

LINWOOD VETERINARY SERVICES PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

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December 2005 Newsletter

CLINIC NEWS

We will be closing the clinic early on December 23, 2005 at 3:00 p.m. and will also be closed on December 26, 2005 and January 2, 2006. Please try to plan ahead for your pharmaceutical needs during the holiday season.

A.I. CUSTOMERS

Please be advised that there will be no A.I. available from Saturday, December 24 through to Monday, December 26 and Saturday, December 31 through to Monday, January 2. Please plan and place your orders accordingly.

SWINE

The struggle against viral pathogens continues this fall. We have seen four new PRRSV outbreaks so far this fall and all of them have been with clinically virulent strains. We have continued to use Pulmotil and serum therapy as an intervention strategy with good success so far. This program is not without risks. In conversation with some other vets using this intervention they were disappointed to see some abortions after serum therapy. It is important to understand that when we do this program we are injecting pregnant sows with the live virus causing the outbreak. In my estimation abortion rates under 10% after injection classify as a huge success. Some of the "new" PRRSV strains can cause abortion rates of greater than 40% of pregnant inventory.

Swine Flu

It looks like H₃N₂ influenza is re-circulating in some nurseries and grow-finish barns. In Ontario we have not had to deal with this strain until spring of this year. It has been uncommon to vaccinate sow herds for flu in Ontario. Other areas in the U.S. have had this strain for a few years and sow herd vaccination is the most common intervention. More vaccine use is inevitable when trying to control viruses but we do need to proceed with care. At this time we have some herds vaccinating for flu pre-farrowing and we will evaluate how effective the programs are. If post weaned pigs have a sneeze and cough that is not responding to antibiotic treatment it may be flu and/or PRRS. Proper diagnosis is needed to make the right treatment decisions but it is likely more sow herds will end up vaccinating for flu.

Tetracycline use

Recently there has been an issue with some bone discoloration found in pigs medicated with Tetracycline. There are 3 kinds of tetracycline available:

- Chlortetracycline (feed medication)
- Oxytetracycline (feed and injectable medication)
- Tetracycline HCL (water medication)

These drugs are very effective against many swine bacterial pathogens and are a safe economical treatment choice. However pigs with bone discoloration are an issue. We suggest that you limit tetracycline use to the nursery or early grower stage of production until we get more information on the risks and consequences of using it in the later feeds.

If you have any questions about medication usage please call and we can go over your farm specific program. Like any input drug use only makes sense if it has a positive cost benefit and is completely safe.

Events of interest

- December 13th OPIC stakeholder meeting
Featuring an update of the Ontario PRRS project and the formation of the OPIC Ontario Swine Health Advisory board.
- December 14th Monoway Farms pork producer meeting
A swine information meeting about the disease challenging the swine industry, particularly featuring Dr. Martin Misener speaking about PRRS, Circo Virus Disease Update and also The Benefits of high health and gilt acclimatization.

BEEF

The changing fall weather has resulted in more BRD cases in the last few weeks. No one is surprised about this result. We all expect environment changes will impact on cattle health. It happens every year and the severity of the clinical presentation is directly related to high risk vs. low risk cattle. All groups can be affected but high risk are always the worst.

High risk cattle:

- Lighter weights
- Multi source
- Multiple week pen fills
- Poorly vaccinated cattle (or non vaccinates)

It is very wise to reduce the risk as much as possible. When buying high risk cattle use Micotil at processing instead of LA. Ensure you are starting on a medicated feedlot starter. Finally do not be slow to mass treat. If a group high risk cattle are going the wrong way, run them all through the chute and Temp. and treat.

Bullers and implants

Every year some farms have problems with riding activity and blame it on implants. Several research trials (using various implants) have tried to induce bully behaviour and cannot.

The problem is likely due to two main issues:

1. Crushing implants
2. Social behaviour of recently mixed cattle

Both scenarios can be avoided. The first problem requires good implanting technique and equipment and the second can be reduced by delaying implanting. We have recommended delayed implanting and still think this is the best program. By delaying implanting you can also effectively booster vaccinate for IBR reducing the risk of an IBR wreak in cattle close to finish.

EQUINE

Mares- Transitional and winter anestrus

Most mares will cease to cycle reproductively in winter i.e. November, December, January and February. This is termed “deep anestrus” or “winter anestrus”. Since a mare naturally breeds in the summer during long days, it is relatively simple to stimulate her to begin cycling again by putting her under lights. Maintaining a mare under a stimulatory artificial photoperiod can be a simple and inexpensive method to encourage her to begin cycling reproductively. Many hormone treatments have been investigated for this role, and it is generally noted that if mares respond at all, they typically respond better or faster if already under lights. Mares under lights still undergo a transitional period of normal length, but begin earlier, earlier in the year.

Recommended Light Treatment Program:

- Begin light exposure in the first week of December if targeting initial breeding in February
- Light intensity: minimum 10 foot candles (100 luc=10 foot cantles). This is roughly equivalent to 100-200W incandescent bulb in 12 x 12 foot box stall
- Expose mare to light for 14.5 to 16 hours. This can be started without gradual increases.
- Daylight if the mare is outside is adequate, but she will need extra light after dusk.
- If the mare has a run in/run out housing, lights are needed in the outdoor aspect as well.
- Hang a bulb in the stall for each mare to be treated – alleyway lights will not provide enough light intensity.

Intensity of light is important. A 200W bulb will bring mares in faster than a 100W bulb. Once the light exposure treatment has begun, it is recommended to keep cycling mares on the program. Most mares will fall back into deep anestrus if the light therapy is removed.

