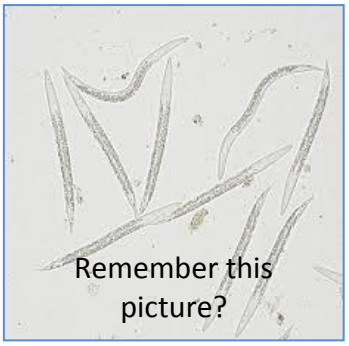
THE WOOD VETERINARY GROUP

FARM NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2017

Beware Lungworm – Can be Deadly if Ignored!

In the last three weeks we have seen a record number of cases of lungworm in both beef and dairy herds. Previously healthy adult cows have died on several farms where coughing around and after housing has been ignored. Not only do we see marked production losses in the form of milk yield and weight loss but lung damage will cause future poor performance. This is not just a disease of calves at spring turnout.



In the October newsletter we mentioned that coughing around housing can be lungworm causing parasitic bronchitis. Ivermectin based wormers are effective against lungworm (check the product has action against Lungworm aka *Dictyocaulus viviparus*).

Cattle that are affected need to be treated and removed from infected pasture. When cattle have a very high burden of larvae, giving treatment can exacerbate clinical signs because of dead or dying larvae. These cattle may need non steroidal anti-inflammatory medicines.

Immunity: Animals that are exposed to low levels of lungworm at grazing develop immunity within 10 days of exposure. This is why we recommend vaccinating 1st season grazing animals to stop them getting clinical disease but allow them to build a good immune response. If animals are not re-exposed annually, their immunity declines. Last year the weather did not allow a high level of lungworm to develop and so re-exposure has been low. Conversely this year has been a great year for parasites; hence the significant levels of disease seen in adults – low immunity and high parasite burden. The Perfect Storm!

Two weeks after housing – a few coughing?

We can diagnose lungworm burdens in bulk milk samples, pooled faecal samples, blood samples (4-6 wks post infection) and on post mortem – if you are suspicious then let's get a diagnosis so that we can appropriately treat animals.
Treating animals is relatively straight forward as mentioned above but needs to be done as early as possible to prevent severe damage and masses of dead larvae blocking up lungs but also not when animals are still grazing – protection from wormers is only short and more crucially blanket treatments can encourage low immunity.

N.B. IBR and pneumonia are also around so get your vet involved in diagnosis and treatment plans

TB Update

TBhub – The home of UK TB information

From 1ST November in High Risk Areas (i.e. here in Gloucestershire) there are changes coming in to force that affect Inconclusive Reactors. The main changes are:

- All IR animals found on a test that are retested with a clear result 60 days later, will be restricted to that holding for LIFE
- They may only move from this holding either direct to slaughter or to slaughter via an Approved Finishing Unit (AFU) under a specific APHA license/TB dedicated sale (Orange Market)
- APHA will carry out a percentage of checks to ensure that restriction for life is completed
- Owners can request a Gamma Interferon blood test for animals older than 6 months. This is at the owners cost and we have to apply to APHA on your behalf to get permission beforehand
- This blood test must be done in the 40 days after the IR is tested clear on the second test
- If negative on the blood test the lifetime restriction will be lifted; if positive this will become a positive reactor and culled as normal, as well as triggering a whole herd restriction and new whole herd TB test

Calf Pneumonia Treatment Protocol

Returning to more seasonal calf pneumonia, this can be just as damaging to production even with low death rates. A case of pneumonia costs from £63 (dairy) to £82 (beef) per ill animal and more worryingly £30 (dairy) to £74 (beef) for animals that don't have a case of pneumonia but are in the same group. Prompt treatment of ill animals will reduce the damage done to lung tissue and therefore long term stunting, speed up the return to normal feeding behaviour and minimise the spread of cases.

To successfully target animals we need to grade the disease:

Stage 1 – COUGHING ONLY

1 – Observe and monitor closely – no treatment

Stage 2 - COUGH + TEMPERATURE OF 38.9-39.5^{O}C OR OVER WITH NO OTHER SIGNS

1 – NSAID treatment (Finadyne 3 days or Metacam once)
2 – Broad spectrum antibiotic treatment (Alamycin LA 1ml/10kg)

Stage 3 - COUGH + TEMPERATURE OF 39.5^{O}C OR OVER + ANY 1 OF THE FOLLOWING:

HEAVY BREATHING / FAST BREATHING / RELUCTANCE TO DRINK MILK OR NOT FINISHING FEEDS/ SWEATY BACK / DROOPY EARS / DEPRESSED / SUNKEN EYES / SKIN TENT

1 – NSAID treatment (Finadyne 3 days or Metacam once)
2 – Specific pneumonia antibiotic treatment
3 – Add electrolyte (Rehydion gel only) to milk feeds at either end of the day (bag feed if necessary)
It is vital that calves drink or are stomach tube with their full allowance of milk as energy is crucial
4 – 2 Litres of water with electrolyte (Rehydion/Lectade/Lifeaid) at lunchtime (bag if necessary)
5 – Assess the rest of the group for affected animals

Isolate ill calves where possible to reduce risk of further spread

If >10% of the group in that air space are coughing with temperatures (Stage 2 or above) then blanket treat the entire group with broad antibiotic (Alamycin LA)

So which antibiotic is best??

Anti-inflammatory treatments reduce the temperature, improve effectiveness of the antibiotic, encourage normal drinking behaviour and crucially reduce damage to the lung tissue. When we use an antibiotic to treat pneumonia we are targeting bacterial causes as well as preventing secondary infections. Depending upon the bugs you have on your farm, will decide which is best for you so please speak to us about your choice – especially if you don't feel that the one you use is working. There are subsidised bloods tests that can help us identify your farm pathogens.

Meetings

Dairy KPI Meeting
What's Driving Your SCC?
Mastitis - Dry Period Performance
Wed 29th November 2016
11.30am – 2pm at **THE FARMER'S CLUB** on **Sandhurst Lane GL2 9RG**
A hot lunch will be provided
Phone 01452 543 999 to book in

Meetings

Joint Evening Meeting of the KILO Club and DAIRY Calf Rearers

Details and Invitations to follow shortly – watch this space!