



**Herd Health Diagnostics**  
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## **BLV ELISA**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Q: What is Bovine Leukosis (BLV)?**

A: Bovine Leukosis is a retrovirus that infects the lymphoid tissue of beef and dairy cattle, causing malignant lymphoma and lymphosarcoma in up to 5 percent of infected animals. The virus is transmitted to cattle primarily by direct exposure with infected blood, saliva, semen and milk. Most BLV-infected cattle seldomly exhibit clinical signs. Signs of infection may include tumors in lymphoid tissues, enlarged lymph nodes, weight loss, decreased milk production, fever, loss of appetite, ear limb weakness or paralysis, protruding eyeballs, gastrointestinal obstructions, and increased blood lymphocyte counts. Because no vaccine is available for BLV, virus specific antibodies found in serum are a good indicator of exposure and a practical method for disease screening.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Q: How does the BLV ELISA work?**

A: The enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) detects antibodies to Bovine Leukemia Virus (BLV) glycoprotein (gp51) in bovine sera.

#### **Q: How much does it cost?**

A: \$5.00 per sample.

#### **Q: How long does it take to receive results?**

A: Samples are tested weekly on Wednesdays with results on Wednesday. Samples must arrive on or before the Tuesday prior to testing in order to be run that Wednesday. Samples that arrive on Wednesdays or later will be held until the following week's test day.

#### **Q: How long are samples good for and how do I ship?**

A: It is recommended that samples are shipped so that they are not in transit for more than a few days. .

#### **Q: How much sample do I need to collect?**

A: A good rule of thumb is to collect 1-2 ccs for each test requested.

#### **Q: Can multiple tests be run on one sample?**

A: Yes! One sample can be used for multiple services. Additional services available for cattle include: BioPRYN (pregnancy), Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) and Johnes. When using one sample for multiple services, be sure to collect 1-2 milliliters of blood for each service (i.e. if wanting 3 tests, collect about 3-6 mls of blood).

#### **Q: What blood collection supplies do I need and where do I buy it?**

A: We recommend a plain, 3-5 ml, plastic, red top tube (with or without clot activator) or serum separator tube (tiger). If using a tiger top tube, be sure to fill the tube  $\frac{3}{4}$  full or more. We recommend using an 18 or 20-gauge double sided needle by 1 to 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches long. You may also use a syringe and then transfer to a blood tube as well. If you need help deciding what is best for you, contact Herd Health Diagnostics.

Supplies can be purchased through the BioTracking Store, your local vet supply or ranch or farm store. There are also many online stores such as Amazon who sell supplies.

#### **Q: How do I label tubes for testing?**

A: Each tube should be labeled in sharpie with a tube sequence number (e.g. 1, 2, 3, etc.) and unique animal ID or ear tag # (e.g. 875).

#### **Q: Who do I contact for more information?**

A: Contact Amber at Herd Health Diagnostics from 8:30 am to 4 pm Pacific Time, Monday – Friday. The testing lab number is 509.715.1131 and her email is [amber@herdhealthdiagnostics.com](mailto:amber@herdhealthdiagnostics.com)