

devoted vets

for your animal's life!



for your herd's health

12 Normanby St, Warragul, 3820 Phone: 5623 2525

Spring 2015

Hi there!

The dry weather is the big topic of conversation around the farms. Already we are doing quite a few preg tests to detect the "passengers."

We start this newsletter by looking at recent research into accelerating the pre-weaning growth rates of calves.

We continue the "Get to know the bug" section, so you can better interpret and act on information many of you receive from the milk cultures of mastitis cases.

This month's focus is Strep uberis.

Lastly more tricks of the trade!

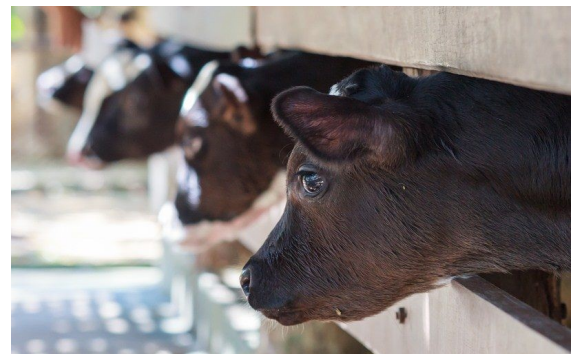
Boosting the nutrition for pre-weaned calves

Dairy Australia has conducted a research trial looking into the effect of boosting the nutrition of preweaning calves with "fortified milk".

This research is important because it has been shown higher growth rates prior to weaning result in higher milk production as adults due to the positive effects of added nutrition on the development of the young udder. It has been shown that for every 0.1kg of average daily gain, there is an increase in first lactation milk yield of 155kgs.

There is also a positive impact on life long fertility as well as milk production!

150 gms of milk powder was added to 2 litres of milk fed to a group of calves twice daily, with the control group receiving no added milk powder. Both groups were fed ad lib calf starter with a minimum of 18% protein.



By week 8, the calves on the fortified diet were nearly 6 kgs heavier, having added an average of 0.1 kgs per day at an added cost of \$59.30 You would need to be paid 39c/kg of milk to break even when these calves were in their first lactation - and that makes calculations a bit tricky!

The major benefit occurred in the first four weeks of life and if margins are tight, the fortified milk could be given for just the first four weeks.

Of real interest, there was no increase in disease within the fortified group, debunking the idea that "rich" milk caused scours. I feel there would be additional benefits beyond the first lactation yield. Food for thought!

Latest research on calf rearing

The benefits and responses from feeding "fortified" milk

Get to know the bugs: Strep uberis - the most common cause of environmental mastitis

Tips from the back of the vet's car!

Getting to know the bugs: Strep uberis

Strep uberis is THE most common bacteria we find in milk cultures. The reason why it is so common is that it is normally found in cow manure which is err, common! Because it's in cow manure, it is everywhere in your cow's environment, and therefore we call it an environmental bacteria.

Typical conditions that cause Strep uberis mastitis are those that favour an increased concentration of manure at the teat end - calving pads and paddocks, very muddy tracks, sacrifice paddocks, exit footbaths, cows being held back on tracks after milking, cow camps, under shade trees etc.

Wet conditions also favour Strep uberis because water runs down to the teat end, bringing with it traces of manure and the Strep. In wet and dirty conditions, teats and udders are often washed, further adding to the level of contamination. (For this reason, only the teat should be washed with low pressure, not the whole udder. If the teat is washed, it should be dried.)

We are still seeing outbreaks of Strep uberis mastitis in the current dry conditions. Why is this so?

Strep uberis isn't only a cause of clinical mastitis, it also causes subclinical mastitis, so infections gained during the calving period may stay subclinical for some months, flaring up when conditions are drier.

Clinical cases of Strep uberis vary from mild with clots and wateriness, to severe with hot, painful and swollen udders.

Strep uberis responds well to penicillin penethemate. Intramuscular injections of drugs such as mamyzin and yodimaspen reach high concentrations in the milk and are usually highly effective. They have the advantage of treating all four quarters - so you have the advantage of treating other quarters that may have subclinical infections. In addition these injections reach all parts of the quarter unless it is very congested.

Procaine penicillin (the type used for footrot) is ineffective. Penicillin based intramammary treatments (ampiclox LC, maxalac, clavulox LC) are also effective against Strep uberis.

Occasionally Strep uberis is resistant to penicillin. We will report this when giving you the results of milk cultures.

Tips from the back of the vet's car

- When you're delivering a calf with traction, always put a "double hitch" around the legs - one loop above the fetlock joint and one above the hoof - to spread the force of traction. Failure to do so can result in a broken leg!
- In doubt about a cow being on heat? Simple solution: wash her up, slip on a glove + lube and check out her vaginal contents. Lots of mucus - she's on heat! Mucus + blood? She's ovulated! Mate her now!
- Never use finadyne, ketoprofen or meloxicam for injured or down cows prior to calving. These drugs have an anti-prostaglandin effect and indefinitely postpone calving. Not good!



*Devoted vets...
Fast response, experience, value!*

**devoted
vets**

for your animal's life!

Phone: 03-5623 2525 Fax: 03-5623 2892

Email: info@devotedvets.com.au Website: www.devotedvets.com.au

Clinic Hours

Monday and Thursday: 8am to 7 pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 8am to 5pm

Saturday: 9am to 12 noon