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December 2007 Newsletter

CLINIC NEWS

The clinic will be closed on Tuesday, December 25 and Wednesday, December 26th for Christmas and Boxing Day as well as Tuesday, January 1, 2008 for New Years Day. Please try to plan ahead for your pharmaceutical needs during the holiday season.

For our Deliveries at Christmas:

For those who normally receive their deliveries on Tuesdays - deliveries for Tuesday, December 25th will be made on Monday, December 24th and deliveries for Tuesday, January 1st will be made on Monday, December 31st.

For those who normally receive their deliveries on Wednesdays - deliveries for Wednesday, December 26th will be made on Thursday, December 27th.

The above deliveries will be weather permitting, if there is bad weather on any of these days mentioned above, then we will bring your delivery on the next available day.

SWINE

Look to the future with optimism, face the present with pragmatism. Last month we presented the importance of return on investment (ROI) of inputs and this month we want to stress this point again. If something you use pays back more than it costs than it makes sense to continue using it. All your herd health inputs should be evaluated against this fact. We will happily go over your current inputs and help identify what is giving you a ROI. I have had many clients asking if they should send weanlings or feeder pigs to the U.S. for further feeding. This decision is based on lower cost of production in the U.S. and access to packers. To better answer this question I traveled to Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska and Minnesota.

The following are a few observations:

1. Pig manure is a major driving factor in the expansion of new finishing barns. It makes sense with the rising price of corn and fertilizer.
2. The farmers in the MidWest are wonderful people to meet and are good managers.
3. The MidWest is a finishing culture. In other words the main pig production is wean to finish or finishing. American weanlings and feeder pigs are trucked to Iowa for finishing.
4. There are good packing options although the marketing approach is very different from Ontario.
5. Placing pigs can be done by using the services of management companies such as Propig or Farms.com or by developing contacts with the U.S. feed supply industry.

Should Ontario swine producers consider placing pigs in the U.S.? The answer is dependent on many variables but if I had a big enough flow to fill barns I would put some of my production in the U.S. to develop some business relationships. The MidWest is very much a relationship business model. You have to meet people and shake hands! I would have underestimated the importance of this observation. We will continue to evaluate this option for clients and try to help you reduce risk and find pig spaces in the MidWest if you intend to place pigs there.

Most producers are already aware of the government program that is covering part of the cost of circovirus vaccine. To apply you need a copy of all vaccine invoices and a lab report confirming the presence of PCV₂ on your farm. If diagnostics have not been done for your operation we will sample some clinical cases and send the tissues away for lab diagnostics. We hope to be able to utilize related pig flows as well. Contact the office for more information.

DAIRY

Now that winter is upon us and cows and heifers have moved inside it is time to focus our attention to management tasks such as vaccinating and deworming. Internal and external parasites, such as stomach worms and lice, are organisms that feed on a host animal's tissue, blood, and tissue fluids and can interfere with productivity and performance. Internal parasites can cause appetite suppression, reduced feed digestibility and nutrient absorption, blood loss, and anemia, which in turn can lead to decreased weight gain and milk production, weakened immune system, and tissue and organ damage. External parasites can cause sores and scabbing, blood loss and anemia, and skin irritation, and act as a disease vector. The effects of external parasites on production can include decreased weight gain and milk production, hide damage, and damage to facilities and fences from rubbing and scratching.

EPRINEX[®] (eprinomectin) Pour-On is the strongest, most potent parasite control product available for lactating animals and offers the following advantages:

- Broadest spectrum of control, including biting and sucking lice
- Fastest acting
- Longest lasting
- Zero meat withdrawal
- Weatherproof formulation
- Odorless
- Non-flammable
- Zero milk withdrawal

EQUINE

Pre-Winter Maintenance:

The month of December often brings with it variable weather as well as the occasional snowstorm and intermittent snowfall. During this time of year, horse owners need to monitor their vaccination program, deworming schedule as well as their horse's water consumption.

Prior to the increased confinement that occurs during the cold and stormy winter months, it is important for the horse to be current on their vaccinations. Strangles/distemper, influenza and rhinopneumonitis are often administered at this time of year unless the horse was inoculated in the spring. If these are the horse's first set of vaccination for strangles/distemper, influenza and rhinopneumonitis, then the horse will require a booster vaccination in one month. In these cases, it is important to vaccinate as quickly as possible so that the booster vaccinations can be administered prior to the end of January.

As well as monitoring the horse's vaccination program, the deworming schedule should be evaluated as well. After the first frost, it is time for the horse's final deworming or fecal test of the year. Horses that have been out on pasture may have been exposed to tapeworms and should have their feces evaluated or dewormed with a product that can take care of the tapeworms.

Additionally, with the changing weather, the horse's water intake will decrease in amount and frequency often leading to colic, especially impaction colics. It is important for the horse to have free access to clean water. If you notice that your horse's water intake has decreased or is intermittent, providing warm water may stimulate and potentially increase the animal's water intake. A warm bran mash once per week can also be provided to ensure adequate water consumption.

As with regular fall yard maintenance, your horses' need specific care at various times of the year. Keeping a set of records or just tracking what product you used at what time of the year can help ease this already stressful time of year. Careful observation can help to minimize an impending colic due to early detection and treatment. Hope your holidays are as stress-free as possible.