



FarmVets

S O U T H W E S T



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Calf Scours...Part 2: Treatment

Following on from last month we will focus on treating calf scours. The key element is always to treat dehydration.

Fluids (Boviform plus/Effydral/Scour Formula)

A calf that is scouring and still standing is likely to be moderately (5%) dehydrated. It can be successfully treated with oral fluids, but don't hold back. Key points:

- It is almost impossible to over-hydrate a calf, especially if each feed is restricted to 2-3 litres
- Aim for at least 2 but preferably 3 (2-3lt) electrolyte daily
- Do not stop daily milk feeding as well - the gut cells need this energy to recover
- Do not mix electrolytes and milk in the same feed - this prevents the milk from clotting



A calf that is down/collapsed and scouring is likely to be severely dehydrated (10%). It needs i/v treatment. Call us to "drip a calf".

Antibiotics

- Will be useful against E.coli infection: speak to a vet about the best choices
- Not so useful against viral/protozoal (crypto) infections - ***this is why getting a diagnosis is vital, remember we can diagnose almost all causes of scour in our lab. Please drop in a sample.***

Pain-killers (Finadyne/Metacam)

- Will help if the calf is standing. Use them freely
- Controversial if the calf is recumbent (down), but probably is still the right thing to do – leave that decision to the vet on the day!

Halocur

- Only for crypto infections (get a diagnosis!)
- Decreases shedding of crypto, so reduces the challenge to other calves

Vecoxan

- Only for cocci problems (get a diagnosis!)
- Usually a one off drench.
- Best to leave routine drenching as late as possible to allow the calf to meet the cocci and develop immunity. Ideally dose between 4-6 weeks old
- Or alternatively 2 weeks after moving to a high risk environment

Benefits of Metacam and Finadyne

Everyone will be familiar with Metacam or Finadyne and probably use these drugs for a number of different conditions in their livestock. In fact, they are used for so many things it's easy to forget why exactly we do use them and the benefits they provide, both in terms of animal welfare and also financially. Both Metacam and Finadyne are non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDS). They perform four important functions:

- Pain relief
- Anti-inflammatory
- Anti-pyretic (reduces fevers)
- Anti-endotoxic (reduces toxaeemias)

The benefits they provide acutely sick animals are obvious. However, let's consider the less obvious cases where they are still beneficial:

Disbudding calves - the pain from hot iron disbudding can last for almost 2 days. Local anaesthetic will only last for a few hours, therefore the calf will experience pain and stress for at least a day beyond this. Studies have shown that using Metacam at the point of disbudding improves suckling behaviour and increases feed intake. This weight gain benefit outweighs the cost of the Metacam injection.

Mastitis cows - it is clear that the anti-endotoxic benefits of Finadyne make it hugely beneficial in E.coli mastitis cases, however what about the other, less severe, but more common mastitis conditions? These drugs will bring down udder swelling which will reduce the pain and therefore help prevent the secondary problems associated with decreased feed intake. This reduced swelling will also speed recovery and reduce udder damage. Studies have also shown a longer term benefit in the form of decreased somatic cell counts and decreased mastitis culling rates.

On my final rounds....Phil Kenward



So - after nigh on 30 years working for you guys I am hanging up my stethoscope. I am fortunate enough to be able to say that I have thoroughly enjoyed the many and varied challenges you have all thrown at me. I won't miss the night calls - but I will miss your company. Since Claire and I are not moving, I hope to bump into many of you over the coming months and years.

We will be holding a celebratory drink for Phil later on this year - details to follow in the near future

Bovilis Ringvac is back (for now)

For those of you who have had a ringworm diagnosis confirmed by a vet and the lab, "Ringvac" is back in stock. It is an excellent vaccine which is licenced for both prevention and treatment of this debilitating condition which affects the health and welfare of our calves.



Congratulations

To the winners at Honiton show this year: Chris Reed, Kate House and Mrs Durman.....well done to all of you!

