Tern Vets Ltd

FARM CARE by Ternvets

PUTTING CARE INTO PRACTICE

MARCH 2017

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Your dedicated farm team available 24/7

LUNGWORM REMINDER

Lungworm or husk is a serious lung condition of grazing young-stock and reports show an increase in the numbers of lungworm clinical cases in second season grazers and adults. Cattle get infected by eating larvae from infected pasture which cross the gut and travel to the lungs to reach adulthood where they start producing eggs. These eggs get coughed up and swallowed, then pass through the gut and onto the pasture to start the cycle again.

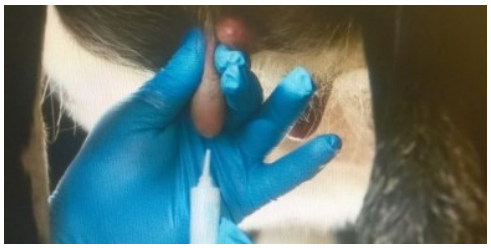
Affected grazing cattle show signs in mid-late summer of coughing and faster, laboured breathing. At this point they need treating with a systemic wormer as well as treating for pneumonia as the adult lungworms die and set up an intense pneumonia in the lungs.

There is a vaccine available for lungworm "Huskvac" that you can give to first season grazers before turn out. This gives them a controlled exposure to lungworm without risk of disease. Their immunity is then boosted by natural exposure to the lungworms throughout the grazing season and gives them lifelong protection. Wormers can be used to control lungworm but they prevent life long immunity to the disease as they stop the lungworms ever reaching the lungs - this is contributing to older cattle being affected by clinical lungworm.

If you have had lungworm in the past make sure you have a robust lungworm plan in place before turn out - please call the practice for more advice.

TEAT SEALANT REMINDER

Many of you will be using a teat sealant with or without a dry cow antibiotic at drying off to help prevent new infections getting into the udder during the dry period. The sealant must be inserted hygienically, especially if no antibiotics are being used, as it is easy to infuse bacteria along with the tube from the environment into the udder and create a mastitis. It is also vital to pinch the top of the teat to keep the sealant within the teat rather than letting it escape into the udder. Teat sealant that gets into the udder rather than in the teat can be shed for weeks in the milk next lactation. The sealant is inert and harmless but can cause an unsightly "black spot" to form in cheese which can condemn the whole batch.



Heat Detection part 3:

In part three of our focus on heat detection we will look at **ways to increase heat behaviour.**

1. **SPACE TO SHOW BULLING:** Provide 3m^2 loafing area (non-passageway, non bedded area) per cow with a **good, grippy footing surface** where cattle are free to interact—consider using sand to improve grip in loafing areas.
2. **OBSERVE AT PEAK BULLING TIMES:** Make sure heat detection is scheduled in the evening and early morning to coincide when most of the mounting activity occurs.

3. **MOBILITY:** When cows have sore feet and legs, heat detection is more difficult as lame bulling cows are less likely to mount others, and lame mid-cycle cows may be reluctant to move away from mounting cows and be mistakenly served. Make sure all cows get a preventative trim and lame cows are treated as quickly as possible.
4. **TRAINING:** When several people are working with the herd, assign one person to be responsible for overall heat detection, and allow time for this person to do the job properly. All staff need to be trained to recognise signs of heat and promptly report this information to the person who is in charge of breeding.

5. **CLEAR ID:** Studies have shown that up to 15 percent of the cattle presented for insemination are really not in heat. Poor cow identification can be one cause of this problem. Legible large ear tags, clean freeze brands or numbered neck collars can help reduce mistakes.
6. **RECORDS:** Record all heats, whether the animal is to be inseminated or not. Heat detection will improve if future heats can be anticipated. Use a pocket notebook to record heats and transfer this information to a 3 week diary and to the permanent individual cow record. This allows monitoring of abnormal cycles and long intervals from calving to first service.
7. **HEAT DETECTION AIDS:** Consider using heat detection aids (tailpaint, stickers such as Estrotect/Kamar or movement sensors such as Heatime, Silent Herdsman) to help increase the number of heats detected. Remember these aids should **supplement** routine visual observation rather than replace observations.

8. **TEASER BULL:** A vasectomised bull is a cheap, quick and easy way to identify bulling cows in your herd.
9. **BULL PEN:** Housing a stock bull in a pen close to the cows can improve heat detection as bulling cows will group around the bull pen.

SCHMALLENBERG REMINDER

Remember there is funding available for free screening for Scmallenberg virus in abnormal calves, lambs and kids that are born. The virus was passed on by midges last Autumn and causes limb and brain deformities so please get in touch if you have any odd births and we can arrange for the appropriate samples to be taken and sent to the lab. The limb deformities can cause tricky births so phone if you are struggling.

GOOD LUCK TO PAULA!

Sadly, this month we say a temporary goodbye and good luck to Paula. As many of you may have noticed Paula is expecting her third baby and we are all very excited about her new arrival. Unfortunately, this does mean we will all have to cope without her for the next few months but we look forward to meeting the new addition to the Scales clan.