Repeat mastitis

Olaf Klein DrMedVet

Reoccurring mastitis is a problem that we see more of as the milking season progresses. It usually goes along with the request for some stronger antibiotic, because the antibiotic used did not quite resolve the symptoms, or the condition resolved but reappeared shortly after the antibiotic treatment finished.The fact that there was improvement with antibiotic treatment clearly indicates that the bug is sensitive to the antibiotic used.The main reason for the condition to not fully resolve or to reappear is due to the bacteria surviving the treatment by hiding in the scar tissue which is less easily penetrated by the antibiotic. Lengthening of the treatment period with the same antibiotic is your first line of attack, especially when you see good initial results on a 3 tube treatment. There are infections though, that you will never cure within a reasonable time period they are usually well established Staphylococcus infections in a quarter were there is already a lot of scar tissue. If this type of infection is limited to a single quarter it is often more economical to stop milking the quarter and cull the cow at the end of the season. Milk sample testing in these cases will often confirm the diagnosis of a Staph. infection and with sensitivity to a range of antibiotics but there is an equal chance to see "no growth" in those pretreated quarter milk samples.It is much better to take samples before the initial treatment and freeze them because you can cultivate them for several months are freezing. If treatment did not work for more than a single cow or quarter for that matter, you have a sample collected already that will produce much more meaningful results. As we all know, there is only one treatment that works 100% every time, so do not forget to put cows that had mastitis twice in one quarter in one season onto the culling list.

Bench dominant bulls from mating team

Wobby weaners

David Haugh BVSc

Polioencephalomalacia (PEM), aka Cerebrocortico necrosis (CCN), is a brain disease of stock we usually only see rarely. Most of the cases I have seen over the years have been in dairy weaners in November, December, January and usually only one or two or three in a mob are affected. Sometimes it is seen in sporadic cases up to young adult cattle stage. It can occur in goats, alpacas and sheep. Again, it is not common, but cases of large numbers being affected in a mob have been recorded in sheep.

This disease is caused by an acute deficiency of vitamin B1 (thiamine). There is B1 in milk, but weaned animals get it made for them by the bacteria and protozoa in the rumen. Something upsets this process and disease starts. It progresses over about a week. To begin with there will be slight in-coordination. It worsens, with disorientation and the animal goes blind even though the eyes are fine. Next the animal goes down and eventually starts fitting and dies. Even advanced cases can respond to thiamine injection treatment but the sooner the better.

In the early stages, PEM/CCN can look like paspalum/ryegrass staggers. The similarity ends there though. This latter disease usually strikes in summer/autumn, affects a large number of the mob, which are worse when "stirred up" but almost never progress so that the vast majority of these animals recover, unless they wobble over a bluff or into deep water.

Apply nitrogen fertilizers to boost early spring pasture

Wellsford VET CLINIC

The Mad Cow Client Newsletter

116 Rodney Street, Wellsford 0900. Ph 09 4238 008 Fax 09 4328 178

Fold to here

Opening stanza

Stephen McAulay BVSc

Mating is winding down for most dairy farms with the bulls now running with the herd. Keep an eye on dominant behaviour from the bulls and rotate the mating team around. Sometimes it is beneficial to remove dominant bulls from the mating team as they can spend all their time preventing other bulls mating cows and they spend no time mating cows themselves!

Spring fertilizer is being applied and having good potash levels (K) in the spring fert can help plants be more water deficient tolerant. Emptying effluent ponds before Christmas is good practice. Apply the nutrients and associated water to the ground whilst moisture is still present in the soil will enable nutrients to move into the soil profile and boost pasture growth. When the ground is still moist there is lower levels of nutrient run-off. Water quality is important.

Very few farms check their trace element levels prior to mating The farms that we did often had 2 year olds with low Selenium levels (off farm when selenium was applied in spring fert). Copper was also low on several farms. With the financial conditions of the last few years many farms have reduced expenditure. Ensure the right decisions are being made, getting cows in-calf early. It is important for whole farm profitability. The cost implications are not immediately clear (until pregnancy testing or calving next year).

Monitoring is important.

Controlling bulk milk SCC

Stephen McAulay BVSc

The effort spent before Christmas managing individual cow somatic cell count (SCC) is time well spent. Identifying the odd cow with mastitis early, before she has a chance to spread the infection during the milking process will ensure the bulk milk SCC stays down later in the season.

Identifying all cows with SCC >400,000 is important after herd testing. You have already paid for the test, use the results to their full benefit. Paddle testing or rapid mastitis testing (RMT) cows with SCC >400,000 to help identify the potentially problem quarters is important. Marking affected quarters (after RMT) with spray paint and hand stripping these problem quarters before cupping will help identify intermittent clinical/sub-clinical cows. Continue hand stripping problem quarters until the paint fades, usually about a week.

Hand stripping the entire herd weekly in December (prior to Christmas) is an additional technique to keep the bulk milk SCC from rising through January and February.

Calf drenching

Neil Warnock BVM&S

We have had a few cases of calves suffering from parasitism in the last month, so it seems a good time to discuss drenching. I will focus on cattle under one year of age in this article.

All paddocks which have had cattle grazing will have worm eggs present on them (pasture burden). If the paddocks have had large numbers of young stock grazing the pasture, then the burden will be higher.

>90% herd 3 week submission rate

Top farmers achieve

InCalf Benchmark

As calves get exposed to the worms, they slowly develop an immunity, but until they do, usually at 12-18 months of age, the worms will reduce the animals' growth rates and leave them susceptible to other diseases. They do this in two ways.

Firstly, as cattle pick up the worm eggs, there is an immune response triggered which uses up energy and leaves less energy for growth. The more worm eggs they pick up the more energy that is wasted, so highly contaminated pastures will reduce growth rates more than clean pastures. Secondly, growth rates are further slowed by these eggs developing into adult worms, within the digestive tract, which steal nutrition from the calf. The adult worms produce eggs which are excreted in the cattle's faeces onto the pasture to perpetuate the cycle.

Lepto vaccinate calves with 7in1 prior to weaning

We are unable to kill eggs on the pasture so it is very hard to prevent cattle using energy up on the initial immune response to the worm eggs. We can, however, use tactical drenching and management procedures to limit the number of eggs that end up on the pasture and get eaten.

One component of this is using adult cattle, which have developed an immunity to worms, to clean up pastures after calves have been on them. Alternatively, making hay or silage on a paddock will do the same thing.

The second component of this is to draft a drench plan with your vet which decides on key dates and products to drench your young stock. For example, the Cooperia spp of worms affect cattle under one year of age and are a common cause of production loss. They have a very high level of resistance to single active drenches within New Zealand, and for this reason all cattle under a year old should be treated with a combination drench, otherwise you end up accelerating the development of resistance. Cydectin is no longer a suitable drench for cattle under a year of age!

In addition to a drench plan we can formulate a complete young stock health plan to advise you on the best times to supplement with trace minerals, what target weights should be and when vaccination protocols should be completed.

Calves can tolerate a very substantial number of adult worms within their digestive tract before they start to exhibit signs of scouring. If you are using faecal consistency as an indicator for when to drench, then the stock have already suffered considerable subclinical losses by the time you drench them. This is why a drench plan is key to maximising growth in young stock.

If you would like to get yourself sorted with a youngstock health plan then give the clinic a ring and we can book a time to go over it with you.

Need a good combination worming product for your young stock, ask for the BOSS-

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Contact clinic regarding Animal Health Plans

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For sheep greater than 20kg and older than 4 weeks age.
Contains Abamectin, Levamisole, Oxfendazole & Selenium & Cobalt

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Key Reproduction Dates

Calving Date	10 July	20 July	1 Aug
Cows mated after today may calve after planned start of mating 2020	15 Dec	25 Dec	6 Jan

Lumpy pasture

Stephen McAulay BVSc

Uneven pasture has been noticeable around the district and often occurs when the grass is growing well. The unevenness is due to nutrient deficits. Nitrogen is often the limiting nutrient and when nitrogen has been applied and the pasture is still lumpy then it is either potassium (K) or sulphur (S), or both.

Doug Edmeades calls lumpy pasture, Indian pasture, it's a bit a patchy.

Sulphur deficiency shows up as an orange tinge. If you have ever had a wheelbarrow of dirt full up with rainwater, the dirt starts to smell like Rotorua. The sulphur is being gassed off as hydrogen sulphide. If you soid sits soggy with water the same effect will be happening.

Consider supplementing calves with selenium & copper

Both sulphur and potassium associate with soil organic matter, they bind to the soil organic matter. When ground is "worked up" the organic matter frequently gets oxidised and breaks down and the soil "loses its' ability to hold onto sulphur and potassium. Hence this lumpy orange pasture is frequently seen in new grass paddocks after cropping.

This can be overcome by applying an additional 20kg of elemental sulphur and 40 kg potash, over and above what is normally applied every year.

Understanding and monitoring the actual elemental kilograms of nitrogen, phosphate, potassium and sulphur (N, P, K, S) applied every year to your property and associating this with pasture growth will help your business.

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