pinkeye and keep your cattle healthy and productive. Contact the LaRue County Cooperative Extension office or veterinarian for more information on how to address pinkeye in cattle.

## Electrolytes Explained

### LG&E and KU offer important tips during National Safety Month

Staying hydrated is important to keep your energy up, maintain your body temperature, and



MARLA STILLWELL  
UK EXTENSION

support some other body functions. Each part of your body benefits from hydration because about 60% of an adult’s body weight is from water. Water is the base for all fluids in the body. That includes blood, spinal fluid, and digestive fluids. For many of your bodily functions, water is not acting alone. Electrolytes are found within the many compartments of water throughout the body. They support body functions including maintaining blood pressure, contracting muscles including your heart, and supporting communication between nerves.

Most electrolytes are minerals that have an electrical charge (positive or negative) tied to them when they are dissolved in water. Positively charged electrolytes include sodium, potassium, calcium, and magnesium. Negatively charged electrolytes include chloride. These electrolytes mostly come from food and drinks. Other electrolytes can be made in our bodies.

Our bodies are good at holding a neutral balance of these charges. That means the positive and negative charges cancel each other out. Our kidneys play a major role in this balance. They help to get rid of too many electrolytes through urine. That is one of the main ways we lose fluid each day. Another main source of fluid loss is sweat.



Our bodies sweat to help keep our body cool during high activity or high temperatures. When we lose more fluid than we take in, there is a risk of dehydration. People who do a lot of hard exercise and those who spend long periods outdoors should pay extra attention to their hydration. This includes people who work outside like farmers, producers, contractors, and landscapers. People who sweat a lot may benefit from a sports drink or other electrolyte products. Symptoms of dehydration include dizziness, lack of energy, trouble remembering things, headaches, and muscle cramps. But, people who don’t usually do intense exercise or are not outside for long periods often get plenty of electrolytes and levels of hydration from drinking water throughout the day and eating a balanced diet including fruits, vegetables, dairy, grains, and proteins.

Electrolytes are important for hydration, but there is a risk of overdoing it. Many hydration products, like sports drinks and electrolyte packets, have high amounts of these minerals. Too much sodium, which comes from foods and drinks, is a risk factor for high blood pressure and heart disease. The American Heart Association urges limiting sodium consumption to no more than 2,300 milligrams per day. To support heart health, that goal should be closer to 1,500 milligrams or less per day. Some of these electrolyte packets

have almost this daily amount in one serving and are marketed as needed for hydration. Recommendations for hydration suggest women need around 9 to 11 cups of water a day and men need 11 to 15 cups a day. An extra 20% of water comes from food choices to further support hydration.

As with anything, too much of something is not always a good thing. There is a risk of overhydration with water. That means the electrolytes in the body become diluted. This is why it is important to drink fluids throughout the day along with a balanced diet to make sure we are getting the nutrients we need in the proper amounts. If you use a product with large amounts of electrolytes, talk about this with your health-care provider. Treat these rehydration solutions as you would vitamins and mineral supplements. They could interact or interfere with other medications or health conditions. If you are feeling symptoms of dehydration, also talk about this with your provider. They might suggest you take some electrolyte supplementation.

No matter what, hydration should be a priority. Most people can meet their electrolyte needs with a balanced diet and regular water intake. Keep the water bottle close by as temperatures start to rise, especially those who are spending more time outside either for work or for fun. Source: Heather Norman-Burgdolf and Anna Cason, Dietetics and Human Nutrition

### FCS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### FARMERS MARKET

Every Thursday starting June 12, 9 am — 1 pm at the LaRue County High School Parking Lot. New this year we will have a July 3 Farmers Market from 4:30 pm- 7 pm. Extended August Market dates: August 7, 14 and 21. The August Market will be at the LaRue County Extension Service.

#### FARMERS MARKET COOKING SHOWCASE

Every Wednesday starting June 25 till August 6, noon at the LaRue County Extension Service. Taste farm fresh food, while learning about health benefits and be inspired by what you can purchase the following day at the Farmers Market. Free class. To register call 270-358-3501.

#### COUNTY HOMEMAKER ANNUAL MEETING & INTERNATIONAL LUNCHEON

Friday, June 27, 11 am at the LaRue County Extension Service

#### WITS WORKOUT

Monday, June 30, 10:30 am at the LaRue County Public Library. To register, call the library at 270-358-3851.

#### STIRRING UP SMILES INCLUSIVE COOKING CLASS SERIES

Weekly every Tuesday starting July 1 till

July 29, 1 pm — 3 pm at the LaRue County Extension Service. Inclusive cooking class for middle and high school students and adult caregiver. Sign up is required. Call 270-358-3401 to register.

#### QUILT CLUB

Wednesday, July 9, 10 am at LaRue County Extension Service

#### COOKING THROUGH THE CALENDAR — “CHICKEN BURGERS”

Friday, July 11, noon at the LaRue County Extension Service

#### WATER BATH CANNING — FOOD PRESERVATION SERIES

Saturday, July 19, 10 am at the LaRue County Extension Service. Free class. Call 270-358-3401 to register. Deadline to register is Wednesday, July 16th, 2025.

#### PRESSURE CANNING — FOOD PRESERVATION SERIES

Tuesday, July 22, 5:30 pm at the LaRue County Extension Service. Free class. Call 270-358-3401 to register. Deadline to register is Friday, July 18th, 2025.

#### OPEN SEW

Monday, July 28, 10 am at the LaRue County Extension Service

## Warm up to safety this summer

Summer’s heat can lead to severe storms that can pop up in a hurry. During National Safety Month this June, Louisville Gas and Electric Company and Kentucky Utilities Company are offering tips for keeping you and your family safe all season long.

- Never take a bath or shower during severe storms.
- Always keep an up-to-date emergency kit at the ready, including nonperishable food, plenty of drinking water, first-aid supplies, a cell phone charger (with a portable power bank), a weather radio and extra batteries. Be sure everyone knows where the emergency kit is located.
- Have a place to stay in case there is an extended emergency affecting your home.
- Keep at least half a tank of gas in your car.
- Be sure to store all flammable liquids (gas, paint thinners, etc.) outside your home, in proper containers and out of reach of children.

If you lose power and need to report an outage, remember to use the LG&E and KU mobile app. (Download the app by visiting [lge-ku.com/app](http://lge-ku.com/app) or by searching “LG&E KU ODP” via the App Store or Google Play.) You can also text OUTAGE to 454358 (4LGEKU). Text STATUS for updates.

If you encounter a downed power line, stay away and report it by calling 502-589-1444 (800-331-7370 outside Louisville) and pressing 1-1-3 if you’re an LG&E customer, and by calling 800-981-0600 and pressing 1-1-2 if you’re a KU customer.

### MAKE SAFETY A PRIORITY DURING OUTDOOR PROJECTS

- When it’s not storming, summer can also be a great time to complete outdoor projects. Before checking off tasks on your to-do list, make sure to follow these tips and stay safe.
- Check electrical cords for worn spots or frayed wires and replace any damaged cords.
- Only use electrical products that are marked for outdoor use.
- Use bright colored extension cords when working in the yard to avoid accidentally cutting the wire.
- Always be aware

of overhead and underground power lines to avoid injury.

- Carry extension ladders parallel to the ground and check for the location of overhead power lines before setting the ladder upright.
- Have underground utility lines marked at least two full business days before doing any digging. Call 811 or visit [kentucky811.org](http://kentucky811.org) to submit a locate request. KU is a member utility in certain parts of its service territory. In areas where KU is not a member utility of the 811 service, customers need to contact KU directly to request an underground electric line locate service. Once all lines have been marked, keep at least two feet away from either side of the markings. Visit LG&E and KU’s extensive online library of information for customers and community partners about electric and natural gas safety.

Use QR Code to Search Kentucky Public Notices or go to [kypublicnotice.com](http://kypublicnotice.com)

