

HOOK NORTON VETERINARY SURGEONS



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NOVEMBER 2009 FARM NEWSLETTER

DAIRY & BEEF

New Pneumonia Treatments

This month Zactran (the new Micotil that you the farmer are allowed to administer!) and Marbocyl Solo have been brought onto the market. Both are single dose, long-acting antibiotics licensed to treat Bovine Respiratory Disease. One single dose of Zactran gives up to 15 days long lasting protection and is fast acting, reaching a high concentration in the lung after just 30 minutes. It comes in 100ml bottles at a similar price to Micotil. For further information and

Zactran in sheep for lameness, mastitis and Pneumonia at the same dose rate of 1ml/25kg]

Don't forget that housing can have a significant affect on the amount of disease you will see in your animals. Adequate ventilation, bedding and feeding space are all very important. We are keen to come out on the farm and discuss any issues you might be worried about in the coming season, including the use of smoke bombs to evaluate just how

flukicide for liver fluke if you have had a history of fluke on the farm. If you aren't sure, speak to one of us and we may suggest faecal samples to check for fluke eggs. Don't forget we now have Closamectin Pour-on, that will take care of everything for you. Clipping the hair off the back can be a helpful tip to prevent overheating in housing and allow air to cool the animal.

Just a little reminder that if you are planning on using a Pneumonia vaccination plan as recommended in the October Newsletter, now is the time to crack on! Rispoval intra-nasal can be used from 3 weeks old to protect against BRSV and PI. Rispoval 4 can then be used from 12 weeks of age to protect against PI3, BRSV, BVD and IBR.

Remember that effective treatment for Pneumonia must include both an antibiotic and anti-inflammatory, such as Metacam or Finadyne, to reduce the level of scar tissue that forms within the lungs, and therefore reduce the negative effects on live weight gain and also speed up recovery.

Uterine Torsion (Twisted Uterus)

Autumn calving is fully upon us and one problem which we are encountering frequently is that of Uterine Torsion. This is when the uterus twists upon itself rendering the calf unable to enter the cervix and the cow may push but make no progress. When you insert your hand into the vulva you may notice the vagina is narrow and your hand turns when you follow the reproductive tract (the walls of the vagina are twisted/spiralled). You may only be able to get 2 or 3 fingers into the cervix and the calf will feel 'far in', if you can even feel it at all.

This may mean that she has a case of uterine torsion and you should contact us immediately as she will never deliver the calf herself. We may try to correct the torsion

by rolling the cow, but more often than not the only option is a caesarean.

Acorn Poisoning

This is the time of year when we occasionally see cases of acorn poisoning in cattle. Dairy cows are the ones that usually try the acorns even though they have a very bitter taste. Affected animals pass dark droppings, lose weight and are uncomfortable with abdominal pain. If caught early some will respond to treatment, but often animals will die or have to be slaughtered for humane reasons. The danger period seems to be when they first appear on the ground, especially if there is less grass. The acorns seem to become less toxic when ripened further. It is best to fence off areas around any oak trees in your fields to keep cows away!

Ergotism

Another strange form of poisoning occasionally seen in any species is Ergotism, following the ingestion of a parasitic fungus (the Ergot – which looks like black rice on the plant) which is eaten in affected hay or grain. The toxin in the Ergot damages the blood vessels. The first sign is

lameness, which can occur 2-6wks after ingestion, swelling and tender joints and a loss of sensation in the affected part which can develop gangrene and eventually die off. The tips of the ears or tail may slough off too. The obvious control is to change to an Ergot-free diet! Whilst not a common problem it does remind us to keep an eye out for these little black fungi in feed (and I found plenty living in the grasses, on my recent holiday to Dorset!)

[N.B: Ergots are known to cause hallucinations in people and have been implicated in the Salem Witch Trials of 1692!]

Sheep

Lambing lists

With the new lambing season fast approaching it is important you get in first with your orders! You should receive this year's lambing list in with your next bill! If you need a list before then some will be available in the farm shop. As usual please fax, telephone or post your order at least 24 hours before collection is required. This gives us a chance to make sure that the order

will be ready for you when you come to pick it up. If payment is made on collection a discount of 5% will be deducted from the total bill.

'Rearing More Lambs - The Key to Profitability'

ADAS have organised a number of free meetings in the coming months. The focus will be on the pre and post-lambing periods including correct nutrition, good husbandry and disease control. The aim is to keep lamb losses to a minimum, improve sheep health and welfare, and consequently increase profitability! If you are interested please call the surgery for further details on available dates and venues.

Coccidiosis Update

Coccidiosis is one of the most common diseases causing diarrhoea and production losses in lambs. It can be seen as early as 2 weeks of age, although typically in lambs aged 4-6 weeks. The parasite causes severe, long-lasting damage to the lining of the gut resulting in diarrhoea (+/- mucus/blood), fever, pain, weight loss, dehydration, and ultimately death if not treated.

We recommend faecal samples be taken from 3-5 animals from 3 weeks of age. If you have had a problem in the past you will almost certainly suffer again this year so be sure to dose lambs to prevent the infection taking hold.

Baycox Ovis Oral suspension is now fully licensed for use in lambs. All lambs in the group should be given a one-off dose once diagnosis is confirmed by faecal sample, or at 3 weeks of age if it has been confirmed in previous seasons.

Autumn Treatments for Sheep

As we head for winter, don't forget the need for Clostridial Vaccinations (Heptavac-P plus), annual boosters for the ewes, a primary course for replacement ewe lambs and any abortion vaccines you may be using (Toxovax/Cevac).

Fluke control is as important in sheep as it is in cattle and faecal egg counts can be used to check for infection. If you know you have fluke on the farm, now is a good time to drench with a flukicide (i.e Fasimec Duo or Combinex). Foot rot and scald can be troublesome and control is always better than

trying to treat an outbreak.

Scald is found predominantly in young lambs 1-3months old with reddening and hair loss between the toes and can be treated successfully with footbathing and antibiotic sprays. Footrot often starts between the toes at the heels and then tracks forwards and outwards, leading to under-running of the hoof and a nasty smell.

Remember Lincospectin Soluble is available from the surgery and can be used at a preventative dose as well as a treatment dose.

Consider footbathing at the preventative dose which should work extremely well at controlling scald and preventing footrot from getting out of control. Footvax vaccination is available and can form an important part of a successful whole flock control programme, it should be used after a dry period in Summer or Autumn.

Antibiotic treatment may well be necessary for severe or chronic foot rot, a single dose of Tetroxyl LA combined with foot trimming and footbathing should be effective.