

Dairy RVS Exam Study Guide - 2026

This guide will help you prepare for your ABVP Recognized Veterinary Specialty (RVS) examination this November.

The 350 item Combined RVS Exam given in two parts on the same day. The exams are mostly to exclusively multiple-choice. There is the possibility of filling in the blank, short answer, essay, or matching for some exam items. The AVMA best practices is that the examination items align with a Job Task Analysis (JTA) of current RVS Diplomates. The 2018 JTA identified tasks, diseases, etc. that Diplomates either saw frequently or expected a Specialist to have immediate knowledge of the subject.

Additionally, it has been decided that some exam items can come from current journals and a small percentage can be at your Exam Committee's discretion. Please note that items drawn from current journals (with a 5 year look back period) are 1) from a journal on the RVS Reading List, 2) the question is drawn from the abstract only, and 3) the journal abstract must be inexpensively obtained. The exception to this is Veterinary Clinics of North America (if applicable), where the exam taker is responsible for the whole article.

Exam Blueprint

For topics that are systems (such as Cardiovascular, etc.), questions can include anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, diseases (Including neoplasia), etiologies, diagnosis, and therapy.

Topic	Percentage on Exam
Behavioral B	up to 1%
Cardiovascular CV	1%
Endocrine E	up to 1%
Gastrointestinal GI	14%
Genetic G	up to 1%
Hemolymphatic HL	1%
Immunologic I	1%
Infectious IN	20%
Integument/Mammary IM	14 %
Management/Environment ME	9%
Metabolic M	3%
Musculoskeletal MS	4%
Nervous NV	4%
Nutritional N	2%
Oral/Dentition/Beak O	up to 1%
Neoplasia - concepts, multisystem NP	1%
Pharmacologic RX	up to 1%
Regulatory RG	up to 1%
Reproductive RP	13%



Respiratory RS	6 %
Special senses SS	1%
Toxicologic T	2%
Urogenital UG	4%
Zoonotic Z	up to 1%

Specific conditions

Certain conditions were identified as important to Diplomates in your RVS. This list is meant to help guide your study and not meant to be an all-inclusive list. Conditions not on this list may be present on the exam.

Actinobacillosis
Actinomycosis
Skin Conditions
Analgesia and Anesthesia (local, regional, and general)
Animal Welfare (cow comfort, health, and nutrition)
Bovine Respiratory Disease (viral, bacterial, and fungal)
Regulatory Diseases (Brucellosis and Tuberculosis)
Neonatal calf diarrhea (up to 30 days old)
Calf diarrhea
Clostridium diseases
Early embryonic death
Metritis, endometritis, and pyometra
Estrus synchronization
Metabolic Diseases
Indigestion
Infectious Bovine Keratoconjunctivitis
Rumen Acidosis and tympany (bloat - free gas and frothy)
Castration
Obstetrics and dystocia
Mastitis
Milking procedures and milking system
Nutrition (bulls, heifers, breeding age heifers, lactating cows, and dry cows)
Lameness
Hoof trim
Abortion
Laminitis
Hyperketonemia and fatty liver
Diseases of the abomasum (displacement and ulcers)



Disbudding and dehorning
Wound management
Listeriosis
Milk bacteriology
Necropsy
Bovine Papilloma virus
Peripheral neuropathies
Rabies
Record analysis
Reproductive disorders
Reproductive exams
Teat and Udder diseases
Traumatic reticuloperitonitis and pericarditis
Twinning
Ultrasound (Reproductive)
Vaccination
Vitamin E and Selenium deficiency
Polioencephalomalacia
Prolapses (rectal, vaginal, and uterine)
Vitamin A deficiency
Lead toxicity
Ocular diseases
Septicemia
Diseases of bulls (epididymitis, trichomoniasis, penile fibropapillomatosis, persistent frenulum)
Bulls - internal reproductive examination
Breeding soundness examination
Toxicities and Poisoning
Urinary tract diseases (leptospirosis, pyelonephritis, amyloidosis, cystitis, malignant catarrhal fever)
Diseases of the umbilicus
Diagnostic laboratory samples (venereal, respiratory, ophthalmologic, etc)

Dairy Reading List

Texts

- *Current Therapy Food Animal Practice 5th ed* – Anderson and Rings
- *Current Therapy in Theriogenology 2nd ed* – Morrow
- *Bovine Reproduction 2nd ed.* – Hopper
- *Current Therapy in Large Animal Theriogenology 2nd ed* - Youngquist and Threlfall
- *Dairy Production Medicine* – Risco and Melendez
- *Noordsy's Food Animal Surgery 6th ed* – Lozier and Niehaus
- *Herd Health: Food Animal Production Medicine* - Radostits, Leslie & Fetrow



- *Large Animal Clinical Nutrition* - Ralston and Naylor
- *Large Animal Internal Medicine 6th ed* – Smith, Van Metre, and Pusterla
- *Large Dairy Herd Management* - Van Horne, et. al.
- *Rebhun's Diseases of Dairy Cattle*, 3rd ed, Elsevier, 2018; Peek S, Divers TJ.
- *The Merck Veterinary Manual*, (latest edition)
- *Turner and McIlwraith's Techniques in Large Animal Surgery*, 4th ed. – Baird and Hendrickson
- *Veterinary Medicine 11th ed.* - Constable, Hinchliff. Done and Gruenberg

Journals

- *American Journal of Veterinary Research*
- *Bovine Practitioner*
- *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*
- *Journal of Animal Science*
- *Journal of Dairy Science*
- *Theriogenology*
- *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Food Animal Practice*

Miscellaneous Proceedings:

- Proceedings of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners (Past 10 years)
- Dairy Production Medicine Meetings
- National Mastitis Council (Past 10 years)
- Society for Theriogenology

Continuing Education:

- AABP (especially the pre-convention seminars on nutrition, quality milk production, dairy economic health, calf rearing, records analysis, etc.
- ABVP Bovine Sessions
- ADSA Meetings
- ASAS Meetings
- AVMA Meetings
- Certification Programs (currently programs are being offered at Penn, Guelph and Ohio State that, upon completion, certify the practitioner as having completed extensive course work in dairy production medicine.)
- Dairy Production Medicine Nutrition and Management Meetings
 - Examples: Northeast Dairy Production Medicine Symposium, Western Dairy Management Conference, Cornell Nutrition Conference, Academy of Western Dairy Consultants
- National Mastitis Council
- Society for Theriogenology

