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For lame cows the golden standard is and has been for a while that every cow that gets a block should get an NSAID as well. If you're not doing this yet best have a word with vet and foot trimmer to get this incorporated in the herd health plan. There is a strong argument to be made for every score 2, 3 lame cow to get an NSAID at the time of trimming regardless if they get a block or not. In digital dermatitis, which is acutely painful, it has now been proven that they too benefit from this approach.



We've been using NSAIDs for a long time now in calves with pneumonia but how about scouring calves? Anti-inflammatory and anti-toxin activity would benefit them as well. Not to mention any calf with pyrexia.

As for the last two applications, calvings and metritis, we're not so quick to use NSAIDs. Any calving would benefit from

painkillers but for practical reasons any assisted calving ought to receive them... and so do the calves. Treated calves were proven to get up quicker and be more mobile therefore achieving higher maternal antibodies from colostrum.

I think all of us have seen with our own eyes that metritis is painful. You only have to think about clean checks where the cow grunts and arches her back when the vet puts their hand inside.

All this to make the point of considering NSAIDs when any pain and or inflammatory processes occur in the animals. Not only because it's the right thing to do but also because it makes economic sense.

Talking about making points...

I wish you lots of points in the coming rounds of the tournament and that if you need painkillers it's for all the right reasons.

Roel



## Hypotrichosis in Hereford Cattle: Fact Sheet

**Hypotrichosis, commonly referred to as hairlessness, is an unusual genetic condition affecting various cattle breeds, including the Hereford. This condition is characterized by the partial or complete absence of hair at birth and can have significant implications for the health, productivity, and welfare of affected animals.**

Hypotrichosis is typically inherited as an autosomal recessive trait. This means that both parents must carry one copy of the mutated gene for their offspring to express the condition. Carriers, which possess one copy of the gene, generally appear normal but have a 25% chance of producing an affected calf if mated with another carrier.

Calves affected with hypotrichosis are born with partial or complete absence of hair. The hair that is present tends to be thin, sparse, and often patchy. In some cases, the hairlessness can be almost complete, leaving the skin exposed and vulnerable to environmental factors. This condition is evident at birth and does not improve significantly with age. Adult animals may periodically display a patchy hair coat where hair has been lost and is slow to regrow.

The implications and challenges of the condition are:

- 1. Health Risks:** Hair plays a crucial role in protecting cattle from the elements. Hypotrichotic calves are more susceptible to temperature extremes, particularly cold weather. The lack of hair also makes them more vulnerable to skin injuries and infections.
- 2. Economic Impact:** Affected calves often require additional care, including shelter and sometimes clothing to protect them from the cold. This extra care can increase labour and management costs, moreover, these animals might be less desirable in the market, affecting their economic value.
- 3. Breeding Considerations:** Identifying and managing carriers of the hypotrichosis gene is essential to prevent the spread of the condition within a herd. Genetic testing can help breeders

identify carriers and make informed breeding decisions to minimize the incidence of hypotrichosis.

Hypotrichosis in Hereford cattle presents a unique challenge for breeders and producers. While the condition itself is not life-threatening, it does necessitate additional care and management to ensure the health and welfare of affected animals. Through genetic testing and informed breeding strategies, the incidence of hypotrichosis can be minimized, contributing to the overall health and productivity of Hereford cattle herds.

Mihail





# Understanding selective dry cow therapy

All dairy farms in the UK now adopt the approach of selective dry cow therapy at drying off. It is an approach to help promote udder health and reduce losses.

Historically the approach of using antibiotic therapy at drying off for all cows was adopted to reduce the incidence of contagious mastitis within a herd, such as Staph aureus. With clinical mastitis now predominantly being caused by environmental pathogens, that can still behave in a contagious way, this approach has been succeeded by a selective approach to treatment at drying off.

Our main aims at drying off are to:-

- Cure any infected quarters
- Maintain udder health and prevent new infections during the dry period
- Reduce new infections post calving
- Reduce post calving cell count

The decision-making processes in the last 3 months running up to drying off is which cows are in which drying off category and which need to maintain their current udder health and which need to be cured. By taking the correct steps maintaining udder health will promote the cows natural mechanisms for tackling mastitis pathogens.

The policy that is adopted is based on overall herd performance to then make decisions on individuals. A typical udder cell count cut off for selective dry cow therapy is usually between 150,000 to 200,000 cells/ml. This cut off is decided based herd performance, if bulk cell count is high and more cows need the opportunity to cure the threshold at which antibiotic therapy is used is dropped. If the bulk tank cell count is regularly under 200,000 cells/ml then the upper threshold can be adopted.

Cows receiving teat sealant alone usually fall in to this following criteria ;

- No clinical cases of mastitis in the last 3 months
- A cell count under the protocol threshold for the last 3 months
- A low risk of becoming infected during the dry period or early lactation.

As a recap, drying off should be a hygienic process as close to sterile as possible to minimize the risk of introducing infection into the udder.

## Items needed

- Drying off list
- Clean disposable gloves
- Pre dip
- Paper towel
- Surgical spirit
- Cotton wool
- Teat sealant
- Dry cow antibiotic tubes
- Post dip

1. Wash down parlour after milking and bring drying off cows back onto parlour.

**DO NOT USE VOLUME WASHER ONCE COWS ARE ON THE PARLOUR**

2. Wash hands and arms thoroughly and put on a clean pair of disposable gloves. Keep gloves clean and change regularly (ideally between cows)

3. Use records to check if the cow needs antibiotic tubes or teat sealant alone

4. If necessary wash any excessive dirt off the teats and udders with potable water and dry with paper towel

5. Starting with back teats pre dip all four teats and leave for 30 seconds

6. Starting with front teats wipe all four teats dry with individual paper towel per teat ensuring teat end is wiped thoroughly, there should be no visible contamination

7. Hold onto the teat, use cotton wool soaked in surgical spirit to wipe the teat and get the teat end spotless. If there is dirt on the cotton wool repeat with a clean piece. **DO NOT LET GO OF THE TEAT**

## APPLYING ANTIBIOTIC

8. Whilst holding onto the teat insert half of the tube nozzle and gently infuse. Pinch the teat end with the hand holding the teat and push the antibiotic up the teat with the other hand.

## APPLYING TEAT SEALANT

9. Still holding the teat pinch the base of the teat between your thumb and index finger. Gently infuse the teat sealant feeling the pressure build in the teat and withdraw the nozzle leaving a bleb of sealant in the teat canal. Release the teat

**\*DO NOT MASSAGE SEALANT INTO THE UDDER \***

10. Repeat for the other 3 teats

11. Apply post dip to all four teats

12. Apply red tail tape

13. Allow cows to stand for 30 mins before returning to housing.

The long term benefit is not only a saving on use of antibiotic use but also improving overall herd health and reduce mastitis rates.

Sean



## Neosporosis in Cattle: Understanding and Managing a Significant Parasitic Disease

**Neosporosis is a parasitic disease caused by the protozoan *Neospora caninum*, which primarily affects cattle but can also infect other animals, including dogs. This disease is of particular concern to the cattle industry due to its association with reproductive issues, including abortion, which can lead to substantial economic losses.**

*Neospora caninum* is an intracellular protozoan parasite. Dogs and other canids (such as foxes) are the definitive hosts, shedding the parasite's oocysts in their faeces. Cattle become infected primarily through ingesting these oocysts from contaminated feed, water, or environment. Once inside the cattle, the parasite can cross the placenta, leading to congenital infection of the foetus.

The disease can have a profound economic impact on cattle farms due to increased abortion rates, subsequent metritis, and reduced yield or loss of the lactation.

The most significant clinical sign of neosporosis in cattle is abortion, which can occur at any stage of gestation but is most common between 5 to 7 months. Other manifestations include:

- **Reproductive Failure:** Infected cows may experience reduced fertility, stillbirths, and the birth of weak calves.
- **Neurological Signs:** While rare, some infected calves may show neurological symptoms such as ataxia, hind limb paralysis, and muscle stiffness.
- **Seemingly normal calves.** Calves from infected cows which are born alive and survive are highly likely to have been infected in the uterus. As such, they will carry the disease with them, and, while they cannot directly transmit it to other cattle, they are highly likely to go on to abort their own calves.

Diagnosing neosporosis involves a combination of clinical evaluation and serological testing:

- **Serology:** Blood tests can detect antibodies against *N. caninum*, indicating exposure to the parasite. The sensitivity of this test declines rapidly after the abortion has taken place, so cattle must be tested as soon as possible after aborting. If serology is being used as a screening test, late pregnancy is the best time to do it.
- **Polymerase Chain Reaction:** PCR tests (just like BVD Tag&Test kits) can identify the parasite's DNA in tissues, confirming infection.
- **Histopathology:** Examination of aborted foetuses and placental tissues can reveal characteristic lesions and the presence of the parasite.

Managing the disease is challenging, as no vaccine exists, and farms often face a constant risk of infection, especially in fields with footpaths which are popular with dog walkers. Control revolves around identification of infected animals and adjusting management so that replacements are not kept from neospora positive cattle.

To summarise, neosporosis is a significant parasitic disease affecting cattle, primarily causing reproductive issues that can lead to economic losses. Effective management requires a combination of biosecurity measures, diagnostic testing, and herd management practices.

**Mihail**

### TB UPDATE

Last month we tested 9889 cattle over 32 TB tests. There were 10 reactors and 12 inconclusive reactors.

### EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

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Please keep a note of the mobile numbers for the vets should you ever need them

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