

PRACTICE NEWS

February Sheep Meeting:

'Nutritional Requirements for the Pre and Post Lambing Ewe'
&
'New Ear Tagging Requirements'

As many of you requested this as a future topic via the recent meeting feedback forms, NorCal Veterinary Services and H&C Pearce are pleased to host this topical Sheep farmer meeting and invite you to attend.

Date: Thursday 12th February
Venue: Thame Store, Aylesbury Road, Thame, OX9 3AS
Time: 7 - 9pm

With light refreshments and beer!

Speakers/Topics Covered:

Mark Hall nutritionist from Country Wide will be discussing pre and post lambing nutritional needs for the ewe.

New Ear Tagging requirements
Evan David NorCal Vets will be discussing a topic of your choice.

To help us with the catering arrangements, contact either Sam at the Shop on 01844 212034, your HCP representative or let Evan know if you wish to attend this event, as soon as possible.

We look forward to seeing you on the evening!

COLOSTRUM EFFICACY

The efficacy of the colostrum received by a calf is dependent on both quality and quantity.

Colostrum Quality decreases with:

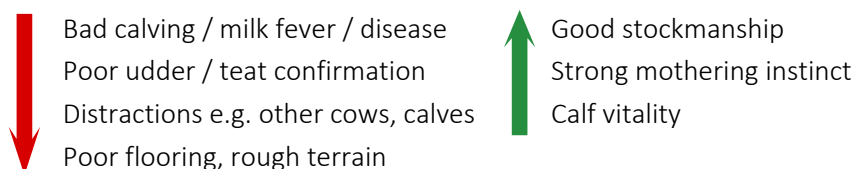
1. Milking the cow before she calves
2. Subsequent milking - the antibody level decreases with each milking
3. Mastitis
4. Short dry period - insufficient time for the cow to prepare
5. Immaturity, very young heifers
6. If the mother is sick at, or around, calving

Measure colostrum quality with a colostrometer to check it is doing what it says on the tin. Simply doubling the dose of half-quality colostrum is not good enough.

Colostrum Quantity - As a rule of thumb, the idea of 3 litres in 3 hours, then 3 litres in the next twelve hours still holds true. This relies on the colostrum being of good quality, fresh and fed by a teat. Greater volumes will be required if tubing the animals since the rumen will fill with colostrum first before it flows over into the abomasum.

Certain diseases such as Johne's can be spread by the administration of contaminated colostrum, so care must be taken. This can be administered by bottle or stomach tube as circumstances dictate.

The speed at which a calf receives colostrum:



Remember - every hour that passes after calving before the calf gets its colostrum, reduces antibody uptake by 5%.

WINTER PARASITES

If your stock isn't looking as good as expected, you may want to consider whether parasites could be the cause.

In particular, we are seeing the impacts of liver fluke much later than usual this year – if you are experiencing poor growth rates or have animals suffering from scour or weight loss then checking for fluke is a must, even if you have treated previously.



FINADYNE TRANSDERMAL

This innovative new product is a pour on anti-inflammatory licensed to treat the high temperatures associated with pneumonia in calves.

What is in it?

Flunixin is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) which has been around for a long time. It has been demonstrated that use of an NSAID during a pneumonia case will help the calf to:

- Improve clinically more quickly, ensuring that it gets back to eating, drinking and growing much sooner.
- Reduce the damage to the lungs – this means that the animal will be less susceptible to future recurrences of pneumonia.

When should I use it?

When you have calves with a high temperature that you and your vet consider is likely to be due to a virus, without any bacterial complication.

In these cases, you may not require an antibiotic (which will only be effective against bacteria – not viruses) and using a pour on solution may be a lower stress alternative to injecting them all.

How is it used?

Similar to other pour-ons, there is a weight calibrated guide on the bottle which can be used to ensure accurate dosing. The bright red colour of the product will be helpful in seeing which animals have been treated.

Although the licence is only currently for high temperature associated with pneumonia, there is a milk withhold quoted of 36 hours, with a 7 day meat withhold.

What is the feedback on it?

One recent farm trial left the farmer saying that the product had worked well at reducing temperatures, was easy to apply and was well tolerated by the calves.



NEOSPOROSIS

Neosporosis is a disease caused by a parasite, and is the most frequently diagnosed cause of abortion in cattle in the United Kingdom.

The life-cycle includes the dog and the cow.

Abortions can occur between 3 and 9 months of pregnancy but are usually seen between 5 and 7 months; stillbirths and premature calves are also observed.

About 15% of infected cattle will abort, most commonly in their first or second pregnancy.

Repeat abortions are possible in the same cow but less than 5% abort for a second time.

When a dog is infected it will pass oocysts in its faeces, cattle are then infected by eating contaminated feed.

Infection does not pass directly from cow to cow except for mother to calf in the womb.

The disease can be identified by examination of tissue samples from the aborted foetus and/or blood samples from the cow.

There is at present no treatment and no vaccine available so good management practices are essential in controlling the problem.

For further information about neosporosis and investigation of abortion problems please call the practice.

CLEAN NEEDLES AND INJECTION SITES

As nice as it is to see the family needle when you administer a dose of calcium or a course of antibiotic, and to hear how Grandad used to sharpen it on the wall when he was a lad, there are good reasons to use fresh needles.

We see abscesses on a frequent basis, some of which are massive. These may be incidental, but will also often cause significant enough lesions to make the cow drop her milk and become quite sick. A number of these lesions require lancing and possibly medical intervention.

This could be avoided by using a clean needle, and putting it through clean skin. Please consider this when you are injecting. There is probably no need to surgically prepare the skin, but you should try to avoid the wet and dirty bits. Needles are definitely a lot cheaper than a down cow.

