

THREE RIVERS VETERINARY GROUP

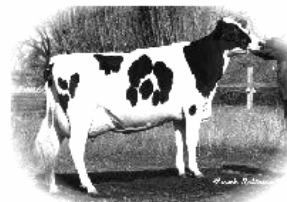
FARM ANIMAL PRACTICE

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CATTLE PRACTICE

May 2010 NEWSLETTER.



Final turnout checks? Have you planned your strategies for hypomagnesaemia, mineral supplementation, leptospirosis, BVD, Bluetongue, lungworm, gutworm and liver fluke? If not and you need some help we can offer you free advice and planning.

Game Birds.

Whilst this is a cattle newsletter many of you rear game birds either from day old or from poults and this is a reminder that we are able to offer help in disease investigations and post mortems at the Beccles surgery.

Please contact us prior to bringing in any birds so that we can advise you regarding their submission in order to get the best results.

A new antibiotic has been launched this Week to treat Mycoplasmosis (or Bulgy-eye). We have seen cases of this already this year in the laying birds and we expect that the disease may become quite common in the coming months. It is carried by wild birds and there has been a high incidence of it this year. The disease is vertically transmitted to the young birds from the adults via the egg. The antibiotic is administered via the drinking water.

New Parentage DNA Test.

According to BCMS there are at least 18,000 cattle without a passport because their application was rejected. Applications can be rejected for a number of reasons including when an animal is more than 27 days old at the time of application. If the dam is available; both she and the calf can be blood sampled and the calf's identity confirmed.

If you have any animals of any age without a passport, submit an application to BCMS. This will be refused but if the nominated

dam is alive according to their database, BCMS send out a 'DNA test form', on which the dam and calf ID are printed. Both the vet and farmer need to sign this form at the time of blood sampling. Once the results are received, the farmer sends the form with the parentage confirmation to BCMS, who then consider the appeal to issue a passport for the animal. BCMS state that there are no guarantees that a passport will be issued.

We carry blood sampling kits for parentage testing. The laboratory charges are £25 + Vat per sample (therefore £50 + Vat for a cow and calf), plus our costs for taking the samples.

Poor Neonatal Calf Viability.

Spring calving is under way for many beef suckler herds and most dairy herds now have an all year round calving pattern. So at this time of year we see a large number of calving cows and related calf problems. The following list is not exhaustive but it covers the main problem areas:

1. **Inadequate intake of colostrum** is the single most important factor in calf and lamb mortality in the first weeks of life. Calves and lambs must receive colostrum in the first 6 hours of life because at this stage their intestines are very porous and allow the large protective immunoglobulin molecules to pass through into the body. However colostrum also has local protective powers for the lining of the intestine and this is protective against intestinal infectious agents.

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Colostrum from cows can be stored frozen and then warmed for emergency use. There are also excellent calf and lamb colostrum replacers available such as Volostrum.

If your herd has a history of Johnes disease then pooled colostrum feeding should not be practiced as it will spread the disease from infected milk - use artificial colostrum.

2. Tight or traumatic calvings – These will always occur but they should be an occasional problem rather than a regular one. The calf, if born alive, may have significant bruising to the chest which will affect its viability. The commonest cause is foetal oversize; this may be due to a number of reasons:

- The bull throwing large calves – in which case he should be replaced with an easier calving bull.
- The cow or heifer being overweight – i.e. too much fat in the birth canal.
- Poorly grown heifers with a pelvis which is too small.

3. Poor hygiene at calving – This allows the development of diseases such as navel ill and joint ill. Ensure the calving area either housed or at pasture is a clean environment and routinely use an iodine dip or antibiotic spray on the navel after birth.

4. Low iodine levels – this is primarily a problem in beef herds, where the dams are mainly fed on forage and grass. In dairy herds the cows have access to concentrates and there is usually a high exposure to iodine products in the parlour (teat disinfectants). The calves are slow to suck and fade rapidly; we are seeing an increasing number of these cases. The laboratory test for iodine is expensive and so we take 4 or 5 blood samples from the cows and pool them as a single test. There is a new iodine bolus available which provides the easiest way of supplementing the cows.

5. Low Selenium levels – this occurs in both beef and dairy calves and is easily prevented by the use of supplements in the form of mineral licks, dry cow concentrate rolls, injections or boluses. Selenium deficiency results in weak calves but also affects the cows by causing a high rate of afterbirth retention and a higher incidence of post calving endometritis (whites).

6. High molybdenum levels – this results in a reduced uptake of copper by the cow and the calves are born with a copper

deficiency. Prevention is by increasing the level of copper in the diet using mineral licks, dry cow concentrate rolls or boluses.

7. BVD (Bovine Viral Diarrhoea) – This virus infection is acquired during pregnancy and some calves are born as persistently infected (PI) animals. These animals excrete large quantities of virus and infect all the other calves in the immediate area. The virus is immuno-suppressive and allows other diseases to take hold more easily. The disease is easily prevented by Vaccination of the dams prior to service.

8. Intestinal disease (Scour) caused by E.coli, Rotavirus, Coronavirus – These diseases are carried by the dams and passed onto the calves via faecal ingestion – often from teats contaminated with faeces. Prevention is easily achieved by vaccinating the dams 8 – 12 weeks prior to calving so that the calves are protected via the colostrum.

9. Respiratory disease – This may strike early in life, the main causes at this stage of life are Histophilus somnus (sleepy calf disease) and Pasturella infections.

Butox Swish – controls flies (8weeks) and midges (4 weeks).

Now proven rainfast!

250ml - £14.63 (8 cows).

1 Litre – £48.37 (33 cows).

2.5 Litre - £107.53 (83 cows).

12.0 Litre plus applicator (400 cow pack) £430.08. *All prices excluding Vat.*

Closamectin Pour-On.

For treatment of - lungworm; gastro-intestinal worms; Liver Fluke & Mites/Lice.

Dose rate - 1ml per 10 Kg body weight.

1 litre: £119.84 + Vat (no gun needed).

2.5 Litre: £210.94 + Vat.

5 Litre: £418.95 + Vat.

Gun: £16.05 +Vat.

Ivermectin Pour-On Wormer .

For lungworm and gut worms:

2.5 litres Enovex at £46.09 + VAT!!!

Trodax Injection.

Treats liver fluke only – can be used with pour-on wormer.

The pack contains 2x500ml which contains enough for 66 x 500kg cattle (or 111 x 300 kg) - **£142.28+vat.**