



FarmVets

S O U T H W E S T



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Newsletter January 2013

CALF HEALTH MEETING : DAI GROVE-WHITE

Dai proved to be an excellent and engaging speaker and we hope that you found the meeting informative as well as entertaining. The main points Dai highlighted were:

- Good calf health starts with colostrum (4 litres within 6 hours of birth)
- Seeing the calf sucking on the cows teat is not the same as actually feeding
- Keep calves on colostrum for the first few days after birth
- Many farmers underfeed calves milk
- Cold, wet weather drains young calves of energy so allow up to 50% more milk/milk replacer on cold days and/or use calf jackets
- With pig wire and straw you can make a cheap shelter for the back of calf pens
- Spread out stressful events when rearing calves (e.g. don't wean, dehorn and group at the same time)
- Get in fast with oral rehydration therapy. A scouring calf wants water and electrolytes as soon as diarrhoea is seen
- Don't take scouring calves off milk, give an electrolyte feed two hours before or after the milk feed
- Severely dehydrated calves need to be dripped by a vet
- A dry place to lie down is essential for calves to stay healthy. The bedding in calf pens shouldn't squelch when you walk on it
- Isolate sick animals to prevent spread of disease
- Calf hutches are a good way to rear young calves.

FVSW runs a Heifer Monitoring Programme which covers the health and performance of dairy heifer calves. If you would like to discuss calf rearing (beef or dairy) please contact us at any one of our offices.

BOVIFERM PLUS

At the Calf Health Meeting we were introduced to Boviform Plus— a new rehydration therapy for scouring calves. We have studied the spec of this product and believe it offers many advantages to most other rehydration products on the market, give it a go and see if you agree.



BIMAMIX

This is a ready to use preparation to treat diarrhoea in young calves. It contains two effective antibiotics (neomycin and sulfadiazine). Bimamix also contains Kaolin: an inert substance used as an absorbent. When husbandry and rehydration fail, and following veterinary advice, this product will prove helpful in the control of calf scours.



Changes to TB Cattle Movement Control

The following changes will come into effect from 1st January 2013:

Restocking of Officially TB free status suspended herds (OTFS) will only be allowed after the herd's first post-breakdown test (short interval), after any identified reactors have been moved and subject to a satisfactory veterinary risk assessment.

The window of movement of cattle from TB restricted herds is now reduced from 60 to 30 days from the day of their last negative TB test. Movement to slaughter (either direct or from an Approved Finishing Unit or slaughter gathering) will continue to be allowed within 60 days of a negative test.

From 1st January 2013 existing AQU's (Approved Quarantine Units) will NOT be able to restock. Sanctions against operators of AQU's that breach operating conditions will be reviewed by individual case with operation licences being removed for serious breaches.

For more information please call Holly at Bridgwater or view this Defra link: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animal-diseases/files/tb-infonote-1205-changes-to-movements.pdf>

On our rounds.....Rob Hutchinson



Rob Hutchinson

Another new disease this month but not some exotic virus... we've found eggs from a parasite that is new to the area: Rumen Fluke. It has probably been in the area for a few years but this year's climate will have considerably helped its' spread.

Rumen fluke has a similar life cycle to Liver Fluke (eggs infect snails and then move out of the snails to infect the pasture). The adult Rumen Fluke lives in the rumen, as the name suggests, but they do not cause any problems there—unlike adult liver fluke which do cause disease. Immature rumen fluke live in the small intestine and this is where the disease is caused, mainly in young-stock or, possibly, first lactation heifers. The clinical signs are scouring (often black in colour) and ill-thrift.

The problem is that whilst the immature fluke cause disease, we have no easy way of diagnosing the condition since they do not lay eggs. Also, the usual worm and fluke treatments are not effective and only one fluke product is successful, Levafas Diamond which was previously known as Zanil. Currently, response to treatment with this drug is the best diagnosis of the disease.

The main time for disease to be seen is June and July but it can go into the Autumn since parasites don't always read the books!
Best wishes for the New Year.....Rob

The Directors and staff at FarmVets would like to wish you all a happy and prosperous 2013. Let's hope for less rain and better weather in the coming year.....

