



HALE VETERINARY GROUP

FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2010



CALF PNEUMONIA

As the weather becomes colder and wetter we will soon be seeing cases of calf pneumonia so we thought it would be useful to mention it this month. Calf pneumonia can result in huge economic losses, due to deaths, poor weight gain and treatment costs, and compromises calf welfare so needs to be controlled.

Calf pneumonia is considered to be a multifactorial disease as it results from a combination of factors, including:

- Pathogens – viruses and bacteria.
- Poor environment – low temperature, high humidity, poor ventilation.
- Poor management – inadequate colostrum intake, overstocking, mixing different age groups, stress (eg. weaning, dehorning/castration).

Control of calf pneumonia can be difficult as controlling one of the above factors without controlling the rest often fails to work. Control measures include:

- Good management – **the most important control measure**. Ensure all calves receive adequate colostrum, avoid overstocking, avoid housing different age groups in the same air space, and avoid carrying out stressful procedures all at the same time (eg. dehorning/castrating at weaning).
- Good housing – correct temperature and humidity, good ventilation.
- Vaccination – **vaccination is not a substitute for poor management** – vaccination alone will have little effect if there are other risk factors still present. The pathogens present on a farm need to be identified before choosing which vaccine(s) to use as different farms have different pathogens present.

As part of the Hale Healthy Herd Initiative we are able to devise farm-specific calf pneumonia control plans. Speak to one of our farm animal vets for more information about this.

TUPPING

Tupping will soon be upon us so we thought it would be sensible to stress to our sheep clients the importance of ensuring that their rams are fit for the breeding season. Prior to tupping all rams should be condition scored and health checked to ensure they are well and in good condition. It is useful for a vet to carry out a general health check, paying particular attention to the feet and eyes – a lame and blind ram is not likely to serve many ewes! The vet can also carry out a breeding soundness examination to ensure that the ram is likely to be fertile. Jenny Grewal, one of our farm animal vets, is very keen on sheep fertility so speak to her at the practice if you have any questions about tupping and preparing your rams for it.

HVG HEALTH WATCH

Left displaced abomasums are still keeping us busy. We have also seen several downer cows and would like to stress to our clients the importance of caring for cows while they are down. Cows should be turned regularly and provided with plenty of food and water. If the cow has been down for more than 24 hours or is not eating and drinking she must be seen by a vet as soon as possible.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER/OTHER UPDATES BY E-MAIL PLEASE E-MAIL US AT: halehealthyherdinitiative@hotmail.co.uk