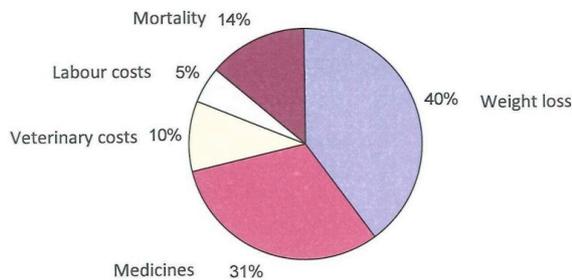


CALF RESPIRATORY DISEASE

Calf respiratory disease continues to be a significant economic and welfare problem for the cattle industry with each case in beef calves costing £82 per head and in dairy calves £43 per head.



It has been shown that 60% of the costs are related to weight loss, reduction in daily liveweight gain, additional labour and mortality with only 40% coming from veterinary and medicine costs.

Controlling calf respiratory disease depends on the following:

- Management practices which will influence the incidence of respiratory disease.
- Early detection and aggressive treatment of sick animals.
- Vaccination to increase the animal's immunity to viral or bacterial infections.

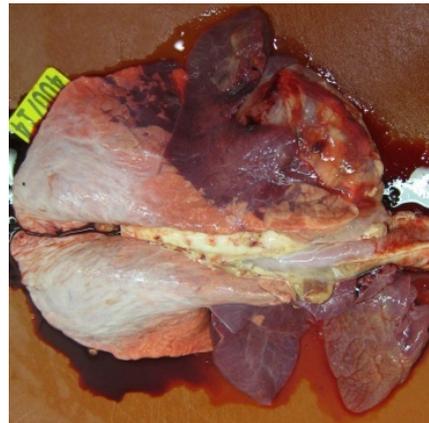
Management issues

- Nutrition - ensure adequate colostrum intake and stress free weaning.
- Stress management - avoid multiple stresses such as weaning, dehorning, and housing.
- Housing - well ventilated and drained, draught free and correct stocking rates.

- Mixing - avoid mixing cattle of different ages, bought in with home reared or sick animals with healthy.
- Other diseases - immunosuppression by the BVD virus will increase the risk of respiratory disease.

Early detection and treatment

Detect cases early and treat with an antibiotic providing at least 3 days cover effective against pneumonia pathogens. The use of anti-inflammatories at the same time will improve recovery markedly.



Isolate all sick calves in a separate airspace but return recovered calves to the original group rather than mixing with different cattle.

If 15-20% of calves in a group are affected with respiratory disease then treat the any contact cattle as well using a long acting antibiotic such as Hexasol or Draxxin.

Vaccination

Vaccines, such as Rispoval 4 and Bovipast, can be used alongside any management or environmental deficiencies to help control respiratory disease.



Any vaccination programme needs to be completed ahead of the main risk period for respiratory disease on your farm- speak to one of the vets about which vaccine would be suitable for your farm.

Respiratory vaccines currently cost about £10 per head- they have never been cheaper!



We are holding several training courses over the next few months as part of the XL Vets Farm Skills training initiative.

These include:

Cow Signals Workshop

The cow signals workshop looks at all aspects of cow management, behaviour and housing.

John Cammack will run this workshop - he is one of only a few UK vets who have been trained by Joep Driessen, the Dutch vet who developed the Cow Signals approach to cow management.

The Workshop will be held by kind permission of Mr Ball at The Spond, Alton on Wednesday 18th November and starts at 10.30am.

Calf Management

There will be a training course on all aspects of calf management on Wednesday 2nd December starting at 10.30 am held at Oaklands Farm, Walton on Trent by kind permission of Mr G White.

This course will be run by Richard Vecqueray, a vet with a special interest in bovine nutrition.

These courses have been heavily subsidised by the West and East Midlands Rural Development programmes but there will be a small cost (approx. £30 per person) which can be added to your farm account and lunch is included!

If you would like to attend either of these courses then please contact the Farm Office.