



# WENSUM VALLEY VETS NEWSLETTER

## Important Banking Changes

Important change of bank details with effect from September 2023

**Account Name:**  
**Independent Vetcare  
Ltd**

**Account Number:**  
**01528734**

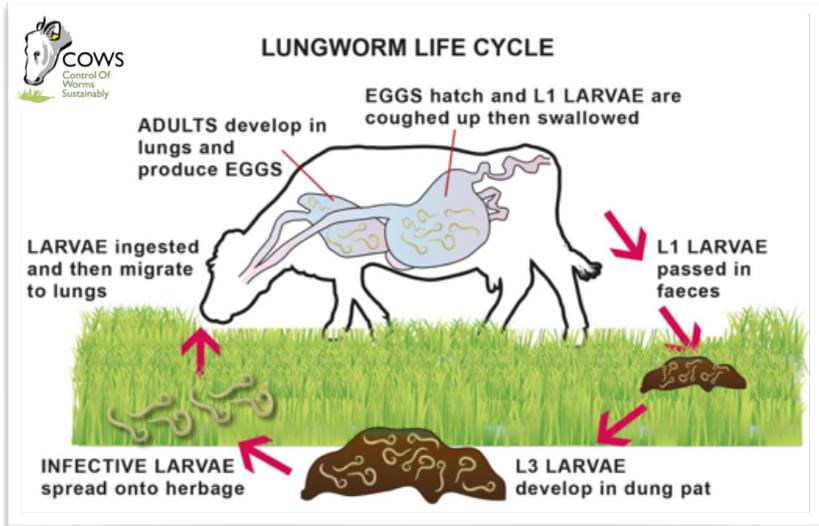
**Sort Code:**  
**40-01-94**

Please add there reference of 2254 & your surname on the account.

We hope that this new system will ensure that making payment is easy and efficient.



Wensum Valley Vets



## Lungworm

*Dictyocaulus viviparus* is the cause of lungworm in cattle, it is a worm with a complex lifecycle meaning that outbreaks can be unpredictable. Like other gastrointestinal worms in cattle, the larvae are released into the pasture in faeces and picked up when this grass is eaten, often after rainfall. Once eaten, the larvae migrate from the gastrointestinal tract to the lungs where the adult worms live. There the adults lay eggs, which hatch into larvae, are coughed up and then swallowed back into the gastrointestinal tract. They are then excreted in faeces, completing their lifecycle. This year's wet summer weather has increased the risk and prevalence of lungworm. Animals that have been previously exposed to lungworm usually get a strong immunity to the worms, so infection of adult cattle is less common, however this immunity can wane.

### *Clinical Signs*

Larvae and adult worms living in the lungs are the source of the clinical signs of lung worm, leading to pneumonia and



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bronchitis. However, some individuals show more severe signs after an outbreak (this is called post-patent parasitic bronchitis), which is often fatal. The damaged lung tissue is more susceptible to bacterial infections, which worsen the signs of lungworm. The main things to look out for are:



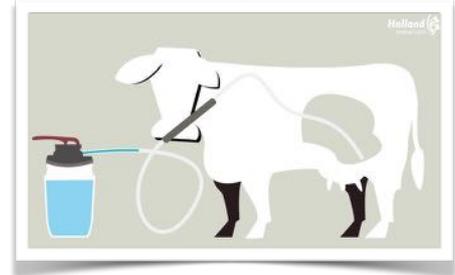
- Coughing
- Increased breathing rate
- Heavy/laboured breathing
- Inappetence and weight loss
- Increased temperature (if a secondary bacterial infection is present)
- Death in the worst affected animals

### *Diagnosis*

Diagnosis is usually based on the history and clinical signs in a group, as the disease usually affects all young cattle of a group on a new pasture. Specific tests on faecal samples can be used to show the presence of larvae and confirm diagnosis.

### *Treatment*

Luckily, all available wormers are effective against lungworm, and there is currently no known resistance. However, treatment needs to be carefully targeted and veterinary advice on this should be sought before conducting a blanket treatment.



### *Prevention*

The disease can be prevented using the lungworm vaccine. It is given orally to calves from 8 weeks of age, with two doses needed at a four week interval to ensure a high level of immunity develops. Ideally calves should be kept away from infected pasture until two weeks after their second dose. Our vets can advise on the best vaccination protocol for your farm.

Vaccination is not justified in low-prevalence regions of lungworm disease or on farms with no previous history of lungworm. In these herds, good quarantine measures should be used to prevent introduction of infection on the farm.

Although vaccination of calves is effective at preventing clinical disease, it cannot completely prevent establishment of small numbers of lungworms. Therefore, pastures often remain contaminated at a low level. Because of this, it is essential that all calves on farms where lungworm is endemic should be vaccinated and calf vaccination continued annually.

Control of lungworm (parasitic bronchitis) in calves can be achieved by using prophylactic anthelmintic regimes, as for the control of parasitic gastroenteritis. The potential downside of this is that rigorous control in the first grazing season means that the calves' exposure to lungworm larvae may be so limited that they remain susceptible to infection going forwards. In these situations, it is advisable to consider vaccination prior to the second year at grass and to make a long term lungworm management protocol with your vet.

