

Calf-Link 4



2015



Welcome

With the long awaited arrival of some warm weather, so too are most people reaching the end of the heifer replacements coming in and the focus of calf rearers starts to move to the other end of the process - getting calves outside, onto once a day feeding and really encouraging the meal into calves. Around the traps we are getting a lot of calves scouring, with Rotavirus being the predominant cause. If you are having trouble please give us a call, if only for a debrief to keep your sanity!

If you know of someone who might be interested in receiving this newsletter, please let the clinic know and we will ensure they are put on our email list. Also, if you have questions about specific cases or topics, please call or email Elspeth (edunne@cluthavets.co.nz).

Don't Forget your Bobbies!

This week one of our vets visited a farm who was having trouble with their bobby calves. The calves were weak, unwilling to stand and some were even unwilling to sit. There was no scouring and the calves were still drinking well. The strange thing was that the heifer calves were completely normal. So what was going on?

After a bit of digging into the management, it was found that the heifer calves were being collected frequently, given gold colostrum as soon as they were picked up and their navels well sprayed with iodine. The bobby calves were left in the paddock until someone found time to get them, the colostrum was just what they had managed to get from mum, if any, and navels were being sprayed a bit hit and miss. All the calves were found to have joint infections in one or more joint, and unfortunately in that condition were unable to go on the truck. This case shows that it is important to look after all calves the same in the first few days of life, regardless of future prospects.



COMPETITION TIME!

Want to win a massage to rest your weary bones and muscles at the end of calf rearing?

In each edition we will have a question for you to answer. Simply text the answer and your name to 027 418 2410, and correct answers will go into the draw to win an hour massage with SHINE Massage Therapy. With a slight change in plan we will now have a massage prize for each newsletter!

This week's question—

Bobby calves don't need Colostrum.

True or False?

Congratulations to the winner of last week's quiz question:

Dana Christiansen

The answer: The normal temperature range for a calf is 38-39.5°C. Calf temperatures tend to be a little higher than adult cattle, the same for infants of most species.

Weird Things in Calves?

It is usually round this time of year that we get a few questions about hair loss, funny skin, and lumps. Hair loss usually raises the most concern but it is not uncommon for calves to have hair loss around different parts of the body. The location of the hair loss can give us a good indication of what might be the cause.

Scald

Hair loss from scald tends to be at either end of the calf. Around the face or muzzle is often from milk scald - calf head butting feeders, milk being splashed out of feeder and so on. The other common area is around the back end of the calf, often after scouring. Hair loss may extend to include the tail, backs of the legs and around to over the hips - anywhere the scour may have come in contact with. Scald itself is not normally a problem, calves don't really seem bothered by it and the biggest thing is that it doesn't spread. Normally only a few calves from a group will be affected.



Lice

Calves with lice are itchy and they will rub on everything! The normal area affected is over the shoulder and around the neck area, but in severe cases can spread. If any of your calves have lice it will be spreading across the other calves and pens and treatment will be needed for control.



Ringworm

Typically ring worm will be found on the head and neck region but can occur anywhere. It is highly contagious and can also spread to people so hygiene is very im-

portant. Ringworm appears as circular dry lesions which can, but not necessarily, be itchy. Ring worm often occurs when other stresses such as scouring or nutritional problems are involved.



Pink Eye

Pink eye typically presents as watery eyes with a cloudy appearance. Animals may be affected in one or both eyes. Often the affected eye(s) will be held closed as they become very sensitive to light. Pink eye treatment depends on severity but in the early stages Orbenin eye ointment can be very effective. If the surface of the eye becomes damaged and ulcerated further veterinary treatment may be required.



Eye Injuries

Calves being naturally inquisitive will often stick their heads where they shouldn't and it's surprising that we don't see more eye injuries than we do. Straw, wire, and sticks are all great at getting into eyes. If the calf is lucky the eyeball itself is not damaged. These injuries often need vet attention to ensure the offending item isn't still in the eye.



Sore eyes that don't fit the above?

There is a viral disease called IBR that can cause similar cloudy eyes to pink eye. In these cases the calves often, but not always, have snotty noses and a cough as well. Please give us a call if you have calves not responding to pink eye treatment.

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