

Dairy Newsletter November 2022



Camperdown Veterinary
Centre
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Hours:
8:00am – 5:30pm (Mon– Fri)
9:00am – 12:00pm (Sat)

CVC CLINIC NEWS

Welcome to the November edition of the Dairy Newsletter. We know with all this rain about it's hard to think about the flies, but they will be here soon enough and so will pink eye, therefore we've included another section on pink eye in this newsletter as we can't stress enough the importance of being prepared for it this season. This newsletter will also explain swamp fever and the signs and symptoms to watch for and how to treat it if it occurs in your cattle. We also suggest having a think about the quality of feed you are feeding your cattle or consider if you actually know the nutritional break down of your feed, as this is very important in lactating and reproducing animals.

Client Christmas Party!

It's that time of the year again and Christmas is just around the corner. We would like to invite you to our annual client Christmas party. Come down on Monday the 5th December after 5:30pm to enjoy a BBQ and drinks with our staff as a way of us saying thank you to you for all your support over the last 12 months (and many years before that).



PINK EYE IS HERE!

Have you considered vaccinating for pink eye this year? If you haven't already, now is the time!

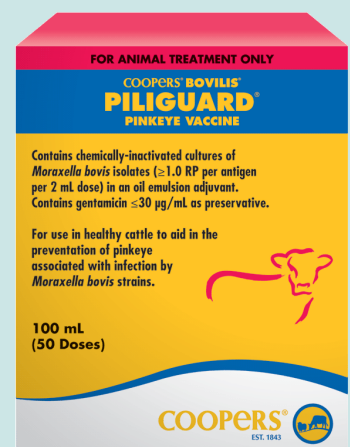
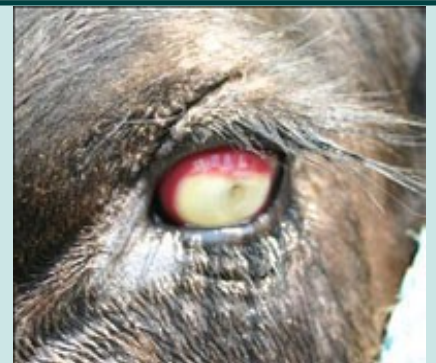
Pink eye is an infectious keratoconjunctivitis which is highly contagious. It generally occurs when the surface of the eye (cornea) becomes compromised allowing bacteria (*Moraxella bovis*) to enter resulting in infection.

Pink eye can affect up to 80% of a mob and usually young cattle are most susceptible. *Moraxella bovis* can be carried in the nasal and ocular secretions of infected animals for up to 12 months but occurrence most commonly occurs in Victoria during Summer and Autumn when the flies are around as they play an important role in transmission of the bacteria between cattle.

Susceptible animals can be vaccinated with Coopers Piliguard to help reduce occurrence in your livestock. To have the best result from the vaccine, it should be administered 3-6 weeks prior to the onset of pink eye season which means it needs to be administered now.

It is important to note that the vaccination alone may not be enough to stop pink eye occurring in your herd. If you have had trouble in the past or are worried about its occurrence coming into summer, give our vets a call to discuss prevention options.

In herds which are routinely vaccinated but infection is still occurring or severe infection is occurring despite vaccination, swabs can be taken to identify the specific strain of bacteria causing pinkeye. From this, an Autogenous pink eye vaccine can be developed. This is a vaccine that is designed to be effective against the specific strain on your farm. To get the most out of this vaccine process, swabbing should be performed early in the season, as soon as pink eye cases start to occur. If you think this might be of benefit on your farm or would like more information please have a chat with our vets.



SWAMP FEVER– PHOTOSENSITISATION

Photosensitivity is where the non-pigmented or hairless skin of cattle becomes highly sensitive to the sun. This can result in variable signs ranging from an irritable cow that is off her milk to severe sloughing or thickening of the skin.

There are two causes of photosensitivity, primary and secondary.

The most common form of photosensitisation seen in livestock is secondary. Secondary photosensitivity reactions occur when the components of plants that are reactive to light called protoxins build up in the skin of cattle. When cattle eat plants the chlorophyll contained in these plants are broken down and phototoxins are released. Generally these are processed by the liver however when there are large amounts present or there is underlying damage to the liver, photo toxins will build up resulting in photosensitisation.

Cattle can also develop primary photosensitivity by eating plants that directly contain phototoxins. These plants include brassica crops and weeds such as St Johns Wort. It is also important to note that some plants such as parsnips are able to cause blisters and photosensitivity by contacting the skin.



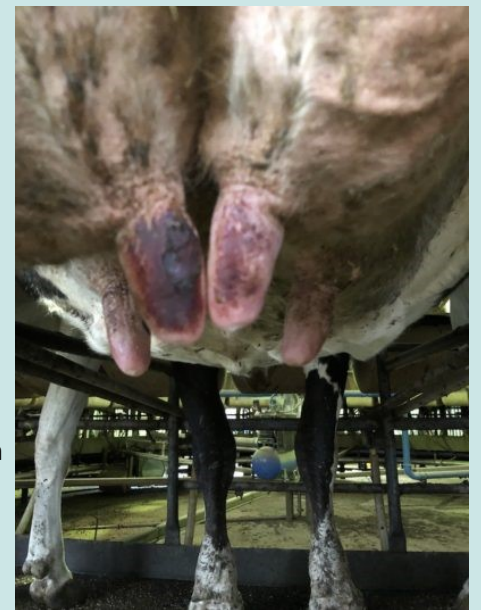
CLINICAL SIGNS

- Irritation
- Kicking at cups during milking
- Seeking shade
- Shaking head or ears
- Peeling or swelling of skin in affected areas
- Lameness if skin around hooves has been affected
- Often affected animals will seek relief by standing in water, hence where this condition gets its name, swamp fever
- In severe cases where teats are damaged, some cows may develop mastitis.
- Some cows may also be found recumbent with a fever



TREATMENT

Affected animals should be placed in a paddock or area with limited exposure to sunlight until the acute clinical signs decrease. Anti-inflammatories and anti-histamines can also help to reduce the severity in the acute phase of the condition therefore if you suspect your cattle have been affected contact a vet immediately. The application of emollient zinc sunblock (such as Filtabac) can be applied to affected teats to protect the cow from long term damage.



FEED QUALITY / TESTING

We have had a lot of rain this spring and hopefully as the weather warms there will be a lot of feed floating around however, just because there is a lot around, doesn't mean it is of good quality.

Feed testing is really important to understand the production potential of your feed. It will also allow you to understand how suitable your feed is for the livestock you are feeding it to. For example you may feed your higher quality feed to your lactating animals and save the lower quality feed for animals that are not under as high metabolic strain.

Understanding the quality of your feed will also allow you to plan ahead identifying when/if supplementation will be required. We recommend speaking with your nutritionist or feed supplier to ensure you know the quality of feed being fed to your livestock.