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Orders for Delivery: call by 9:30am for same day delivery Mon to Friday
24 Hour Emergency Vet Service

JULY 2011 NEWSLETTER

Clinic News

Please note that for the August 1 Civic Holiday the clinic will be open 7am to 12 am but there will be no regular delivery service. Veterinarians will be on call for emergencies.

CQM

Thanks to Henria Holsteins for this letter about their experience using the Canadian Quality Milk Program:

To Linwood Veterinary Services:

“We here at Henria Holsteins Inc would like to thank Dr. Paul Sostar and Dr. John Tokarz for their time in training us for the CQM program. The amount of paper work at first look seems rather daunting but through their explanation of the process, the details all just came together. We have 18 employees and found that CQM works very well with current Health and Safety policies we have in place. CQM is everything a person needs to know to ship quality milk and meat. We are very pleased with this program and have found it to be beneficial to be assured that only top quality milk and meat is being produced not only for the public but for our own families. We highly recommend other producers to embrace the program as it is not difficult to implement. At the end of the day, we do the right things, for right reasons, and we can prove it!”

Maria Pastink
Henria Holsteins Inc

Heifer Mastitis, Why?

Before they give their first drop of milk, some heifers already succumb to intramammary mastitis infections. How does this happen? The answer is not completely clear.

In general, mastitis is caused by bacteria that enter the teat orifice from a variety of sources:

- On the udder and teat skin, from which it may colonize the teat end and enter the teat orifice.
- Harboured in the oral cavities of calves, which enter the teat orifice via suckling of pen mates.
- Present in heifers' environment, including the soil, manure and bedding materials.
- Spread by biting flies that congregate on teat ends.

The experts recommend a clean, dry housing environment, vigilant fly control and housing calves in individual hutches to prevent cross-suckling. Regular visual examination of bred heifers also is suggested. Evidence of mastitis infections in heifers includes swollen quarters; abnormal secretions (clots and flakes); and teat-end scabs. When intramammary infections do occur, use an intramammary lactating cow **or** dry-cow therapy in addition to a teat sealant to provide the most effective treatment. However, this treatment may constitute extra-label drug use, so should be only performed under the supervision of the herd veterinarian and within a valid veterinarian/client/patient relationship.

Chronic Weight Loss in Small Ruminants

Determining the body condition of ewes and rams with medium to heavy wool can be very difficult. This makes weight loss in small ruminants difficult to recognize. Thin rams and bucks can be especially overlooked during the breeding season, as many producers may associate the weight loss with increased breeding activity. This may not always be the case and there are many reasons why small ruminants can lose weight and it is important to take these into consideration:

I. Lack of Intake

- Quantity of feed- if animals are not allowed to consume as much feed as they require for growth and maintenance.
- Quality of feeds –which is a function of striking a balance between proper energy and protein content.
- Competition -if pens are crowded or there is limited bunk space available these will often allow the largest or most dominant animals to prevent others from eating.
- Problems associated with the mouth and oral cavity (lesions of the tongue and mouth like Orf, missing teeth, broken teeth, etc) - this is often the reason you might see a small ruminant having difficulty chewing or dropping partially chewed feed.
- Lameness -If the animal has overgrowth hooves, foot lesions/rot or arthritic joints, this will make it difficult to get around the pen or field to gather feed. This is worse in the case with animals on pasture.
- Lack of desire to eat- this can be brought upon by any inflammation or disease (eg. Caseous lymphadenitis, pneumonia, CAE, cancer)

II. Increased loss

- Increased demands for nutrients- animals that are heavily pregnant or lactating are going to require more feed than open animals. Also, if sheep or goats are forced to travel excessively to gather feed (eg. sparse pasture), they will require more nutrition. *Note: This can be a complex issue on some operations and may require the use of Extension people, Veterinarians and Nutritionists.*
- Parasitism- Worms like *Haemonchus contortis* and other gastro-intestinal parasites can cause blood and protein loss in small ruminants. Animals may appear thin, weak and/or anemic (pale mucous membranes due to blood loss). If you are pasturing small ruminants, it is important to discuss a deworming protocol for your flock or herd with your veterinarian
- Disease- eg. Johnes disease, Maedi-Visna (Ovine Progressive Pneumonia), Caprine Arthritis & Encephalitis (CAE) - diagnosis and management of these conditions may require diagnostic testing and veterinary consultation.

Remember that weight loss is a gradual process and surprisingly can and is often missed in many operations, and by experienced producers. As the weight loss continues. Animals will develop poor body condition and result in the associated drag on reproduction and production performance goals. That is why establishing a routine monitoring protocol will aid in detecting the weight loss and its causes early.