



Coombefield Veterinary Hospital Farm Newsletter September 2015

The next generation

With falling milk prices, investing for the future becomes much harder. One of a dairy herd's biggest investment is in the rearing of healthy, productive and long lived heifers. Research has shown that the management of young calves is crucial to their future success. For example, the risk and severity of respiratory disease has been shown to be increased in calves with low levels of maternally derived antibodies from colostrum, and a substantial 32% of mortality in the first 16wk of life can be attributed to failure of the transfer of antibodies in colostrum. Another less dramatic and more insidious effect is lower growth rates to 3mth of age.

In a recent study on Cheshire dairy farms, 26% of all calves born had a failure of the transfer of antibodies and 37% of colostrum samples were suboptimal. In this study the farm that supplemented all calves within 2hrs of birth with colostrum had the lowest failure of antibody transfer. So without wishing to teach grandmothers to suck eggs, the standard advice is to feed about 3litres of good quality colostrum within the first 6-8hrs of birth. Good quality colostrum can be determined very easily with a refractometer. It is a simple piece of equipment that takes only a few seconds to get a result. They are widely available including from ourselves. If you have excess colostrum, then freeze it, marking the bags as to whether it is good or average quality colostrum. Blood sampling of calves can determine whether there is a problem or not.

Drug prices

We have been looking at where there might be some savings to be made on drug prices. We have found though that some of the alternative products available have different withdrawal times or different licenses such that, we feel our current products are still the best.

We have however negotiated the following discounts so far -

Metacam	5%
Tylan	5%
Terramycin spray	10%
Draxxin	9%

New Online map shows TB breakdowns

Defra has launched a new web – based interactive map showing the locations of TB breakdowns and breakdowns resolved in England in the past five years. It is updated monthly. The map is at www.ibtb.co.uk

South West Dairy Show at The Royal Bath & West Showground on Wednesday 7th October, 8.30am-5pm

Come and visit Jenny on our stand **513** for tea and cake.



If you would like to speak to a Farm vet or arrange a visit
Please ring 01297 630515
Medicines can be requested via email or by telephone
Email: farm@axvets.co.uk