

Farm First Newsletter August 2016

Updated Fluke Charts for Dairy Cattle There have been some changes to product licences and we now have some more products available for use in dairy herds. We have updated our charts accordingly, so if you would like a laminated copy of the new chart please ask for one at the desk or at your routine visit.

A HCC report reveals “worrying” levels of wormer resistance in sheep A project that monitored the level of wormer resistance on 47 farms in Wales has shown that the levels of resistance has increased considerably over the last 10 years. The failure of the 3-ML group (both Ivermectin and Moxidectin) is of particular concern as many in the sheep industry believed they were effective on most farms. HCC is now looking to raise awareness amongst vets and farmers in Wales so that sheep farmers can be encouraged to check that their wormers are working effectively.

The study looked at the effectiveness of four types of wormer: Benzimidazole (1-BZ); Levamisole (2-LV); Ivermectin (3-ML) and Moxidectin (3-ML) on 47 Welsh farms and showed that:

- One farm only showed that all drugs were still fully effective on that farm;
- 94% of farms have evidence of resistance to Benzimidazole;
- 68% of farms have evidence of resistance to Levamisole;
- 51% of farms have evidence of resistance to Ivermectin;
- 19% of farms have evidence of resistance to Moxidectin.

Apart from the single farm that was considered fully effective, all other farms had resistance to one or more of the anthelmintic classes and as many as 43% of farms showed resistance to either three or four of the different classes of anthelmintic. However, the one farm that had no resistance evident had followed SCOPS guidelines - demonstrating how important it is to follow the advice given by SCOPS.

Startect As a practice we believe that the new generation wormers should be used at some point every year in each flock to reduce and slow the effects of anthelmintic resistance in sheep. Zoetis are offering the following guarantee on their sheep wormer Startect.

Action 1: STARTECT is guaranteed to Knockout resistant worms in your flock. STARTECT when used as a Knockout Drench will remove worms resistant to all other actives. If you are not entirely satisfied and have a positive post drench sample at 14 days. Zoetis will investigate alongside your vet and farm advisor, pay associated lab fees, create a farm specific worm control plan and provide the same amount of STARTECT free of charge for use in the following season.

Action 2: The Improved Growth Rate Guarantee. If STARTECT hasn't produced an improved growth rate in the month after treatment compared to similar stock on the same farm treated with another worming product Zoetis will investigate alongside your vet and farm advisor, pay associated lab fees, create a farm specific worm control plan and provide the same amount of STARTECT free of charge for use in the following season.

Parasite Control Products If you have been into reception recently you may have noticed that we have a selection of wormers, flukicide and parasite control products in stock. These products are all competitively priced, so have a look the next time you are in. If you would like any advice on parasite control in your herd or flock, please give us a ring and speak to one of the vets.

Mycoplasma bovis Mycoplasma bovis (M. bovis) was first discovered in 1961. It has been identified as a cause of pneumonia, mastitis, swollen joints, abortions, infertility and eye infections. Each species of Mycoplasma usually only infects one species of animal e.g. M.

bovis infects cattle whereas *M. ovipneumoniae* causes pneumonia in sheep. This family of bacteria can be difficult to treat as they have several mechanisms of defence, which mean that they can not only avoid the animal's immune system, but also avoid destruction by some antibiotics.

The lack of cell wall results in *M. bovis* having poor ability to survive in the environment, therefore spread is predominantly from cow to cow via secretions, such as discharge from the nose, eyes, vagina, urine and milk. Often the infection is brought into the herd by carrier animals that appear clinically healthy. Both beef and dairy calves can be infected from the cow through the milk. It can survive in contaminated frozen semen for several years (a route which may be overlooked).

In younger cattle *M. bovis* frequently causes respiratory infections (pneumonia) and less commonly an inner ear infection which results in the calf having a drooping ear and a head tilt towards the affected side. These respiratory infections can be caused by *M. bovis* alone or complicated with other viruses or bacteria. Milk from affected quarters has been described as "semolina-like consistency" but the infections can also present as sub-clinical i.e. high cell counts. In some cases, cattle infected with *M. bovis* present with severe arthritis and joint swellings, mainly in the fetlock joints. In these cases cattle are severely lame, respond poorly to treatment and often have to be euthanased on welfare grounds. It is believed that joint infections are a result of an infection of the udder or lungs which has travelled through the bloodstream to the joint.

The gold standard test is to isolate and culture the bacteria from milk, swollen joints or diseased lung, which can take a few weeks. Paired blood samples (2 blood samples taken 4-6 weeks apart) can be taken to look for a rise in antibodies, indicating that an animal has been recently exposed and is building an immune response.

M. bovis is often poorly responsive to common antibiotic treatments. Treatment must be given early and painkillers will help to alleviate the clinical signs. Discussion with your veterinary surgeon is paramount to tackling an outbreak of *M. bovis* on your farm. At the moment there is no commercial vaccine available against *M. bovis* but there are a few laboratories that are able to make autogenous vaccines (specific to the farm). This requires the bacteria to be cultured directly from an infected animal.

Maintaining a closed herd is the best way to prevent introduction of infection.

Velactis withdrawn We have had notification from Ceva that they have voluntarily withdrawn this product from sale, due to some adverse reactions seen, mainly in Holland. It is thought this is likely to be due to the different management of cows at drying off in Holland. We will let you know if and when the product is once again available, as we had some very positive feedback from our clients who tried it.

Monmouth and Usk Shows Once again we will be in attendance at Monmouth and Usk shows, so if you are going to either of these please come along to say hello and join us for some tea, cake and a chat, or even something stronger.

The Joke A husband and wife were driving down a country lane on their way to visit some friends. They came to a muddy patch in the road and the car became bogged. After a few minutes of trying to get the car out by themselves, they saw a young farmer coming down the lane, driving some oxen before him.

The farmer stopped when he saw the couple in trouble and offered to pull the car out of the mud for \$50. The husband accepted and minutes later the car was free. The farmer turned to the husband and said, "You know, you're the tenth car I've helped out of the mud today." The husband looks around at the fields incredulously and asks the farmer, "When do you have time to plough your land? At night?"

"No," the young farmer replied seriously, "Night is when I put the water in the hole."