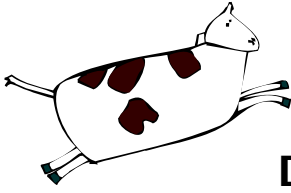


Friars Moor Veterinary Clinic



December 2009 Newsletter

Emergency Slaughter for Human Consumption

From time to time we are asked to certify animals for slaughter on farm, the carcass is then hauled to an abattoir to enter the food chain. Compared to many years ago, prior to BSE, there have been a few important **changes** to the regulations that farmers need to be aware of.

The regulations are now very **strict** in determining which animals are **eligible** for emergency slaughter on farm, stating that 'an **otherwise healthy animal** must have suffered an **accident** that prevented its transport to the abattoir for welfare reasons'. This therefore excludes all animals with prior health issues such as lameness, mastitis etc, these animals should be disposed of as fallen stock. The only exception to this would be, for example, an unmanageable animal which cannot be safely loaded onto a lorry but otherwise is healthy.

Farmers need to contact the nearest abattoir to ensure that they are willing to accept the carcase, and to arrange the slaughter and transport of the carcase to the abattoir.

Previously vets could inspect the animals a few hours prior to intended slaughter and leave a certificate. Under the new regulations a **vet has to be present at the time of slaughter** and sign the certificate confirming the time and date of slaughter. This can cause problems trying to get one of us to arrive on farm at the same time as the slaughterman.

Finally animals must also fulfil the clean livestock policy, and the withdrawal periods for any medicines administered must be observed. Farmers will need to complete a certificate regarding recent medicine administration.

ZACTRAN – New Calf Pneumonia Antibiotic

Zactran is a new long acting antibiotic for the treatment of calf pneumonia. It is very similar to Micotil and Draxxin but with two extra advantages. Firstly it is **very fast acting** with high levels of the drug been present in the blood and lungs within **one hour** of injection. Secondly it continues to be present at therapeutic levels in the lungs for up to **15 days**, thus reducing the need for repeat treatments.

It is given **under the skin** at a dose rate of **1 ml per 25 kg**. Treating a 100 kg animal costs about **£7.20 + VAT**, as against £8.05 + VAT for Draxxin. If you would like further information please speak to one of the vets.

MICOTIL – Treatment of Chronic High Cell Count Cows

Micotil has recently been granted a licence for use in **dairy cattle** with a milk withholding period of **36 days**. Although it is primarily a pneumonia antibiotic it has also been found useful for tackling **chronic high cell count cows** during the dry period. On many farms Tylan has traditionally been used in the dry period for tackling persistent high cell count cows, with variable results. Recent work from Cheshire presented at the British Mastitis Conference in October showed an average **cure rate of 70%** for high cell count cows treated with Micotil at or near drying off. Furthermore the cure rate was unaffected by the age of the cow or the number of months that the cell count had been raised prior to treatment.

Micotil can only be administered by a **vet** – however on some farms high cell count cows are being presented for treatment at vet routines thus avoiding extra visit fees. If you are interested please speak to one of the vets.

REHYDION – Electrolyte for Calf Scours

For many years now the advice for treating scouring calves has been to stop feeding milk and instead to feed electrolyte solutions in water for a few days before a gradual introduction back to milk. However in doing this we are in effect starving a very young animal, causing it to mobilise body reserves to sustain energy metabolism—this may actually compound the calf's health problems further. More recently it has been advocated that we should continue to feed milk, maybe at a reduced rate, to scouring calves while also feeding electrolytes.

Traditionally most farmers have been using electrolyte sachets, such as Lectade, made up with warm water. A newer product called **Rehydion Gel** has been designed to be **mixed with milk/milk replacer** (20ml per litre) as well as with water. Its special formulation means that when mixed with milk it does not affect the normal clotting process of milk in the calf's stomach. By feeding Rehydion mixed in milk, scouring calves not only receive electrolytes but also continue to have their basic nutritional requirements met.



**Wishing you all a very
Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year from all
at Friars Moor**

