

## Major clinical signs

Protrusion of the third eyelid.



*Cancer of the third eyelid in bovine (Source: MSD Veterinary Manual)*

**Treatment:** Surgical removal of the tumour.

## How to Identify and Control Eye Conditions in Cattle

### KCSAP Brochure No. 1E



Compiled by: Ithinji D.G. and Ndirangu P.N.

#### For Further information contact:

Veterinary Research Institute, Muguga,  
P.O. Box 32-00902 Kikuyu  
Email: [Directorvsri@kalro.org](mailto:Directorvsri@kalro.org)  
Tel No. 0202020572

Website: [www.kalro.org](http://www.kalro.org)

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## How to Identify and Control Eye Conditions in Cattle

### 1. Pink Eye disease

Pink eye also called Infectious Bovine Keratoconjunctivitis (IBK) is a highly infectious disease of cattle that spreads rapidly when there is increased presence of mechanical vectors such as flies.

#### What causes Pink Eye?

Pink eye is caused by a bacterium, *Moraxella bovis*. It is more commonly seen in young stock than adults.

Head and nuisance flies can act as mechanical vectors for *M. bovis* and dust is a risk factor. The pain associated with this condition is more intense in bright sunlight.

#### Clinical Signs of Pink Eye

Most eye lesions are selected for treatment on the basis of obvious tear-staining of the face which becomes thicker and opaque, matting the lashes and hair of the face. There is marked pain when the eye is exposed to direct sunlight. The eye lesions are very painful and disrupt grazing patterns, causing poor performance and even weight loss. Lesions in both eyes cause temporary blindness and the affected animals tend to wander aimlessly about.



*Pink eye infection (Source: MSD Veterinary Manual)*

#### Treatment

Pink eye is treated using eye ointments following a prescription by a qualified animal health service provider.

#### Prevention and Control

Outbreaks of Pink eye may occur after the introduction of purchased stock. Whenever possible, all new stock should be managed separately as one group away from the main herd. Fly control using insecticides will assist.

### 2. Eye worms

#### Description

They measure up to 2 cm in length and are white. They can be seen scrawling on the eye. The worm has a rough cuticle which irritates and causes inflammation of the eye. Worms are spread by flies and infected animals will produce excess tears, avoid sunlight and

the cornea becomes cloudy. *Thelazia lachrymalis* are the most common species of worms affecting animals.

#### Major clinical signs

These are:

- Cornea becomes cloudy (corneal opacity)
- watery eyes
- ulcers develop on the affected eyes
- fear of light (photophobia)



*Eye worms*

#### Treatment/control

- Use of injectable anthelmintics and antibiotics
- Fly control
- Separation of sick animals from the rest of the herd

### 3. Cancer of the Third Eyelid

This is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in cows. It affects the non-pigmented areas of the eyelid and the conjunctiva. Predisposing factors are long exposure to sunlight or ultraviolet light, which is common in the tropics, where animals graze out in the hot sun.