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*We will provide industry-leading, reliable, knowledgeable service, in a friendly, courteous and timely manner, to benefit our clients and the communities we serve.*

**Linwood Clinic Hours: Mon-Fri 7am – 5pm Sat 7am – 12pm**

**Hwy 89 Clinic: Mon-Sat 7am-1 pm**

**NOTE: BOTH CLINICS ARE CLOSED SUNDAY**

Orders for Delivery: **call by 9:30 am at the latest** for same day local delivery Monday to Friday

**24 Hour Emergency Vet Service 1-800-663-2941**

## **JULY 2014 NEWSLETTER**

**HOLIDAY HOURS** There will be no delivery service on the Monday August 4<sup>th</sup> Civic Holiday but both clinics will be open in the morning.

**Linwood Moonlight Madness Friday August 8<sup>th</sup>** The Linwood clinic will remain open till 9pm for this evening event for your convenience. If you would like to pick up an order while you are in town, **please call it in ahead** and we will prepare it for you! Living Waters, Home Hardware, The Corner Store, Schnurrs Grocery, and H & E Appliances will be participating with specials and treats for customers.

## **Dry off Program: Dry cow treatments**

Controlling mastitis is critically important for dairy profitability and the production of high quality milk. A long-standing recommendation to achieve this goal is that all cows, and all quarters of the udder be treated with an antimicrobial at dry-off time. Is this practice still important?

In a 2013 survey of herds in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Florida conducted by the Quality Milk Alliance project, 75 percent of all herds reported they always use dry cow treatment on cows and another 16 percent use it often or sometimes. In this study, use of dry cow treatment was associated with lower herd somatic cell counts (SCC).

Dry treatment consists of an antimicrobial which is formulated to provide an effective therapeutic level for an extended period of time. The use of dry cow treatment has been shown to provide a better cure rate of some types of mastitis than during lactation antimicrobial therapy and it also serves to protect the udder from infection through the dry period, especially during in the early weeks after dry-off.

The main reason that we always recommend every cow, every quarter is because we do not know which cows or quarters might have a subclinical infection. Therefore, the most prudent thing to do is to treat all.

But the landscape has changed over time. The specific organisms causing infections on farms have changed. It used to be that the contagious organisms, *Strep. agalactiae* and to a lesser extent, *Staph. aureus* were more common in herds and the somatic cell counts of herds were higher, indicating more infected quarters in the herd.

Today in many dairies, the primary organisms causing mastitis are environmental *Streptococci* and Coagulase-negative *Staphylococci* (CNS). In addition, herd SCC's are significantly lower, a direct result of better udder management during milking. Additionally, teat sealants have reduced the opportunity for new infections associated with dry-off. The fact that subclinical infections at dry-off are less common may make blanket treatment of all cows and all quarters maybe viewed as overkill **but** the presence of the extended treatment helps to ward off the development of infections during the dry period which is a driver of reducing SCC.

Prevention of mastitis is an important job for everyone working with cows. We make it a priority and so should you.

## The Power of a Fecal and Herd Management

Worms silently decrease efficiency. In Canada, a product for both internal and external parasites was given. These pour on endectocides (macrocytic lactones) were pretty much given each year and other than when lungworm would crop up in the summer we really didn't give much credence to other internal parasites so as veterinarians, have done fewer and fewer fecals.

There has been over the last few years lots of credible evidence to resistance building up by internal worms against the macrocytic lactones (ivermectins). Parasitologists have talked about a fecal egg count reduction test (FECRT) which is measured as the percentage drop in egg counts two weeks after treatment with a dewormer. Any amount less than a 90% reduction is considered to show evidence of resistance building up. While most of the previous evidence on resistance was in the more temperate areas of the United States, recent work by Merck Animal Health and an independent researcher is showing very similar results in Canada. In multiple replicate pastures the reduction in parasites ranged from the mid 50%'s to the best being in the mid 80%'s. This clearly shows in Canada with our colder climate and winters putting parasite transmission on pastures in suspended animation that internal parasite resistance is still becoming a problem. Alternating classes of dewormers and more strategic deworming are two possibilities to decrease the resistance. The other is stacking classes of dewormers which I will explain later.

Your herd veterinarians are in the best position to offer the advice on deworming based on results of fecal sampling on a herd basis. One fecal flotation on a large herd may not provide adequate evidence but several will. A sample size of 5-10% of the animals even on the largest herd gives a very representative result. The samples are easy to collect even at pasture but they must be fresh and analyzed quickly or shipped at refrigeration temperature (with ice packs). They can be random or if the farmer knows the identification number write it down. It is important to find out what the worm burden is, as often there is a mixed infection going on.

Most of us over the years have performed fecal floats; results yield a very subjective description of 1+ to 4+. What needs to be done ideally is a quantitative fecal giving a number in eggs per gram or eggs per three or five grams. This is a numerical answer which can be compared and it should be closely repeatable regardless of the technician involved. There are two methods of fecal analysis out on the market today. One is the McMaster which dilutes a finite amount of manure and counts it in a counting chamber. One egg seen is the equivalent of 25epg (eggs per gram). The other is the Modified Wisconsin method, used at Linwood Veterinary Services, where a measured finite amount of fecal material is used in a low speed centrifuge and every egg is counted. The numbers considered significant for production and health are values in the 50 epg and above range. Any worm load is not good long term and studies on dairy cattle when the ivermectin "Eprinex" came out was any low amount of parasitic burden showed a decrease in milk production. Studies on Dairy cattle found that any amount of parasitic burden shown resulted in a decrease in milk production and poor reproductive performance.