



THE
WOOD
VETERINARY
GROUP



Farm Dog Microchipping



In a slight change from our usual species, we must highlight some recent changes affecting our faithful farm dogs. From 6th April ALL dogs in the UK must be microchipped and it also needs to be registered with your up to date owner details. This INCLUDES ALL FARM DOGS. If you have your pet (dog, cat or rabbit) microchipped at Quedgeley or Longlevens before 1st April it is only £10 per animal (less than half the usual price) and you will be entered into a free prize draw competition for a chance to win a 32" Smart TV! Having a dog microchipped will make it much more likely that lost dogs will be returned safely home to you – so book now!

Hypomagnesia/Grass Staggers

Technically we are now in meteorological spring and yet with the current weather being so variable, animals that are turned out will be on very wet ground. Wet spring grazing is very low in magnesium and also low in fibre so the grass passes through the gut quickly. This reduces the absorption of what little magnesium is present. Those of you top dressing or mixing minerals in exposed feed faces will see the run off effect of rain especially when minerals are costly to buy in and the strong link to metabolic diseases in calving cows.

Key areas are: -

- Cows will twitch or seem unsteady on their feet. Affected animals can often be hyper excitable which can make them dangerous to handle, so take care. Clinical signs of an acute case can progress quickly and often the animal will just be found as a 'sudden death'.
- Ruminants cannot store magnesium and rely on daily dietary intake and so:
 - 60g/cow/day of calcined magnesite, somewhere in the ration needs to be given orally
- Supplementation can be done in a concentrate feed, in a TMR ration or in water
- When adding Magnesium to water sources:
 - No other water source must be available
 - If the grazing is very wet uptake of water from troughs may be restricted so increase the dose
 - Do not let magnesium chloride accumulate in troughs as it is very bitter. Clean out troughs frequently.
- Start using magnesium well before grazing. It is not stored well so needs a long “run-up” access period.
- Try and buffer feed animals with more fibrous foods to slow down gut passage and increase magnesium uptake.
- Avoid relying on a mineral block as there can be a huge variation in how much individual cows use them, leaving some cow still at risk of staggers
- Avoid Potash application in the Spring as this further reduces the level found in grass. (NB Slurry contains high levels of potash)

Magnesium deficiency is usually a combination of low magnesium levels and some stress factor. This for most stock will be adverse weather at grazing but could also be other things such as weaning calves for beef animals. Try and minimise stress at danger times of the year – spring and autumn.

Treating beef cows for hypomagnesaemia is very unsuccessful so it is essential to take preventative action.

Bluetongue Virus – Is it returning?

Many of you will have seen in both the farming and general press about the APHA risk assessment of a Bluetongue outbreak in the UK. Due to its ongoing presence in France, and the spread by midges, they deem the UK to be at risk of an outbreak during the late spring or, more likely, late Summer months of this year. Whilst cases in France have been generally mild, we still need to have it in mind.

As an industry we must be vigilant of the Bluetongue risk, including monitoring stock carefully and reporting any clinical signs of the disease immediately to us at the vets and the APHA (it is a Notifiable disease). Sheep are most susceptible to the disease - including eye and nasal discharge, drooling, swelling around the head or mouth, lethargy and lameness where cattle sometimes show no signs of illness at all. Farmers considering importing animals or attending shows in or near mainland Europe, should consider carefully the risk to their naive stock and take up to date advice.

Vaccination is a key part in the control and prevention of spread as it was in 2007-8 in the UK when the south coast blanket vaccinated, and we are hopeful of good vaccine availability and will keep you informed of vaccine access in further newsletters and texts as required.



What It All Means – SCC and Mastitis

When investigating a SCC or bactoscan issue we have to start with what bacteria are causing the issue in order to identify the location of the problem. We grow the bacteria from a bulk sample on specific plates at different temperature to identify what types they are and whether they are in the acceptable limits or not.

To really understand the issue on a farm level the mastitis cases, broken down into first cases, repeats and stage of lactation are essential to understand the cow's involvement. For those farms not recording individual SCC of cows on a monthly basis, these samples and data are the only way to breakdown herd counts down into

individual cow information. When implementing selective non antibiotic dry cow therapy treatment this information is also imperative. Freezing a sample from each mastitis before treatment will establish the pathogen range and if there is a need to eradicate a contagious mastitis.

Unfortunately SCC, bactoscan and mastitis are all linked in a fairly complicated and challenging web but the more information we gather the easier it is to solve. As always, speak to us about how best to tackle these problems and we can work through the information to stabilise cell counts and mastitis rates on farm.

Reminders

Order **Leptavoid H** and **Huskvac** vaccines in now to get animals protected before the grazing season!

Meetings

Dairy KPI Meeting

KPI and the actual cost of Johne's
Wed 13TH April 2016
11am start

Please book a place on 01452 543 999
or email largeanimal@woodvet.co.uk