



Larkmead Veterinary Group

Farm Animal Newsletter

April 2006

Winter Review

Spring has come very late this year with drastic consequences on grass growth. Animals have therefore been housed longer with the resultant build up of bacteria and viruses in sheds.

Across the practice we have seen a large increase in calls to calvings, caesareans, scouring calves, toxic mastitis, and more cows being presented at routine fertility for non-observed oestrus. However the cold dry weather has had some positives, resulting in less cases of pneumonia in both young and old calves. Will this change as the weather becomes warmer and the humidity increases? In general viral pneumonia has decreased as there has been better uptake of vaccines this year. Farmers overall have been pleased with the condition of their young stock, reflected in better growth rates and productivity.

Calvings in the dairy sector have all but stopped for the autumn calving herds. However, beef farmers have been keeping us busy with calvings all month. There seem to be many bigger calves this year; perhaps this is due to the good weather last October/November and last year's good silage. We have probably had over a dozen caesareans this last 6 weeks.

Calf diarrhoea has been a problem this year in both the beef and dairy sector with Rotavirus and Cryptosporidium causing the bulk of cases. We have had 100% success this winter in saving calves which were down and dehydrated using intravenous fluids. This really emphasises the importance of hygiene and good colostrum intake. Farms which have used the rota/corona vaccines have had very few problems with calf diarrhoea as a result.

Acute and sub-clinical mastitis have increased recently with most milk samples culturing environmental bacteria (*Strep. uberis* and *coliforms*). Everybody is fed up with winter and are looking forward to turning out but diligence needs to be maintained. Advocin A180 has recently been licensed to treat *E.coli* mastitis and we have seen some good results. Farmers seem to like the ease of treatment with cows only requiring 20ml subcutaneously every 48 hours on two occasions.

Cattle Worming

A new product has just come on the market called Cydectin 10% (a leaflet should be included with this newsletter). It is a long acting wormer which lasts for 150 days. It is administered by giving an injection into the fat at the base of the ear. The added advantage of this wormer is that its active ingredient, Moxidectin, does not kill the dung beetle which aids in the degradation of cow pats on the field. Less pasture rejection results, therefore increasing grazing area. Please talk to your vet before using this product.

Sheep

Have your sheep experienced mummified foetuses, one lamb born alive and one born dead, or an increase in stillbirths this year? If so you may have either enzootic abortion or toxoplasmosis in your flock. The best way to find out is to collect some fresh placenta and foetuses for laboratory diagnosis. Alternatively Intervet are sponsoring free blood sampling of your ewes one month post lambing looking for high antibodies to the two types of abortion. This is a good opportunity to get things looked at, perhaps decreasing your losses next year.

Keeping the Calving Period Short in Beef Cows

Pre-serving fertility checks are important in order to keep your calving period short and therefore preventing barren cows. Any cow that has had a difficult calving, retained foetal membranes, caesareans and milk fevers should have a fertility check to ensure that the uterus is involuted and clean. We advise that these cows are checked before turnout or before they are put with the bull. This will ensure optimal conception rates and productivity. Please call the surgery if you would like to discuss this.

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Quality Service Providing Peace of Mind from a Caring Team

Larkmead Veterinary Group



Are having an
OPEN DAY

on

SUNDAY MAY 14TH 2006

11 AM – 3 PM

ILGES LANE, CHOLSEY, OXON

Come along for a look behind the scenes!

See what is involved in the day-to-day running
of your local veterinary practice.

Learn about the training required for Veterinary Nursing
and Veterinary Surgery.

Talk to both the small animal and large animal staff
about their job roles.

Have a go at a simulated lambing.

Enjoy a full tour of the operating theatres and diagnostic facilities.

Meet the Pygmy goats, groom the pony
and experience guinea-pig world

There will be games and quizzes for all the family,
with light refreshments available.

All Welcome!