

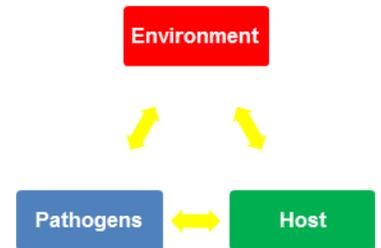
Dear All,

Hopefully this reaches you in time for me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas from everyone at Moorgate, and best wishes for the New Year.

What a change in the weather from summer. Drought conditions with precious little grass for many to now heavy rain and mud. Unfortunately this will create a “perfect storm” of wet conditions exacerbated by a shortage of bedding so we expect to see a rise in cases of calf pneumonia – or Bovine Respiratory Disease (BRD).

Calf Pneumonia (BRD)

BRD is a multifactorial and highly infectious lung disease. Most outbreaks occur in the first month of housing and autumn born calves are generally more affected than larger, spring born calves. BRD is an interaction between Pathogens (Bacteria and Viruses), the environment and the health status of the host (calf). Adult cattle can be a reservoir of infection which can be spread at times of stress.



BRD is a major cause of losses in beef farms, and the main cost is a loss of liveweight gain, which can be reduced by up to 50%, and accounts for over a quarter of losses in an outbreak.

Infectious Causes

- Viruses: Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR), Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD), Parainfluenza Type 3 (PI3)
- Bacteria: *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Histophilus somni*, *Mycoplasma bovis*
- Parasites: Important to rule out Lungworm in calves at grass

Environment

Problems with the environment can damage the calves immune system and make it more susceptible, and also favour the survival of infectious organisms in the air and on bedding, etc.

- Try to ensure as dry an environment as possible and reduce humidity in sheds. Keep well drained floors with plenty of dry bedding, and be careful of single skin walls which can leach moisture in and maintain troughs and feeders to stop leaks.
- Try to reduce dust using high quality bedding and high quality feed stored to reduce the likelihood of mould spores forming
- Monitor ventilation, try to avoid draughts at calf level but maintain airflow such that there is no odour in the barn
- Strict hygiene and “all-in all-out” policies will reduce the spread of disease.

Host factors

Cattle are inherently more susceptible to lung disease. They have relatively small lungs for their size and their respiratory system matures late (approximately 1 year old). They have a reduced blood supply and smaller airways than other large animals e.g. horses. Poor colostrum intake or nutrition can also contribute to a weakened immune system.

Signs of BRD

Each pathogen has subtly different signs, and often more than one disease may be present, symptoms include:

- Fever (over 39°C)
- Coughing (generally worsening)
- Increased breathing rate
- Difficulty breathing (often with abdominal heaving)
- Lack of appetite
- Discharge from nose or mouth
- Death if not treated early enough

Diagnosis and Treatment

Seek veterinary advice – it may be appropriate to take samples (blood or lung washes), as these can guide future preventative treatment

Anti-inflammatories – Very useful to reduce fever and pain, to aid recovery and reduce losses. Sometimes it can be appropriate to treat the entire group to reduce further cases by improving calf health status

Antibiotics – important for clinically affected cases only, based on previous outbreaks and any pathogens identified. Take care to avoid CIAs (Critically Important Antibiotics) which are important for human health. The use of these drugs (e.g. Marbox), must be justified or it can cause problems with Red Tractor accreditation.

Prevention

Good colostrum intake is critical to ensure the calves have a healthy immunity to pathogens on the farm and a supply of nutrients essential to a healthy immune system

Vaccination can be a very useful tool to help prevent BRD. Timing and identifying the correct pathogens is important to make the most out of a vaccination program

Reducing stress at management events such as weaning or dehorning will improve the calf's ability to resist disease. It may be appropriate to use low cost anti-inflammatories such as Solacyl in feed or milk to aid in reducing pain and stress.

As always if you'd like to discuss something in our newsletter, or have any concerns about herd or flock health and performance please give us a ring to get hold of one of the vets

Kind regards, Ashley

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR SURGERY OPENING TIMES

	Bovey Tracey	Moretonhampstead
Monday 24th December	8am – 5pm	8:30am – 5pm
Tuesday 25th December	CLOSED	CLOSED
Wednesday 26th December	CLOSED	CLOSED
Thursday 27th December	8:30am – 7pm	8:30am – 6:30pm
Friday 28th December	8am – 7pm	8:30am – 5pm
Saturday 29th December	8:30am – 1pm	10am – 12pm
Sunday 30th December	CLOSED	CLOSED
Monday 31st December	8am – 5pm	8:30am – 5pm
Tuesday 1st January	CLOSED	CLOSED

AS ALWAYS THERE IS A 24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE ON: 01647 440441

It will always be a Moorgate vet that attends to your call

Please remember that it is Christmas and New Year for the Vets as well, so please make use of the surgery opening times whenever possible.