



FARM NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2023



RESPONSIBLE USE OF ANTIBIOTICS AND MEDICINES HANDLING COURSE JAN 2023

Due to interest following last years **Medicines Handling Course**, Poppy will be running another on **24th January 2023** starting at 10.30. The presentation will last around an hour with time for questions at the end. If you would like to book on, please contact us on **01328 864444**.

Topics Covered will include:

- Common veterinary medicines used on farm
- Safe handling, storage and administration of medications via various routes
- What to do if accidents occur during handling
- Proper record keeping and disposal of sharps and used medicine bottles
- Antibiotic resistance – how it occurs and ways in which we can help reduce it
- Available antibiotics and responsible use of them



CARE OF THE SICK CALF:

Good health, especially in the first 8 weeks of life, sets your calves up for a productive life and increases survival rates long term.

Disease prevention as always is the main stay of increasing farm productivity and applies to your calf management practices too.

Good practices may involve:

- Ensuring all calves receive adequate amounts of high-quality colostrum within the first 6 hrs of life.
- Regular monitoring, especially around feeding time to ensure all calves are suckling/feeding well, are not showing any signs of disease e.g. nasal discharge, rapid breathing, coughing, loss of condition, droopy ears or sunken eyes and lameness.

If any of the above signs are seen prompt action should be taken:

1. **ISOLATE:** Any sick calves in a separate, clean and warm area. Ensure strict hygiene when handling these animals, disinfecting before and especially after being in contact with them to prevent spread to others. Feed sick calves last and ensure any equipment used is disinfected.
2. **KEEP WARM AND MONITOR TEMPERATURE:** A normal calf's temperature is between 38.5 – 39.5°C. Any calves with a temperature below 38°C require warming.

This can include using a heat lamp, calf jackets, warm fluids etc.

3. **FLUIDS:** Ensure fresh water is always available. Electrolytes may be added to aid hydration status in dehydrated calves. If administering these ensure at least 2hrs between milk feeds and water/electrolytes as these can interfere with milk clot formation in the abomasum. If severe dehydration is present IV fluids may be more beneficial administered by a vet.

4. **MILK/MILK REPLACER:** Receiving adequate calories is essential for ensuring sufficient energy for growth and recovery. If using milk replacer, ensure the correct concentration and temperature. Tube feeding may be required if they cannot take enough on board themselves.

5. **MEDICATION:** Most commonly will involve:

Anti-inflammatories: (NSAIDs e.g. Metacam or steroids e.g. rapidexon). These can ease clinical signs, provide pain relief and decrease fever.

Antibiotics: Ideally these will be used after identification of the pathogens involved by means of diagnostic tests. These may include swabs, blood tests and faecal samples. This allows us to administer antibiotics that the bacteria involved will be sensitive to.

Vaccination: If dealing with disease outbreaks, diagnostic testing of affected animals will allow identification of the causative disease -causing organisms. This can help you to make changes on farm that prevent outbreaks occurring in the future. This may involve vaccination protocols.

Prevention is always better than cure. Whether it is sick calves or adults, while often disease is unavoidable, simple changes can sometimes make all the difference.

Looking at stress management, stocking density, where you are buying your stock from and isolation policies, nutrition and preventative health (parasite control and vaccination) will allow you to prevent many conditions from occurring.

We are always available to offer advice and consultation if you have any concerns regarding animal health.

Contact Us: 01328 864444

Email Us: info@wensumvalleyvets.co.uk

