



Daleside
Veterinary Group

FARM NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2024

Christmas Party

Our annual Christmas Party will be held on Tuesday 10th December 7:30pm at The Wrexham Rugby Club, it would be great to see you all there and remember there will be a prize for the best Christmas jumper! Please let us know by the 6th December if you are intending on attending.

Scouring in young calves

Calf scour is a multifactorial disease, involving infectious and non-infectious causes. The immature immune system of a new-born calf is unable to produce its own antibodies, so for protection in the first few weeks of their lives they are relying heavily on maternal antibodies from colostrum.

Recent studies have found the incidence of calf scour to be affecting 18.5% of calves. The implication of this is huge, reduced daily live weight gain resulting in an older age at first calving, reducing lifetime productivity and longevity. Equally as important is the amount of time it takes to tend to sick calves, meaning increased labour costs and decreased staff morale.

Where to begin?

Calf scour investigations often begin with a hunt for a bug involved. These bugs are often linked with underlying husbandry or management problems. Investigations need to start at the beginning i.e. calving, and look at calf rearing as a whole. It can be surprising what simple & cheap measures can be found to significantly improve the health & welfare of calves. On-farm sampling kits allow us to test for the most common 4 causes in 10 minutes, these include Rotavirus, Coronavirus, E. coli F5 (K99) and Cryptosporidium parvum. From there we can establish what is the best control and prevention for your farm.

Vaccination can be a great option, alongside husbandry changes. Scour vaccines are indicated for the immunisation of pregnant cows and are to be given between 12-3 weeks prior to calving. This time frame allows the cow to produce antibodies of her

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Early pneumonia detection in calves

Throughout this year we have been conducting a project alongside Farming Connect. The project consisted of weighing and ultrasound scanning calf lungs to investigate prevalence and severity of Lung Lesions, and whether this correlated with clinical signs and growth rates.

Join us at 7.30pm on the 13th November at the Wynnstay Arms - Ruabon, where we will be sharing our findings and how we intend on using thoracic scanning as a service we can offer to our clients. We would kindly ask that if you are intending on coming then please contact the office to express your interest by Friday 8th November.



own that she will deposit in the colostrum. The antibodies from the vaccinated colostrum have been shown to prevent scouring caused by rotavirus and E. coli and reduce the incidence and severity of scouring caused by coronavirus. In addition to this, the amount of virus spread by calves is significantly reduced.

As mentioned above, the vaccine is entirely reliant on adequate colostrum protocols. The 5 Q's of colostrum management are crucial, and failing to meet one or more of the 'Q's' results in poor health, low growth rates and higher mortalities in calves.

Quantity

- 4 litres or 10% of bodyweight within two hours of birth, followed by a second feed of the same amount within 6 hours of birth
- If a calf is suckling its mother, approximately 20 minutes of continuous suckling is required to consume enough colostrum

Quality

- Good quality colostrum contains at least 50 g/L of IgG antibodies
- Colostrum quality varies enormously between cows, we encourage testing every time with a colostrometer or BRIX refractometer. A BRIX reading of 22 or above indicates good quality colostrum

Quickly

- Colostrum quality decreases 3.7% every hour after birth and a calf's ability to absorb antibodies directly into its bloodstream only lasts a few hours
- First feed to be given within two hours of birth

sQueaky clean

- If colostrum becomes contaminated, a calf's uptake of antibodies falls and can lead to sickness such as diarrhoea or septicaemia
- Fresh colostrum should be used within one hour or within three if stored in the fridge
- Colostrum can be frozen for up to 12 months and thawed in a warm water bath 35-40°C - NEVER USE A MICROWAVE

Quantify

- This is all about reviewing the colostrum management to make sure it is working
- Testing calf bloods between 1-7 days of age every so often is a great way to evaluate if colostrum management is working - speak to one of the vets about getting this done

If calf scour is an issue on your farm, contact us on 01978 311444 and speak to one of our vets about how we can help you.



Vitamin D in Alpacas

As we start to notice the reduced daylight hours heading into winter, now is the time to be thinking about vitamin D supplementation in our alpacas. Ricketts is bone disease that is primarily caused by a lack of vitamin D and can sometimes result in fatal injuries.

Symptoms of vitamin D deficiency include: lameness, hunched posture, slow growth in young cria, enlarged joints, weight loss, and limb deformities. Alpacas with darker fleeces are more at risk than their lighter counterparts, however all alpacas in the UK will need some support over the next few months. Vitamin D can come in a number of forms including an oral paste or an injectable. If you haven't already started supplementing then get in touch with the office today to discuss your options!



**Join
our
team...**



We are a local, independently owned veterinary practice.

We are looking for an organised and conscientious person who works to a high standard, to join our close-knit and friendly farm animal family as an Approved TB Tester (ATT), Vet Technician and Admin Assistant.

This varied and interesting role involves TB Testing, on-farm Vet-Technician work, and assisting in managing the day to day running of the farm practice. This can be a fast-paced role that requires flexibility, excellent organisation skills and the ability to prioritise workload. Experience of working with livestock and Microsoft packages will also be required. Applicants must have a clean driving license and have access to their own vehicle.

We can offer the exciting opportunity to grow and develop your own role within the farm team.

4.5d week, funded CPD including ATT Training and SQP training, competitive salary

For full job description and personal specification, or to send your CV and cover letter, please email bedwyr@dalesidevets.co.uk

