

FARM NEWSLETTER Winter/Spring 2021

Two Rivers Vets welcome new farm clients - dairy, beef and/or sheep. Our 5 vets have broad experience with all farm animals.

www.tworiversvets.co.uk

BIGGAR SURGERY

157 High Street
Biggar
ML12 6DL
01899 220073

Office hours

Mon 8.30am - 7.00pm
Tues - Fri 8.30am - 6.00pm
Saturday 9.00am - 12noon

Consulting times

Mon - Fri 9.00am - 10.30am
Mon 3.00pm - 7.00pm
Tues - Fri 3.00pm - 6.00pm
Saturday 9.00am - 11.00am

PEEBLES SURGERY

15 Old Town
Peebles
EH45 8JF
01721 722879

Office hours

Mon - Fri 8.30am - 6.00pm
Wed 8.30am - 7.00pm
Saturday 9.00am - 12.30pm

Consulting times

Mon - Fri 9.00am - 10.30am
Mon - Fri 3.00pm - 6.00pm
Wed 3.00pm - 7.00pm
Saturday 10.00am - 12noon

**24 HOUR
EMERGENCY SERVICE**
on either telephone number

Trace Element Deficiencies in Cattle

Cobalt ('Pine')

Cobalt is required so ruminants can synthesise Vitamin B12. Deficiency develops when animals graze soil/crops low in cobalt. Clinical signs include reduced appetite, weight loss, anaemia and poor skin/coat. These signs develop over several weeks or months. Diagnosis can be made on the basis of blood tests or response to supplementation.

Cobalt can be provided in drenches (but must be given every 2-4 weeks), added to concentrate feed and is included in most multi-trace element boluses. A long acting injection, Smartshot, is available via special import license for use in sheep.



Copper

Deficiency can develop due to absolute lack of copper in the diet or secondary to the presence of antagonists such as iron, sulphur and molybdenum that reduce copper absorption in the rumen. Clinical signs include poor growth rates, coat depigmentation 'spectacles', a thin dry coat, anaemia, diarrhoea, lameness and reduced fertility particularly delayed and reduced oestrus expression in heifers. Diagnosis can be made on blood samples from 6-10 animals, liver biopsy or based on response to supplementation.

Treatment is by in-feed minerals, multi-trace element boluses or free access minerals (although intake of these is variable). Long acting depot injections have been used previously but are not currently available.



Iodine

Iodine is an essential component of thyroid hormones. Animals can become deficient by grazing soil/crops low in iodine or via ingestion of brassicas. Low selenium can contribute to iodine deficiency as selenium is required for thyroid hormone activation. Clinical signs in calves born to iodine deficient dams include stillborn/weak calves that are unable to suck, they may be hairless (alopecia) and have a large swelling or goitre...

in the neck. Deficiency may also have a role in retained placentas, reduced growth rates and reduced milk production as per selenium deficiency. Diagnosis can be made on the weight of the thyroid gland/goitre and blood tests for iodine and/or T4 (thyroid hormone)

Treatment is by drench, minerals added to the ration or multi-trace element bolus, iodine can also be painting along the backs of cows to provide immediate supply as other cattle will lick this off.

Selenium/Vitamin E

Selenium/Vitamin E are important anti-oxidants for muscles. Animals become deficient when the diet is based on home grown crops/pastures that are low in selenium.

Clinical signs include stillborn or weak calves that are unable to suck. In older calves (1-4months old) symptoms depend on which muscle group is affected:

- sudden death if heart muscle is affected
- stiffness and inability to stand if skeletal muscles affected
- respiratory distress if respiratory muscles are affected

Signs are often precipitated by a sudden increase in exercise, e.g. turnout.



Diagnosis can be made on bloods from affected animals or part of metabolic profiles from cows pre calving.

Prevention is via multi-trace element boluses and/or minerals added to concentrate feeding. Selenium/vitamin E injection is also available. Selenium will cross the placenta and is concentrated in colostrum so ensuring an adequate supply in the cows diet will protect the calf. Most trace element boluses last 6-12months and should be given 6-8 weeks pre calving. In some herds, twice yearly bolusing may be required. Forage/soil analysis can be useful in determining whether deficiencies may be present.

If you are concerned about trace element deficiencies within your herd please contact the surgery to discuss testing. Remember deficiencies can be subclinical, resulting in reduced fertility and growth rates without the more obvious signs. Claire Cameron MRCVS

Bovilis Rotavec Corona

The new licence indication for this product means the vaccine can now be used for 28 days after opening providing it is stored correctly (upright in a fridge at 2-8C). This gives added flexibility when vaccinating small groups of animals or when the calving period is protracted.

The vaccine is a single shot that should be given within 3-12 weeks of calving and provides colostral antibodies against rotavirus, coronavirus and E. coli F5 (K99). Passive immunity is dependent on calves receiving adequate colostrum as soon as possible after birth (within 6 hours). Following correct use calves should then have a reduced incidence of diarrhoea and reduced viral shedding.



We are not anticipating any issues with the supply of the vaccine, however, as per other lambing and calving supplies, we would advise you get your orders in to us as soon as possible. An equivalent single shot vaccine, Bovigen Scour is also available but must be used on the day of opening.

Claire Cameron MRCVS