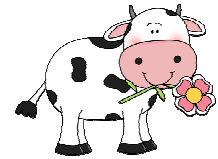


Northwest Veterinary Associates Newsletter

April 2013

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SPRING CHECKLIST

Spring is here (FINALLY) and so is the time to vaccinate and deworm cattle prior to turning them out. Northwest Veterinary Associates would be happy to help you select the best products and programs for your herd.

VACCINATIONS:

New pink eye infections among pastured animals usually peak during the month of August. But, if you wait until August to take action all we can do is treat sick animals and spray for flies. This can lead to high infection rates within herds and loss of vision in affected cattle. Spring, therefore, is the key time to prepare animals to resist pink eye infections and build up their resistance to the bug. BUT, vaccines take time to react with the immune system and develop herd resistance. That's why spring is the time to start protecting animals if you want to reduce the frequency of pink eye infections down the road.

There are several options of pinkeye vaccine including Triview, Pinkeye Shield and Ocuguard. The most common practice, especially for pastured heifers, is to also vaccinate against "black leg" (Clostridium) at the same time. We have several vaccines options that combine the antigens against both Clostridium and pink eye (Moraxella bovis) including Alpha 7 MB and Piliguard. Depending on the vaccine chosen, a second booster shot may need to be given in 2-4 weeks. Yet another reason why starting early in spring to get these shots done is so important.

Rabies vaccination is the remaining "spring shot" that may be given. Although rabies is rare in cattle, we know that it is present in our local wildlife population. The unfortunate aspect of Rabies disease is that it is universally fatal to animals and humans and therefore prevents a very real public health risk. Look to your veterinarian for guidance as certain areas of our practice have a higher risk than others. However, the only way to truly protect your herd (even those kept mostly indoors) is to vaccinate for Rabies annually.

DEWORMING

Parasitologists have found that only 1 to 5 percent of worms on your farm are actually in the animal. Most are in the form of eggs and larvae on the pasture. This is why it is so important this time of year to think strategically about deworming in order to prevent losses in growth and health.

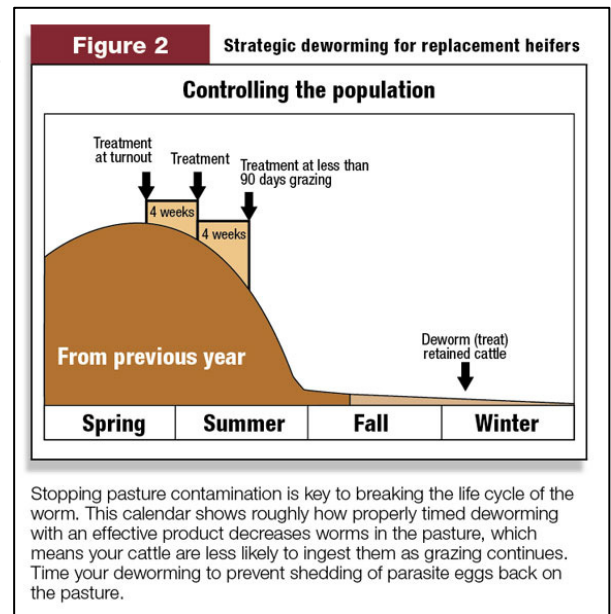
When you consider a strategic deworming program you are really trying to reduce the pasture parasite burden for as much of the grazing season as possible. Typically, when the pasture is at its best, the environment for parasite transmission is ideal. Therefore in spring and early

summer when the pasture is growing rapidly, it is important to attack the worms.

Grazing animals are exposed to parasite larva on a daily basis via the grass they consume, as well as the water they may drink. Most parasites have the same basic life-cycle; however they do not all appear at the same time of year, and weather can play a major role in the number of larva that are able to survive and infect the animal. For example, warm wet weather is the ideal condition for most parasites on pasture.

Varying conditions make it necessary to tailor your deworming schedule to meet your farm's needs year-to-year and your veterinarian is here to help devise this strategy. However, a typical program should entail:

- Deworm grazing calves and replacement heifers at turnout (unless rested parasite-free)
- Deworm again in 4-6 weeks
- Deworm again 4-6 weeks later
- Deworm again in fall after a killing frost has occurred and cooler temperatures prevail
- Deworm cows that were grazed during their dry period at freshening



Timing is just one part of the deworming equation. The type of dewormer and method of administration also make a huge difference. For instance, there are demonstrated resistance of certain parasites to pour-on products. You need to make sure that your dewormer is working and Northwest Vets can help you do that by sending out fecal samples to Dr. Don Bliss of MidAmerica Ag Research courtesy of Merck Animal Health. This allows for fecal egg counts in order to evaluate parasite types and numbers. We are also pleased to announce that Don will be joining again this June for another in-house Parasite Evaluation Clinic and Farmer's meeting.