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LINWOOD
 VETERINARY SERVICES

A member of the South West Pharmacy Group

SWINE DECEMBER 2008 NEWSLETTER

Reduce Lightweights, Mortality and Culls and Hidden Costs

Draxxin has been available for over a year but the industry has used very little because of cash preservation at all costs. With higher futures the opportunity margin of better lights, culls and mortality means we can look at how placement of this product in a herd delivers good return.

Recommendation

For many herds there is a 200 to 400% return treating 10 to 15% of light weight pigs with Draxxin at weaning.

Recent farm trials

50% of All Pigs Treated at Weaning

50% of Light Weight Pigs Treated at Weaning

| | <u>No Draxxin</u> | <u>Draxxin</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Number of Pigs Placed | 1217 | 1217 |
| Deaths | 23 | 3 |
| Mortality | 1.9% | 0.2% |
| # Culls | 0 | 0 |
| Weight In | 5.9 | 5.9 |
| Weight Out | 24.5 | 28.3 |
| ADG (gms) | 396 | 476 |

| | <u>No Draxxin</u> | <u>Draxxin</u> |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Weight In | 3.2 | 3.2 |
| Weight at 42 days | 21.4 | 23.8 |

Untreated pig = thin, light weight



Treated pig = visible difference



Cost: Benefit

- 1 kg weight gain in nursery is \$2.20 revenue less \$0.60 in feed costs = \$1.40 return
 - If Draxxin costs \$0.50 per light weight pig there is a $\$1.40 \div \$0.50 = 3:1$ return.
- 1 dead pig in nursery is \$57.00 revenue less ½ feed cost of \$7.00 = \$50 return (thus 1% mortality = $\$50 \times 1/100 = 0\0.50).
 - If Draxxin costs \$0.50/ light weight pig and reduces mortality by 2% = 2:1 return.

Key Facts

- Draxxin is a unique product - best day to treat pigs is before signs of disease
- Key question - how many pigs not reaching target weight – from farrowing, nursery and finisher groups?
- Variation of light weights usually related to disease (bacterial).
- Lights, mortality and culls is a big component of variation in pig production
- Draxxin effect on lights may not be disease specific, i.e. helping pigs with “garbage bugs”
- There will be farm specific strategy depending on performance and stressors.

Other Data

- Quality of pig at entry to nursery best predictor of nursery performance and exit weight
- Strong correlation between the light pigs into nursery and underweight or dead out.
 - Nursery entry weight¹
 - Below 7lb below 8lb below 9lb below 10lb below 11lb
 - Proportion below 35 lb at exit
 - 90% 75% 65% 45% 25%
- Draxxin use at weaning has greatest impact on light weight pigs with pigs less than 4.5 kg 2.3 times more likely to survive and hit targets weight at exit¹.

Per John Deen, University of Minnesota

Better quality “pulls” with improved treatment response





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DECEMBER 2008 NEWSLETTER

CLINIC NEWS

The clinic will be closed on Thursday, December 25 and Friday, December 26th for Christmas and Boxing Day as well as Thursday, January 1, 2009 for New Years Day. Please try to plan ahead for your pharmaceutical needs during the holiday season.

DAIRY

Bovine Leucosis - What is it and why is it so important?

Bovine Leucosis is caused by a virus called Bovine Leukemia Virus (BLV) and is known to most dairy farmers and heifer raisers as “Leucosis”. It is only usually mentioned on the farm when you are selling cattle for export to specific countries. The buyer may only purchase the heifer(s) if they are “Leucosis Negative”. This means that when you submit a blood sample through Linwood Veterinary Services it is tested for antibodies using an ELISA test and no antibodies are found in the blood sample from that animal on that day. For you, all that is important is that it comes back negative; however, 30% or more are testing positive. The virus is spread mostly from animals being housed together. The shared use of needles, dehorner, nose leads, anything that can be contaminated with blood, can infect a herd-mate. The virus can even be spread through the saliva. There has been research shown that calves in the uterus can become infected from their dam, although this is not the usual way of the calf becoming infected. The virus dies once it is in the environment. Freezing and pasteurization kill the virus as well. The major cause

of the spread of the virus is contaminated blood from one animal to another animal. Most of the time; the virus never causes clinical disease and only if blood samples are taken does the farmer know that the animal has seen the virus or is infected. It can cause tumours in the lymph nodes, behind the eye, in the reproductive tract and 4th stomach. Clinical signs occur on cattle 4 years or older and include large lumps in the places where the lymph nodes are, lumps palpated internally, black manure due to ulcer in the stomach, down cow due to cancer cells in the spinal column and worst case a thin, poor doing cow with no appetite due to cancer cells throughout her body.

The virus is widespread throughout the world. Europe was concerned about the increasing number of cases of BLV after World War II. They have had over 50 years of control and eradication and are proud of it and promote it strongly to competing markets (Russia). Europe had a great concern about public health implications over the years. Interesting though, BLV has never been shown to cause disease in humans or any other species, so it is not a concern to the North American research community. In the world of research for cattle, it is not even considered an economic disease for commercial cattle. It is only an issue for export markets and if certain export markets are important enough such as a renewed European market (very unlikely to change back to live cattle) or the Russian market becomes more important, then and only then will more herds push to control or eradicate leucosis. Research from Canada and US show that most herds have leucosis and that approximately 30% of animals tested will have antibodies. Therefore when animals are tested on your farm before they leave, you can expect on average 30% to fail the test. Then once they are in quarantine, animals that had the virus on the farm but had not yet produced antibodies can test positive in the quarantine so they must be removed. This provides a challenging situation for cattle exporters.

What can you do? Minimize contamination of blood from one animal to the next. In many countries they have a one needle, one animal policy. If reducing the spread of the virus is very important to you then this is one step along with ensuring that all other activities that create blood are managed in order to stop the contamination of this blood to other animals.

EQUINE - Wintertime Care

Winter has arrived in full force and there are quite a few things to keep in mind for your horses' well-being. The colder months with wind chills and slippery conditions make planning ahead for this period a necessity that may save you a lot of time and money.

At this time it is important to discuss with your farrier your horse's shoes. If you're planning on doing a lot of driving or riding in the snow, pads might be advisable. If pads cannot be used, a non-stick spray can be applied to prevent the snow from balling up. Severe injury, such as fractures and bowed tendons, can result to their lower limbs from snow balling up. It is also important to consider the traction your horse is getting from their shoes. Often either caulks or different studs can be inserted to accommodate your needs. Remember that your farrier is a great source of information.

A healthy horse's coat often grows adequately to provide warmth throughout the winter. However, consider that young, old and sick horses often need added insulation and protection from the elements, thereby benefitting from blanketing especially when the conditions are very wet or the wind chill is high. For horses that stay predominantly outdoors, ensure they have access to shelter and water. As the weather changes we see an increase in the amount and frequency of colic. Making sure your horses have access to water is critical. Some horses will refuse to drink if the water is too cold and may require a water heater or occasional warming of their water. Check your water trough and buckets for freezing on a regular basis. Additionally, in the colder temperatures, an increase in their roughage will help to keep them warm.

An increased amount of maintenance and thinking ahead will help to ensure that your horses winter well and are ready to go in the spring. It is advisable to check on your horses more frequently during the winter months to ensure that if a problem does arise, you can treat it early.