

5-1923

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L. Van Es

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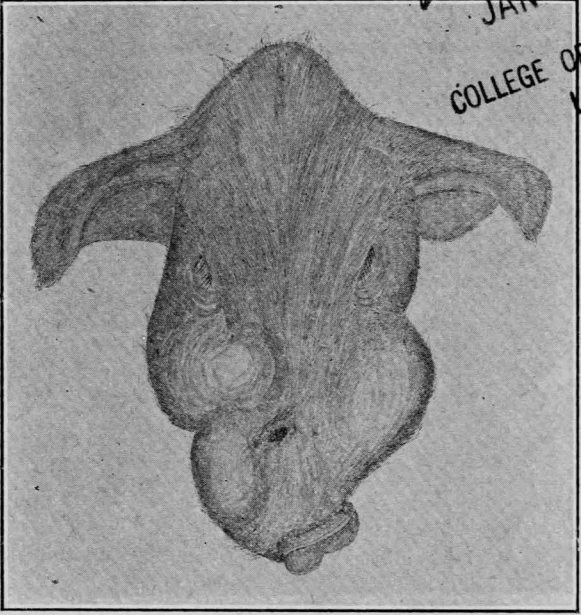
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THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA  
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE EXTENSION SERVICE

May, 1923

Extension Circular 225

# "Bull-Nose" in Pigs



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## **“Bull-Nose” in Pigs**

L. VAN ES

Department of Animal Pathology and Hygiene

Young pigs are particularly susceptible to a disease to which farmers have attached the name “bull-nose.” This designation is based upon the fact that some of the pigs afflicted show a more or less prominent enlargement of the snout and face, which bears a somewhat fanciful resemblance to the blunt, stubby form of the muzzle and nose of a bull. Insofar as the diseased pigs present this feature the name “bull-nose” answers the purpose as well as any other. It may, however, be objected to because the disease in question does not constantly cause the enlargement of the snout and face. The latter feature is only one manifestation of the disease under consideration.

The disease is scientifically designated as “necrobacillosis” because it is caused by a bacillus or germ which causes necrosis or tissue death. The occurrence of this germ is widespread. It is a more or less frequent inhabitant of the intestines of swine, normal or otherwise. It is commonly found in the manure and in the soil upon which the latter is deposited. It is the cause of infectious sore mouth or canker in pigs, of a gangrenous inflammation of the nose and the skin at various parts of the body, while it is occasionally also associated with necrotic disease of some of the internal organs.

Altho it is a common inhabitant of the intestines it does not seem to be often associated with intestinal disease. What is not infrequently called intestinal necrobacillosis is a different disease altogether and the name mentioned is clearly based upon a misconception.

Young pigs are quite susceptible to the disease and hence this is most commonly seen in animals less than two or three months old.

In those animals the mouth, the gums, the nose, the bones and the skin of the face are the parts usually involved in the infection. In many cases all the parts mentioned may be simultaneously affected.

### **Source and Manner of Infection**

The infection is usually obtained from contaminated soil and the manure of older swine. It is a true filth disease and this is none the less true because it occasionally occurs in sanitary quarters. In this connection the part played by fresh manure must be given credit for the source of the mischief.

As a rule the germ gains entrance into the tissues of the pig through small abrasions of the skin or mucous membrane covering the parts involved. Such abrasions arise in pigs in many ways. They are caused by rooting into the soil, they arise in the course of the breaking through or eruption of the teeth. Sometimes the wounds made by the “ringing” of the pigs admit the infection and not infrequently the damage done by clipping the teeth and undue meddling with so-called

"black-teeth" is the starting point of the trouble. Catarrhal conditions of the nose and the subsequent defects of the mucous membrane may likewise be a factor in the causation of the infection.

#### Symptoms

As the infection attacks the mouth it commonly manifests itself by ulcerations of the lips, the gums, the cheeks and even the tongue. From the initial superficial erosions the germs penetrate into the tissues, deeper ulcerations occur and large areas slough out or an ill-smelling debris fills the resulting cavities. Often there is present a nasty, bloody discharge. The pigs have difficulty in nursing, they become poor and look unthrifty. Their growth becomes stunted and they are apt to die in a state of emaciation.

In not a few of the cases, whether the starting point of the infection is the mouth or the nose or the skin, the damage extends into the cartilage and bones of the jaws, the nose and the face. This results in the deformity of the parts which is responsible for the name of "bull-nose."

The enlargement of the structures involved encroaches on the air passages and the pig affected wheezes and snuffles as a result. Sooner or later the skin covering the parts becomes involved and begins to slough, exposing to view the more or less extensive masses of white or gray dead tissue underneath.

The outlook of a pig so affected is a very gloomy one, and in spite of what can be done in the way of treatment the majority of the cases affected in the manner described succumb after a period of wasting away. The very few animals which apparently do recover, remain stunted and runty and fail to make profitable swine.

#### Treatment

Altho treatment does not hold out a very good prospect of ultimate recovery, it may be attempted in the very beginning of the disease when ulceration or canker sores in the mouth are in the initial stages. In such cases the affected parts are cleansed by means of a mild antiseptic solution, such as a 1 per cent solution of liquor cresolis compound in water. Then the dead tissue is carefully and quite deeply scraped away by means of a spoonlike instrument, which the surgeons call a "curette." After this the parts are again washed with the antiseptic and carefully dried with absorbent cotton.

This done, there is applied to the raw surface, by means of a bit of cotton wrapped on a small stick, a mixture composed of one part of the tincture of iodine and four parts of glycerine.

This treatment must be repeated from day to day, always removing the accumulated dead tissue, and until healing occurs.

As already stated, the number of cases which can be saved by any method of treatment is very small, most attempts usually resulting in disappointment.

#### Prevention

As in most other diseases in young pigs, a better prospect for desired results is offered by prevention, and the advantage of this lies in the fact that it requires no measures especially designed against this

disease alone. What is useful in the prevention of the other prevailing diseases of young pigs will also be helpful in dealing with "bull-nose" infection.

The key to all of this group of diseases is sanitation and this means the maintenance of surroundings which are safe for an animal to live in.

In the prevention of those diseases, "bull-nose" included, cleanliness is the principal factor. Knowing that the infection is contained in the manure and in soil contaminated with the same, it is quite obvious that young pigs must be kept away from unclean yards and stables.

Before farrowing time the pens in which the pigs are to be born must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected in the manner recommended for the prevention of worms. If the pens have only a dirt floor, this should be removed to a depth of three or four inches and fresh clean soil, taken from a field used for crop-growing, hauled in to replace it.

Before the sow is placed in the farrowing pen, she herself must be given a most thorough cleaning and scrubbing in the course of which all filth adhering to her skin must be removed. For the prevention of "bull-nose" it is further necessary to clean the pens daily, removing all manure while an occasional disinfection by means of some of the cheaper coal-tar disinfectants increases the margin of safety considerably.

When the time comes for the young pigs to be turned out, they must not be turned into any old hog lot. Instead they should be taken to some pasture land and there, with the sows, housed in so-called colony houses. On a well-ordered swine-raising farm, the crop rotation should be so planned that a fresh pasture is available for every new pig crop so that two or more years separate each occupation by swine.

It is further advisable to so arrange the hog lots about the farmstead that they can be rotated from year to year in order to give the soil plenty of time to rid itself of infectious materials. Water holes and wallows should be eliminated.

In addition, the prevention of "bull-nose" requires that the pig's teeth be not meddled with. It is not necessary to pull or cut any of them, black or otherwise. If the sharp teeth of the pigs are annoying to the sow while suckling, they may be carefully blunted by means of a fine file, but all manipulations involving the risk of causing abrasions of the soft parts should be avoided. When it is necessary to prevent rooting by "ringing", this operation should be postponed until well after weaning time and then it should be done under antiseptic precautions.

For the preservation of young pigs also read: Experiment Station circular 17, The Common Intestinal Roundworm of Swine; Extension circular 5, Disinfection and Disinfectants; Extension circular 221, Some Important Factors in the Prevention of Swine Diseases; Extension circular 222, Sanitation in Pig Raising.

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