

HOOK NORTON VETERINARY SURGEONS



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OCTOBER 2009 FARM NEWSLETTER

CATTLE

PNEUMONIA VACCINES & PNEUMONIA LUNCHTIME DISCUSSION

As Autumn and housing approaches, now is the time to consider ordering your pneumonia vaccines.

Calves who have been recently weaned and housed, or are being mixed from different sources are at high risk of developing pneumonia.

After twelve weeks old, two doses of Rispoval 4 can be administered three weeks apart. Ideally, calves should be fully vaccinated at least two weeks before housing. This vaccine protects animals against all the four major pneumonia viruses, BVD, IBR, PI3 and RSV, for at least 6 months.

Calves younger than 12 weeks can be vaccinated intranasally. A single dose is required and provides protection against RSV and

PI3 for 9 weeks, after which Rispoval 4 can be used.

On October 12th, at 12pm, we are holding a meeting at Oathill Farm, Enstone, to discuss pneumonia in calves with a particular focus on how to improve housing. Please ring the Practice if you are interested. An invitation is enclosed.

LIVER FLUKE

At last a pour-on is available for treatment against Liver Fluke. Closamectin Pour-on is similar to Closamectin injection, but much easier to administer! It kills Liver Fluke down to 7 weeks of age, whilst also treating gut and lung worms and lice.

Cattle should be treated at or just after housing. If you suspect a high level of contamination on pasture, a second treatment should be considered 6 weeks later.

In the spring, to kill liver fluke which have over-

wintered and subsequently been ingested at turnout, cattle should be treated 8-10 weeks after turnout. Like Closamectin injection, the Pour-on has a 60 day milk withdrawal, so in dairy cows, can only be used at drying off, when the dry period is at least 2 months long. It is available in 1 litre and 5 litre packs - dose rate 1ml/10kg. A 500kg cow would require 50ml at a cost of £4.

We are holding a meeting at Peter Surman's, Manor Farm, Fritwell, at 12pm on Thursday 8th October, to demonstrate use of this new product. An invitation is enclosed.

DIFFICULT CALVINGS!

Lots of good grass this year has meant that the autumn calving season has already started with numerous caesarians and calvings.

Make sure you stock up on plenty of lube and gloves, as

well as servicing your calving jack. Keep a close eye on all calving cows and be prepared for malpresentations. Make sure that you are confident to feel inside the vagina and identify a head and front/back legs.

When using your calving jack, do not rush it. After each ratchet, use the jack as a lever, allowing it to fall to the floor, then raise the jack back up to horizontal and repeat the process. This will stretch the vagina and cervix, helping the wider parts of the calf - the shoulders and hips to pass through more easily. Remember that as well as getting a live calf, you also do not want to tear the vagina or cause nerve damage to the calving cow. Use lots of lube throughout the calving, particularly if the calf is dead and dry.

Remember to check the vagina for tears and the uterus for a second calf after calving. Please ring us promptly if you suspect you have a calving problem.

It is important in this area that cattle at grass receive minerals, especially high magnesium with iodine, copper and selenium. These should be available ad lib continuously OR sprinkled on any food given.

SHEEP

TRACE ELEMENT TESTING

If you have suffered from swayback in previous years, or know that your sheep graze pasture that is low in copper, it is sensible to get 5 or 6 sheep tested during mid-pregnancy, to monitor copper and selenium levels. Low copper will require supplementation in mid-pregnancy with either a copper bolus or injection, to prevent swayback in new-born lambs.

SHEEP YEAR PLANNER

The practice is now offering a 'Sheep Year Planner'. This runs alongside our Sheep Flock Plans, and provides a chronological plan of your sheep year, based around when your tups go in and when you plan to lamb. The plan includes advice on when you should be vaccinating against footrot, Heptavac etc, all tailored to your own farm. It will be particularly useful for new sheep owners or small farmers wishing to clarify exactly what they should be doing each month.

It requires a visit from us to go through and detail the exact requirements for your flock - so ring the surgery to make an appointment.

FLOCK PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Intervet has produced a Flock Performance Indicator scheme, to run alongside our Flock Health Plans. The scheme has been developed to raise awareness of targets in commercial sheep farms. It involves sitting down and analysing the number of barren ewes, abortions, lambing percentage etc, to work out how you are performing relative to UK targets.

The scheme offers a concise method of benchmarking farms and would be a very useful exercise to carry out before the next lambing season, to allow comparisons to be made between '08/'09 and '09/'10 lambing season.

FEET

There have been many reports of lame sheep coming into the surgery. Treatment requires a diagnosis: e.g. for footrot, consider vaccination with Footvac and Goldenhoof footbath along with paring and anti-biotic treatment.

For Scald, we recommend either individual treatment with Terramycin/Cyclo spray and Tetroxy LA 1ml/10kg i/m or a footbath of Tylan or **Lincospectin**.