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NOVEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER

CATTLE LUNGWORM ALERT FROM APHA

The APHA Cattle Expert Group has just announced that they have seen several severe cases of lungworm infection or 'husk' through their post-mortem network in recent weeks. As with many other parasitic nematodes, infection is acquired by the ingestion of infective larvae from pasture. The disease is complex and outbreaks are often unpredictable. Despite a good vaccine having been available, and no resistance of lungworm to any of the commonly used anthelmintics (wormers) officially having been reported, lungworm continues to pose a serious threat to both animal welfare and income on cattle farms worldwide.

Traditionally, husk was a disease seen in calves during the latter half of their first grazing season, however, reports of lungworm outbreaks in adult cattle have increased dramatically over the last three decades and is now commonly diagnosed. Losses in severe lungworm outbreaks in growing cattle can average £50-£100 per head and lost milk production in adults may reach £3 per cow per day. Clinical signs can be similar to many other diseases so it is essential to reach a proper diagnosis.

Lungworms are susceptible to the three major classes of benzimidazoles, levamisole and macrocyclic lactones (MLs). Treated cattle should be removed from infected pasture and transferred to clean pasture if it is available or alternatively housed in well-ventilated facilities. In the face of an outbreak, all stock should be treated with anthelmintics, as it is impossible to differentiate between prepatent and patent affected animals, and it will also reduce the potential for further pasture contamination. Beyond anthelmintic treatment, in moderately to severely affected animals, adjunctive treatment with NSAIDs and antibiotics may be required to reduce inflammation and secondary infections.

Cattle can be vaccinated for lungworm by giving an oral vaccine containing irradiated lungworm larvae (L3), which stimulates immunity. Vaccination should be strongly considered on farms with evidence of lungworm. Although vaccination is effective in preventing clinical disease, it does not completely prevent establishment of small numbers of lungworms which should occur after the vaccinated animal are turned onto 'dirty' pasture as this is required to complete the development of immunity.

Consequently, pastures may remain contaminated, albeit at a low level. For this reason, it is important that all calves on farms where lungworm is endemic should be vaccinated whether they go to pasture in the spring, or later in the year; and a calf vaccination programme must be continued annually. Furthermore, all cattle likely



AVIAN INFLUENZA - An Avian Influenza Prevention Zone has come into force across Great Britain as of 5pm on 3rd November. This means it is a legal requirement for all bird keepers to follow strict biosecurity measures to protect their birds. For more information see GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu#AIPZ>

This follows several outbreaks of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1 across the UK in recent weeks.

UDDER HEALTH SURVEY

Zoetis are running an Udder Health Management Survey, the aim of which is to build a clearer picture of UK Dairy Farmers' approach to Udder Health management. The information they receive will be used to better tailor their support to the veterinary profession and in turn, better support to farmers' business needs.

If you would like to contribute, the survey can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/99Y9PQB>
Farmers Weekly, RUMA and Cow Management will also be putting out links to the survey.

Zoetis will make a donation to the Farming Community Network for every survey submitted survey. The Farming Community Network is a national charity and voluntary organisation supporting farmers and members of the farming community in times of difficulty. Whether the issue is personal or business-related, FCN can support farmers through their wide network of volunteers who understand farming life and its challenges.

CALF PNEUMONIA – This photo shows a cross-section view through a section of lung from a 7-month-old weaned suckle calf that had gone through a livestock market 8 days previously. Within 24 hours, the animal went from normal and healthy to dead, with the lungs heavily congested and full of small abscesses. The stress of housing, stock movements and change in



weather can all lead to severe and acute pneumonia such as this. In less severe cases the animal will survive but never thrive, as there will be a degree of permanent lung damage. This helps to show the benefit that vaccination can bring by helping to prevent disease. In an ideal world all stock would

NEW VET – We are pleased to **welcome Harm** Van Den Meijdenberg to North Park. Harm is Dutch and was at university with Elske. He has been working in the UK for several years as well as Ireland, but has decided to relocate to Devon with his young family to be nearer his in-laws in Launceston. He brings a wealth of experience and different ideas to the practice that we are sure to benefit from.

AGRI POLICY CHANGES – Discussions are currently on-going between industry representatives and DEFRA with regards to Agri Policy, including the “**Animal Health and Welfare Pathway**”, which is expected to provide the framework for subsidised vet visits, the aim of which is to assist in improving performance and profitability and replaces the outgoing subsidy system. Jonathan is now on the committee of the Sheep Veterinary Society and has to provide input to these discussions – please contact him if you have any suggestions or concerns regarding policy (for any farmed species) as he can then relay this to the relevant parties. Unfortunately, he cannot guarantee that these concerns will be

BOOKING TB TESTS – In January we will start the new APHA statutory six-monthly TB testing which will replace annual TB testing for most farms, which represents a significant increase in the amount of testing we will have to do. Due to this increase, there is likely to be less flexibility in the system and we will be unlikely to squeeze in last minute pre-movement tests, for example. **PLEASE BOOK in advance to avoid disappointment** and please utilise the answerphone or email – tb@northparkvets.co.uk – as Sophie and Vanessa are often out of the office due to Exports; someone will get back to you as soon as possible. *Thank you TB admin team*



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