

Calf-Link

Clutha Vets Newsletter for Calf Rearers



Issue 3, 2017

With the bulk of the calving done, most people are coming to the end of their replacements coming in, and the pressure of new calves is hopefully starting to ease. The number of new scour outbreaks is starting to slow (thankfully) but we are now starting to see a few cryptosporidium scours as the calves get a little older and the pressure comes on the sheds.

If you have had scours already this season but there has been a change in what you are seeing, you potentially could have a second cause now present which might require a change in treatment plan.

Remember, if you have any questions, queries or interesting cases that you would like to discuss or share, please get in touch with Elspeth or Anna at the Balclutha Clinic (03 4181280).

LSD - Livestock Survival Drench

Over the last few weeks we have had a lot of people asking our advice for ill-thrifty calves. Some of the calves are recovering from a disease such as scours, but other calves are just looking a little bit off or just not doing quite right.

The more experienced vets (they don't like being called old!), and calf rearers remember in years gone by that LSD was used routinely in calves to help give them a boost - either while they were still in the shed or when they were put outside. In more recent years, this practice seems to have waned but it can still be a very cost effective way to give calves a bit of a pick up.



LSD contains vitamins A, C, D and E as well as selenium, chromium and iodine. The combination of these vitamins and minerals in the one supplement boosts the immune system, helping protect against any challenges the calves may face, either from infection or unfavourable environmental conditions. LSD is safe to use at any age, and the selenium levels are not so high that they could cause issues with any other selenium supplementation programme in place for the calves. Calves can be given LSD on a monthly basis, or even more frequently if needed. If you want to discuss specific options for your calves, please get in touch with any of the retail staff or vets.

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- LSD for ill-thrifty calves
- Congenital deformities in calves

The Calf Weaning Debate

We hear of calves being weaned at a particular age (often 10 weeks). This is a concern because whether an individual calf is ready to be weaned really depends on how well it has gone in the first few months, not just the number of days since birth.

Weaning to calf weight is a better approach as it is easily measured and gives a better indication of whether the calf is ready. For most breeds weaning below 80kg is not recommended, particularly coming off a high milk system. You should also gauge how much muesli/pellets they are eating as that is an indication of how well the rumen has developed. Calves should be eating at least 1kg per day before they are weaned off milk to make sure their gut is fully ready to process grass.

Calves with Deformities

Given the number of calves that are born in the district each year it is unsurprising that a few of them will come out “not quite right”.

From two headed calves to missing or extra limbs, most abnormalities have been seen. This year we have seen several with anal atresia (no poo hole), a severe cleft palate, calves with fused and deformed legs, and one with hypospadias (no external urinary tract to enable the calf to urinate). While fascinating for us vets, these conditions aren't very conducive for life for the calves and most will require euthanasia on humane grounds.

If you do have AB bred calves born with deformities it is highly recommended reporting it to your AI company so that complete reports can be kept on each of the bulls.

Below - missing penis, tail and anus



Above - cleft palate and malformed jaw.

Below - a back leg looking like a front leg with malformed and fused joints.



Caption this photo

This year's competition is “Caption this photo”. In each newsletter we will have a photo for you to get creative. Simply message your best caption(s) to 027 485 6014 or email - admin@cluthavets.co.nz to be in to win this fantastic chilly bin (with goodies).

This weeks photo below-



Last week's photo caption winner -

“Mmmmm Jersey Caramel, so tasty!”

Congratulations to this week's winner who goes into the draw for our fantastic prize

If you have a photo you think would make a great candidate for the competition send it in.