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## LUNGWORM Aka Husk

Due to the warm and wet weather conditions being very favourable for parasites we are likely to see a greater number of outbreaks of lungworm in late summer and early autumn. So please be aware of the following important information:

### Animals at risk

- First year grazing cattle in late summer and autumn
- Autumn born beef calves turned out in summer onto pasture
- Adult cattle that have had a drop in immunity due to reduced recent exposure i.e housing for long periods, (intermittent exposure is necessary to create and maintain immunity)
- Purchased cattle that have not been exposed to lungworm in the past
- Heavy stocking densities causing a greater build-up of the parasite on the pasture

### Clinical signs

- Widespread coughing within the herd, especially after exercise
- Severely affected animals will show a harsh cough and excessive salivation, they may also stand with their neck and head extended struggling to breathe
- Mortality and secondary infection with bacteria will take place in association with high burdens

### Diagnosis

- To be sure of infection drop off a pooled faecal sample from 5-10 animals in the group so we can check if there are larvae in the faeces. Early in the infection some faecal samples may come back negative even though the stock are affected, this is due to the parasite being immature and not producing eggs yet, (parasite must be 3 weeks old to produce eggs.) If we do still suspect lungworm we can use a blood test to confirm infection status

### Treatment and control

- Lungworm will be susceptible to all anthelmintics on the market and there are no known cases of resistance. Levacide is our preferred wormer because it paralyses the parasite. This is preferable because in very high burdens if all lungworm die at once they can end up blocking the airways
- When using anthelmintics remember that they should be used strategically in the control of both lung and gut worms. Also bear in mind withholds if treating lactating adult cattle (Eprinex, 0 milk withhold)
- Stock should be treated promptly once a diagnosis has been made to reduce the likelihood of secondary infection or stunted growth
- Huskvac is available to vaccinate prior to turn out of calves, before they have been exposed to larval challenge. If you have had prior issues of lungworm on farm then this would be highly recommended in the future
- Quarantine and treat all bought in cattle to prevent bringing lung and gut parasites onto your farm

## New product called Imrestor

There is a new product on the market that has been developed by **Elanco**, called **Imrestor**. This introduces a new concept in improving cow health around the time of calving. We recognise that calving is a very stressful time for the cow and there are numerous metabolic and social demands.

**Imrestor** is not an antibiotic, vaccine or hormone but it is a product that mimics a natural substance released in the face of an infection challenge which sends a signal to the bone marrow to increase the production of specific white blood cells. It comes in the form of an injection and essentially makes the cow more resistant to infections; (mastitis, metritis etc) by temporarily increasing her circulating white blood cells.

### Injection regime;

Two injections are required, one approximately seven days prior to expected calving date and the second 24 hours after calving.

### Imrestor clinical trials;

We have been given data from five trial sites involving 2465 cows in a variety of climates, under different management regimes and involving both Holstein and Jersey cows. In these trials the cows were injected with either a placebo injection or **Imrestor**. The results showed a 26% reduction in clinical mastitis in those that had been injected with **Imrestor**.

Mastitis reduction is not the only area where **Imrestor** is thought to have a beneficial effect. If a farm is experiencing retained foetal membranes or having a larger number of post calving vulval discharges/metritis then the use of this product has also been recommended.

### Our thoughts ?

In principal it looks to be quite a useful product but we know that a number of these problems can be rectified and managed more effectively with good farming practices around the time of calving. We realise the risk of metabolic diseases and the effect that low calcium/energy levels will have on a cow's health and hence we would like to see changes being considered in these areas before we would consider the "sticky plaster" effect of the above. I say this in the knowledge that, although we haven't been given a definite final price, **Imrestor** is not cheap and will retail at around £27.00 for the two injections.

If you have any questions regarding **Imrestor** then please phone the surgery and speak to either Ian or Matt.