Vaccinate cattle against East Coast Fever

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What is East Coast Fever (ECF)?

This is a disease that occurs only in countries on the Eastern side of Africa and kills around 120,000 cattle of all ages in Kenya every year.

It is caused by organisms similar to those that cause malaria in humans. The disease organisms are transmitted from one animal to another by infected brown ear ticks (attach near the ears).

Symptoms of an ECF infected animal

- Swollen lymph nodes, (Ngiisi)
- Difficult and fast breathing
- Reduced feeding

- Rise in temperature (above 39.5°C)
- Drastic milk reduction (milking cow)

Enlarged lymph nodes

The disease is confirmed in the laboratory by a veterinarian.

It can be treated but early diagnosis is important for success.

How to control and treat the disease

- Tick control with acaricides in dips spray, hand wash or pour-ons.
- Treatment of sick animals
- ECF immunization

What is ECF immunization

- It is the simultaneous injection of ECF causing parasites into an animal and treatment.
- This is commonly referred to as the infection and treatment method (ITM).
- ITM is based on the fact that an infected animal which recovers from the disease develops immunity to clinical re-infection in the same locality.
- Rather than wait for the infection to take place naturally, the immunization is done under controlled conditions.
- ITM requires a follow up visit by the service provider to monitor performance

What are the advantages of immunization?

- Reduced cattle deaths
- Life long immunity from one immunization
- Reduced spray regime from weekly to once every 2 or 3 weeks