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FARM NEWSLETTER

CATTLE

Most of you will have turned your cattle out by now and we can report we are seeing quite a few problems!

1. Sudden Death in Suckler Calves and Fattening Animals

Post mortems revealed Clostridial problems to be the main cause but also some cases of Pneumonia. We are now advising that ALL suckler calves should be vaccinated against Clostridial Disease in this area. The main culprit is Clostridial Sordelli (which causes Sudden Death Syndrome and Abomasitis), along with Clostridium Perfringens Type A (which causes enteritis and death similar to Pulpy Kidney)

We are also seeing occasional cases of

Tetanus and Blackleg. Prevention is achieved by vaccinating with **Bravoxin 10**: this requires 2 doses 4 -6 weeks apart: the first dose can be given from 2 weeks of age if the dam was not vaccinated or at 8 weeks if the cow was vaccinated. The dose is 2ml and after an initial 2-dose course an annual booster is required. It is best given at turnout. The cost is less than £1 per dose and is a small price to pay when you consider the financial implications of losing even one calf.

If you have any sudden death, ring the Surgery for a Post Mortem to check the cause so appropriate preventative measures can be put in place. Remember any sudden unexplained deaths in cattle should be reported in case an Anthrax Investigation is appropriate.

2. Staggers in Beef Cattle

Mainly this has been seen in cattle turned out but some cases have also been seen in housed cattle. Prevention is the only answer as treatment is often unrewarding. ALL suckler cows should receive Magnesium supplementation daily in the spring at grass (it could even be argued all year round): either orally via dosing in the water or a supplement containing high

Magnesium or using a Magnesium Bolus. You can buy a lot of Magnesium for the value of a dead suckler cow!

Dairy farmers should also be aware that Staggers can affect high yielding dairy cows on a grass diet so prevention is required for them as well. ALL dry cows (especially those at grass) should receive magnesium supplementation to reduce the incidence of Milk fever.

DAIRY FARMERS

We are having an important meeting at the Horse & Groom, Milcombe on Wednesday 25th May 2011 @7.30pm – when Fertility will be the topic. More precisely, we will be looking at the costs of infertility and we will be sending out a Cost Calculator Form to each of you to return before the meeting so we can have some actual figures to work on. Please do return them to make the data useful. The meeting is being sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health and you are also welcome to bring along your herdsman with you.

SHEEP

PARASITES

With the dry weather and plenty of sunshine, the lambs have been doing very well with only a few

parasitic problems – BUT beware both Coccidiosis and worms are lurking. As soon as you see any dirty rear ends, or the coats opening out, get a faeces sample checked at the Surgery so we can guide you on the treatment required. We have already had some cases where people have used anti-coccidial treatment inappropriately (i.e. they didn't have it!) and we are needing to retreat. There is no point in treating for Coccidiosis when the problem is worms!! We have already seen some cases of Nematodirus too.

FLY CONTROL

We have only just finished April and maggot problems are already commonplace. What are your options?

1. For treatment and prevention of Blowfly strike **Crovect** is the drug of choice - prevention lasts for up to 8 weeks and meat withhold is 8 days. It is sensible to have some of this product in your drug store anyway for the treatment of struck ewes and lambs. Crovect also treats ticks and lice.

2. For prevention of Blowfly strike, 3 products are available:

a) **Vetrazin** - lasts 8-10 weeks with a 28 meat withhold.

b) **Clik** - lasts up to 16 weeks with a 40 day meat withhold.

c) **Clikzin** - is a new product for this season which lasts for 8 weeks and only has a 7 day meat withhold. It contains the same active ingredients as **Clik** but it lasts for less time though the shorter meat withhold allows for greater flexibility in terms of slaughter.

All of these products are available through the Surgery and we are happy to quote you for your season's order for these products.

Other important preventative measures to reduce Blowfly problems are: adequate worm and Coccidia control to avoid faecal soiling of the back end; dagging out ewes; thrash rams and lambs if the shearers aren't due for a while; and also prompt treatment of affected cases.

GAME BIRDS

We had a very successful client meeting on the 20th April when David Welchman from the V.L.A. at Itchen Abbas gave a very informative talk on the disease of poults in the release pens. We discussed preventative measures for worms (including gapes), Coccidia and Hexamita, which included both husbandry tips and appropriate medication

strategies to ensure healthy poults.

There was some useful information on the use of new drug therapy regimen for worms and Hexamita. The single most important factor was an accurate diagnosis: this requires prompt Post Mortems of affected poults. This can be done at the Surgery or the V.L.A. (when open). Please contact the surgery if you require any more information.