

### Are you smarter than a 5<sup>th</sup> Grader?

As if we had skipped September, here is October! Last year was a challenging harvest with the combines rolling, a long intermission, and another round of combines rolling. This year our 'white interruption' was brief and we hope that this newsletter finds you back in the fields for harvest. Many have taken the opportunity to tackle weaning and preg-testing and the proverbial 'fall run' seems well underway. On a personal note I am approaching the 10<sup>th</sup> birthday of our oldest son Jake—now a 5<sup>th</sup> grader! My life has become a daily reality version of "are you smarter than a 5<sup>th</sup> grader?" and I am thoroughly enjoying drilling him each night on his multiplication tables (can you count by 7's or 9's or 12's?). I am also suddenly faced with all the times over the past few years I'd said words like "maybe when you're older" or "not until you are at least 10 years old." This kid (as do they all) has an iron clad memory and is daily reminding me that he can finally get a gun now that he's turning 10—YIKES! I'm wishing I could hold back time a little on this one, but it appears to be a classic case of mom's not ready, but dad is already shopping for the gun. I've been letting him drive the farm truck out to the pastures close to home and through the gates when we take mineral out and check the cows: smiling inside, bouncing up and down in my passenger seat, while my 7 year old daughter asks "are you sure it's safe to let Jake drive?!" I imagine many of you are either going through or have been through similar times—maybe you're letting your grandson or granddaughter take the wheel—enjoy this! Whether they're ours or someone else's we all have an opportunity to speak into young lives and impact them—this strikes me more and more as I've watched many of your youngsters grow, change, start running the chute or chase up the cows, and even come volunteer here in clinic! Take some time to offer encouragement and mentorship to the younger generation—it's important!

### Lousy Lice Control & Persistent Parasites

Thinking back to the number of producer comments last fall and winter regarding hair loss and itchy cattle makes our skin crawl (ha ha!). We've spoken with company representatives selling pour-on parasite control products and have heard the same story each time—last year was rough! Collaborative work between the Western Vet College and University of Calgary Vet School has confirmed the presence of ivermectin resistant internal parasites in western Canadian beef cattle. While 50% of treated herds still achieve good parasite control following pour on treatments, 50% (wow) are achieving less than 95 percent parasite reduction and 20% of this group less than 50% of parasites controlled with application. What to do this year?

The Ivomec Pour-On lice guarantee has undergone a few revisions worth noting. While very similar to before, the guarantee is now limited to 3 months post application and there is no further guarantee on free product (i.e. if you've had product replaced or donated it will be excluded from the guarantee program). The other parts of the program remain that all animals must be treated with proper dose and application, all animals in a group must be treated within a 28 day period and new arrivals treated with 14day quarantine prior to introduction after 28 days, and absolutely no contact with untreated animals in adjacent pens or pastures which could allow transfer of lice to occur. All guarantees continue to be based on diagnosis of lice by a veterinarian or company technical service member.

Lice is not all we should think about. Internal and external parasites limit production in all classes of cattle and must be effectively addressed. Internal parasites can cause appetite suppression, reduced feed digestibility and nutrient absorption, blood loss, anemia and this in turn can lead to depressed weight gain, weakened immune systems, and tissue plus organ damage. External parasites cause visible hair loss and scabbing, blood loss and anemia, and skin irritation and thus decrease weight gain and milk production, cause hide damage, and damage to facilities and fences from rubbing and scratching. Actual label Ivomec does achieve better persistent activity and more parasite species coverage than generic products and maintains the best product guarantee though remains a higher cost than generic options.

To reduce drug resistance in parasites, follow the 5 C's of Control: Correct product, Correct time, Correct class of cattle, Correct dosage, and Check for effectiveness (monitor egg counts). Particularly with new arrivals to your herd, use two classes of parasite control products (i.e. ivermectin and fenbendazole) to minimize the introduction of resistant parasites into your herd. A huge study conducted in North America looking at the economic impact of parasite control, growth promoter implants, sub-therapeutic antibiotics, ionophores, and  $\beta$ -agonists found that of these practices, deworming had the biggest positive impact in cow-calf (23% for weaning rates), stockers (\$20.77 per head in breakeven prices) and the second highest benefit after growth promoter implants at the feedlot (5.6% improvement in average daily gain and 3.9% reduction in the feed-to-gain ratio). Use of Long Range (slow release eprinomectin) increased grazing gains by 0.16-.54lb/day over 120 days grazing in another study by keeping egg counts at zero (a spring strategy but Long Range is currently unavailable). What all this means is that parasites matter—they rob you of production and cost you money.

Our current recommendations for deworming cattle are: Young cattle coming off pasture moving to a feedlot or corral environment should have a purge dewormer such as fenbendazole (Safeguard) to deal with all current active adult internal parasites. Topical ivermectin (Ivomec or generic) can be applied at the same time to achieve external parasite control and extend the persistent effect to hatching larvae internally. Prevent contact of treated calves with any untreated cattle and do not comingle new arrivals unless they've been treated and quarantined for 10-14 days. Using two dewormers of different classes in this way both maximizes the effectiveness of treatment and slows the development of resistance. Adult cattle (including bulls) should receive a pour-on ivermectin at a correct label dosage and during cool weather on a dry hide. This will purge internal parasites and control external lice for 49 days. Breakthrough lice infestation may be retreated with pour on ivermectin, Cyence, or Boss. Consider checking fecal samples for egg counts prior to and after treatment to establish parasite levels and types in your herd. 20 golf-ball-size samples of fresh feces from calves in the fall will accurately represent the whole group. Testing is quick and

inexpensive. Managing parasites is important and cannot be overlooked. Call us to discuss testing or treatment strategies for your herd!

### **Fall Calf Vaccination and BRD Guarantees**

Do you have a cold right now? I do—ugh! I made it through the back to school transition with only 1/6 of us getting a cold (we think our little guy must have licked the playground at the back to school breakfast ha ha!). I made it through the dust as harvest started and through the snow and now for no apparent reason (I don't lick playgrounds) I have a cold. This fall, as always, calves will be susceptible to pneumonia and other respiratory insults; particularly with the wide swings in temperature between frosty nights and warmer afternoons. Bovine Respiratory Disease (BRD) is a common battle with current feeding systems and management practices. The pharmacists already have the flu shot ready to go for this year in Canada—calves too are going to need their shots!

Zoetis has revised their BRD Guarantee on SelectVac Gold and SelectVac Gold Plus calves extending their guarantee out to 60 days of coverage to a 5% pull rate (or 0% for 30 days and 5% for 30 days on SelectVac Gold Plus calves). Calves in this program also now require a Bovishield Gold booster within 15-90 days to be eligible for the guarantee. The accepted protocols for Zoetis are: Draxxin + Bovishield Gold One Shot + Ultrabac 7 Somnubac boosted with Bovishield Gold in 15-90 days OR Draxxin + Inforce 3 IN + One Shot BVD + Ultrabac 7 Somnubac boosted with Bovishield Gold in 15-90 days. Any BRD issues must be reported to Zoetis via your herd veterinarian within 72 hours of a pen exceeding 30% first pulls for BRD (they call these “wreck pens”). Zoetis covers pertinent veterinary expenses and treatment costs up to \$25 per head over the 0% or 5% pull rate respectively.

Merck has a similar BRD coverage for calves and similarly will help with veterinary expenses and treatment costs per head over a 5% BRD pull rate. They have a flexible vaccination protocol and will honor veterinary recommendations for vaccines and antibiotic choices. We have worked with both Zoetis and Merck in the past and find them equally committed to producers and veterinarians.

Intranasal vaccination remains an excellent option for calves needing vaccination under stress or current illness. Calves that have been comingled (i.e. auction mart or multiple sources), calves with extended transport stress, inclement weather or processing conditions, or abrupt changes in nutrition may experience immunosuppressive stress and be less immunocompetent to respond to injectable viral vaccination. Intranasal vaccine technology works in the face of stress with no change in efficacy and so becomes a very attractive option for calves affected by these circumstances. An injectable booster at some later point in that calf's life will boost the intranasal very well.

What your calves need and when will depend somewhat on your unique management situation and previous vaccination history for those calves. The need for preventative antibiotic treatment (metaphylaxis) can also vary with many factors (weather or other stressors included). Options for metaphylactic treatment include Draxxin, Zuprevo, Zactran, Micotil, or some long acting tetracyclines. Each of these is by prescription and should be discussed ahead with your veterinarian. These antibiotics have varied windows of persistent effect meaning that they range from 3 days of protection up to 28 days for certain bacterial causes of pneumonia. Both vaccination and metaphylaxis are valid management tools in the fight against BRD but alas are still not perfect means of control. Have a plan in place to monitor calves and know your treatment protocols—these too will vary based on calf vaccination and treatment history (i.e. we usually will not use the preventative antibiotic as a treatment but rather change class of antibiotic and product). When purchasing calves, it is very helpful to gain as much health and vaccination history as possible from the previous owner. Healthy calves on feed will perform—protect your production with a solid plan for weaning and feel free to stop in or call to discuss the best approach for your calves today!

### **Biosecurity Requirements for ProAction Mandatory as of September 1, 2019**

For dairies in Alberta the requirements set out in the Biosecurity module of ProAction became mandatory as of September 1, 2019. This includes a Biosecurity Risk Assessment, disease records, four required standard operating procedures (SOP's), and a biosecurity sign. Please let us know if we can assist you in completing any of these criteria or performing your risk assessments and we would be happy to help!

### **News Around the Clinic**

We want to say a huge welcome to new veterinarian Alycia Laniak, DVM! Dr. Laniak comes to us from Sedgewick and is excited to join the SVC team. Her experience has been solely in similar mixed practice and she has jumped right in as if she'd always been here. She has enjoyed her first couple weeks at SVC and looks forward to meeting more great clients, pets, and herds—give her a warm welcome when you meet her!

Over the years many of our staff have participated in the Dinner Theater put on by H.A.T.S. here in town and this year Andrea is excited to be on stage again, Athena is helping make costumes, and Cheryl's husband Colin is busy helping with stage and lighting—very excited to see the show in November—be sure to get tickets well in advance from Bernie at Wells Furniture! Barb, Terra, and Andrea took a trip to the Western Vet College in Saskatoon recently to participate in a job fair. They met many great veterinary students and enjoyed a tour of the Vet College. Dr. Tara and Mirjam are headed to the inaugural Western Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners “10 and Under” Conference for vets in practice less than 10 years—the topics and speakers look excellent! Jackie, Cheryl, Brittany, and Athena are headed to the CanWest Veterinary Conference soon as well with each of them attending a different aspect from beef to equine, to lab work, and office management. Continuing Education (CE) is an annual license requirement for both veterinarians and technicians and a way that we can invest in our staff to improve our clinic with new or improved products and services!

**Calling Long Distance? Use our toll-free number 1-888-GET VETS (1-888-438-8387)**

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**Associates Cheryl Malin, DVM, Tara Snow, DVM, Mirjam Stigter, DVM, Alycia Laniak, DVM**

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