

# EASTERN PLAINS ANGUS



*"Getting you ahead"*



Andrew White 0477 359 057

"Eastern Plains" Guyra NSW

[www.easternplainsangus.com.au](http://www.easternplainsangus.com.au)

## Penile Infections in Bulls

Penile infections are a common disorder in young bulls in their first joining season following introduction to a new herd.

A range of bacterial, viral and other organisms ("bugs") cause these infections with the most common being the genital form of infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR) virus.

Any given property has its own population of "bugs" and as new/young bulls have had no exposure previously to these "bugs", they will likely develop a penile infection early on in the joining period. These penile infections can be severe with bulls developing a reddened, inflamed penis, often with pustules or ulceration on the surface, and will stop the bull serving due to pain.

If bulls with active infection are detected (by their red and inflamed penis) they should be isolated from females and treated with antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medication.

Oxytetracycline antibiotic therapy is the treatment of choice.

**In some cases, penile infections can cause extensive swelling in the prepuce and the condition can look like the bull has a broken penis or sheath injury. But... if treated promptly, these bulls can & do regain normal function.**

Penile infections are transient and bulls usually recover after 3-4 weeks. If undetected, this type of disorder can cause a huge decrease in conception rates and possible permanent infertility in the bull in a small percentage of cases.

Affected bulls may continually mount cows without serving. A sound healthy bull should serve on every 1 or 2 mounts.

Pre-exposure of the bulls by joining them to a small number of females well before the normal joining period is one method of ensuring new, young bulls have maximum immunity to the "bugs" on a property.

Achieving satisfactory pregnancy rates is essential in running a profitable beef enterprise making the joining period one of the most critical in the year. Ideally, bulls and cows should be observed regularly during the joining period to identify any problems and address them as soon as possible.

*(Reproduced with the kind permission of Jock Harbison, Dunoan Angus, NSW)*