



After a very long and hot summer the very recent wet weather has at last revived the grazing pastures a little and final cuts of silage are getting under way. Stock outside have been fed nearly all season long due to the lack of dry matter available however we will hopefully be able to graze for another few weeks in order to reduce forage used this winter. Due to the dry weather we have had a very low prevalence year for worm egg counts and other grazing parasites as they struggle to complete their life cycles. However, with animals out grazing now we may see some issues in the run up to housing:

1) Husk/Lungworm

Heavy rainfall after a hot spell allows larvae already shed in early summer to be spread on pastures. These develop into infective larvae ready to be ingested by naive cattle

Be vigilant for:

- Widespread coughing in groups especially after exercise
- Increased respiratory rate and difficulty breathing
- Rapid weight loss
- Milk drop in dairy cows
- Deaths in heavy infestations



Farms that have a history of lungworm (*Dictyocaulus viviparus*) that are not vaccinating need to be extra vigilant especially when grazing permanent pasture. Similarly to last year, the dry weather and continued feeding of forages out at

pasture will have reduced the exposure to the parasites earlier in the season. This reduces immunity development in young cattle meaning parasitic bronchitis is more prevalent.

If cases are suspected then removal to 'safer' pastures e.g. aftermath or housing in well ventilated sheds is advisable. A wormer treatment should also be administered to kill off residual larvae and adults (most are effective but check it covers *D. viviparus*).

Parasitic bronchitis can be confirmed by post-mortem (as seen in picture of the lung with white larvae seen) or detection of larvae in saliva or faecal samples or a milk ELISA test can also be done in dairy cows.

2) Coccidiosis - Youngstock

Although worm burdens have been reduced by the hot and dry months one of the parasites that is still occurring at sporadic intervals with marked severity is Cocci. It is the second most common cause of diarrhoea in calves after Rotavirus:

What?: Coccidia are single-celled parasites (not bacteria) – not all species cause a problem

Age: Under 2 years old (primarily 3 weeks to 6 months old) in housed and grazing animals

How?: Spread between calves via the environment - eggs (oocysts) shed in faeces that survive for long periods despite heat, cold and most disinfectants

Why?: Damage the wall of the large intestine by replicating in the gut cells and then erupting out damaging the cell. This creates a watery diarrhoea, resulting in straining with mucus and blood seen in the diarrhoea – long term damage done to gut wall. Severe cases show depression, loss of appetite, weight loss and dehydration

95% of cases are not diagnosed and so the key loss with cocci is poor weight gains

Diagnosis: Collect individual or pooled muck samples and submit them to the lab – if samples get warm en route the eggs can hatch giving false negative result. There is no type, smell or colour that is diagnostic of cocci so samples are needed to confirm.

Treat: Separate animals with diarrhoea and treat according to diagnosis including fluid therapy. The rest of the group may also need a coccidiosis treatment depending on the prevalence – speak to us about timing and type of product – remember the parasite has damaged the gut tissue when you see signs – this stunts performance long term.



Prevention of cases requires excellent hygiene and management:

1. Reduce stocking density
2. Regularly moving feed and water troughs
3. Reduce faecal contamination of feed and water troughs - raise or cover and clean out
4. Increasing bedding to reduce contamination/frequently rotate animals in paddocks
5. Avoid mixing different ages of calves
6. Clean and disinfect all buildings between groups of calves. It is important to use a disinfectant that claims effectiveness against coccidial oocysts. Steam cleaning can also be effective
7. Mass in feed preventative medication can be used but is not a fix for poor management

3) Young stock - Blackleg

Clostridial diseases occur when livestock are at pasture ingesting soil contaminated grass. Blackleg is the most common disease for cattle and there is no warning and no particular scenario that we can advise about although the wet weather with poor grass coverage will be a risk factor. Animals are often just found dead or seen as dull, depressed and with a very high temperature. Post mortem findings show dark muscles especially in legs and lumbar muscles where the muscle tissue is dead/dying. This is why animals often present with sudden onset lameness. Treatment is rarely

successful unless started incredibly early. Losses are inevitable so **just vaccinate cattle and sheep!**

Initial vaccination course of 2 doses (given 4-6 weeks apart) will cover the whole grazing season if given 2 weeks before turnout. Booster every 6 - 12 months to give continued immunity. Cattle can be vaccinated from as early as 2 weeks old. If the dam has her booster 8 to 2 weeks prior to calving then the calf will be covered until 12 weeks old.



TB Reactors

In a recent APHA release there are some important updates on TB reactors from 1st Nov 2018. The initiative is to drive the target of England to achieve Officially TB Free status through adapting the way compensation is paid. The aim is to encourage control measures to be implemented through farm bio security and to incentivise risk reduction at a farm level. To ensure not losing compensation please see the following changes:

- **Reduction in compensation by 50% for animals which arrive at the slaughterhouse too dirty to process i.e. in breach of the Livestock Cleanliness policy**

When animals arrive in a dirty or wet and contaminated state the risk of spreading bacteria such as E. coli 0157, Salmonella and Campylobacter to the meat product increases significantly. Where the entire carcass has to be rejected for the food chain this increases the cost to the tax payer as no salvage payment is received. The aim is to reduce the number of cattle arriving not in a state for slaughter

- **Reduction in compensation of 50% for animals brought into a herd during a TB breakdown which are subsequently removed as reactors or direct contacts (DC's) prior to herd regaining TB free status**

Cattle arriving in a TB restricted herd have a higher risk of becoming infected with TB. Whilst this is allowed in order to allow TB restricted herds to bring in replacement stock it is not enabling the eradication of TB infected herds. Herds registered in the CHCS Bovine TB scheme, AFUs, LFU and TB isolation units will be exempt from this reduction in compensation

- **Compensation to be paid for privately slaughtered reactors if they are found to be totally condemned for reasons of TB only**

There is an option to send a TB reactor with APHA and FSA approval to slaughter privately if the payment would be higher. The owner is responsible for haulage and slaughter. However, if the animal is condemned then no compensation was paid deterring most farms from using this option. In new legislation if a private slaughtered reactor is condemned for TB only, the farmer can contact APHA who will pay compensation in line with market values for TB.

Meetings

THE KILO CLUB

Targeting Carcase Specification

WEDNESDAY 26th September

2.30pm – 5.30pm

Invites to follow

Book your place on: 01452 543 999