
TAREE VETERINARY HOSPITAL

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FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

As I write this there's still no rain, unless you're reading this in far north Qld. Here it's hot and dry.

Which brings me to mastitis. We see environmental mastitis at this time of year but this case is a Staph "outbreak". The SCC has been going up for some time, but it becomes an outbreak when you get a bulk SCC of 500,000!

From the herd recording we sampled 11 cows > 600,000, and 10/11 grew Staph aureus. What we are dealing with is a bacterium that is spread cow to cow, by hands or cups, **not** an environmental bug.

Now that we have defined the problem we have to set up systems whereby the spread is prevented. Firstly we remove the source of infection, that is the cows with high SCCs. How high is a difficult question, but start at least with the millionaires, then work down.

If in calf and late lactation the decision is easy : dry off. Use enduro type intramammaries. If aged and has a bad udder, or a low producer, cull. The only tricky ones are the cows under 4 months calved, with high SCCs and not yet confirmed in calf.

These can be milked last, or milked to calf milk, or at least take particular care with their hygiene.

Next is to stop the spread which can only be by hands or cups. Hands should wear gloves and be kept clean. Cups must be drained of milk before putting onto the next set of teats. And inflations must be changed at the manufacturers recommended intervals.

Then the herd recording must be monitored. The problem with curing staph infections is that the bacteria live within cells, so long acting antibiotics are needed, that will work as cells break down. This is why dry cow treatment gives the best results. In this herd the bug is not resistant to any intramammary, but we'll use Clavet or Orbenin LC.

Over the next months I'll update the situation in the newsletter.

The vibrio case discussed last month will take some time to see results of vaccination but will be easily measured by conception rates. Likewise the botulism case is measurable, by deaths. Since vaccination two died within the week but no others have died in the ensuing six weeks.

DISEASES OF THE MONTH

Pink Eye—quite a few cases, treated with a combination of cream (Orbenin Ophthalmic, Opticlox) in the eye, patches glued over the eye and Arrest.

Three Day—several cases, all a bit vague and none confirmed with bloods.

Mastitis—summer's always our worst time of year with cows congregating around water and under trees.

Calvings—some beauties where the calves have been cooked for a day.

Prolapses

Hernias in calves

Bull with a penis laceration, that formed adhesions and prevented urine from passing, resulting in lots of swelling. We had to cut holes in his sheath for his penis and for urine outflow. This is purely a salvage procedure.

Back to the Botulism discussion from last month. We don't often see this disease but it may become more prevalent, particularly if more silage is bought in. The vaccine costs about \$1.60 per head, and is a single shot with yearly boosters.

Horse Topics

The stud season is drawing to a close with fairly average results. Conception rates across the state have been poor due to the conditions. We haven't fared that badly with fresh and frozen inseminations, with a frozen positive last week.

Flies and itch are problematic in summer, with Brute and Swift about the best registered products.

We've seen some wormy horses that have been wormed, but not with a tapewormer. For tapeworms the paste must have praziquantal in it to be effective.

Lastly, many thanks to all the farmers who let the students have access to their stock, and to those who let them spay and castrate their cats. Fortunately all went well. The students must be a bit scared of farmers because they all can't believe how happy people are to let them have a go. It is the most valuable part of their education.

RUN DATES FOR FEBRUARY

Lansdowne.....Thurs 1st

Oxley/Mitchell's Is.....Tues 6th

Hannam Vale.....Thurs 8th

Dyer's Crossing.....Mon 12th

Wingham.....Thurs 15th

Lorne/Comboyne.....Tues 20th

Coomba and the deep south..Thurs 22nd