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Agilis Updates

News from the Road

I have enjoyed being out on the road over the last few months reconnecting with clients and (mostly) talking about IBR. Here's a snapshot of what has come up in conversation:

In Northland a vet took up our IBR free testing offer because they had a suspected IBR situation happening in some young calves. In South Auckland I was shown some fabulously graphic photos of a recent Infectious Balanoposthitis a vet had attended. In January we provided some technical assistance in the Waikato regarding an IBR outbreak in some calves and in November we helped one of the vets at Taranaki Vet Centre who sent us the following report (sic) *"…went out to see some calves with nasal discharge and upper respiratory tract inflammation. Samples were taken and a diagnosis of infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR) was made. Based on these results and after discussion with the farmer, it was decided to investigate using the Hipravovis 3 vaccine in the spring born calves in order to start providing immunity to the young stock coming through. We rang*

Agilis regarding protocol for switching to Hipravovis 3 as the young stock had already been given a single shot of Bovilis BVD vaccine. After discussion with our rep, Haydn, we vaccinated all 45 of his youngstock with 2 shots of Hipravovis 3 four weeks apart."

Everywhere I go, it seems vets can either recall an IBR outbreak from the not-too-distant past or they're dealing with one right now. Mostly they are seeing it in the younger animals and it's knocking them around sufficiently enough that the farmer is calling a vet in. **And surely that challenges the often heard message that IBR in New Zealand is benign!**

Foetal Protection For Bulls

Speaking of mixed messages: at the recent Fieldays I struck up an interesting conversation about BVD with a bull breeder who said he "would only use a product with foetal protection for his bulls"!

Now of course foetal protection is a bit of a thing right now in BVD marketing and farmers can be forgiven for getting a bit confused. However, I think we can all agree that "We have never needed to protect a foetus growing inside a bull"! For this reason, there is almost universal agreement among the many vets I have visited that the extra value of vaccinating for IBR along with BVD protection provided by Hipravovis 3 makes it the obvious first choice for vaccinating bulls. There's no concern about foetal protection so it's a "no-brainer" they say.

Well, that got me thinking…surely the same logic applies to calves. Because… and I'm fairly confident about this… We have also never needed to protect a foetus growing inside a

HIPRABOVIS® 3

4 month old calf! However, it's very apparent (see above) that calves need protection against IBR.

With practices about to get busy vaccinating calves for BVD recommending Hipravovis 3 - for the added security of IBR protection that it provides (just like the majority of you do for bulls) makes more sense than getting hung up on the nuances of foetal protection claims that simply do not matter for these animals.

That's not to say that Hipravovis 3 is out in the cold on foetal protection either I might add. It is the only product that has been field tested in NZ to demonstrate how well it performs protecting a foetus for the entire length of the gestation. I'd love any opportunity to talk to you about this at some stage - for adult cows, where foetal protection is an important consideration - but it's simply an irrelevant distraction for calves. **Hipravovis 3 is THE gold standard calf vaccine.**

If you have any questions about our product range please phone your Agilis rep today.

Tracesure® Copasure®

Copper – the case for a prophylactic bolus?

Many calves have now gone out to grazing for the next 18 months where the aim is to meet growth and then reproduction targets to set the animals up for a smooth transition back into their herds as heifers. *Both of these targets can be limited by low liver copper levels.*

Normal practice is to test to decide whether they need copper. However, it is not unusual for winter grazing/feed/crops to be fed to these animals after the test is completed - particularly in the South Island - and it is known that these challenge liver copper levels. Up to 60% of calves from this environment can have deficient liver copper levels when they finally come back to their herd. Those who attended our Vet Ann's webinar on humeral fractures last year will be aware that growth checks caused by copper deficiency are not uncommon and that humeral fractures are a potential sequelae affecting around 5,000 heifers in NZ each year (J. Hunnan, Unpublished).

Consider recommending Copasure boluses as prophylaxis - even if liver coppers look adequate now - to cover these over-wintering calves through the period where they are not handled much and are known to have a sufficiency issue coming. The goal is for them come out of winter maintaining good liver copper reserves instead of losing them. Many vets are now using our Copasure/Tracesure boluses in calves for exactly this reason and as Vet Kelly Andrews says "seeing astonishing results" right through to mating and beyond.

Edwina Wooderson, you are an IronMaori Toa.

A huge **congratulations** to our North Island Territory Manager Edwina for completing the IronMaori event held in Napier before Christmas. For those unfamiliar; it's a 3.8km swim, 180km bike ride and 42km run. Not weeks apart either, but all in one day. It was second time around for Edwina and as it turned out a very tough day at the office, tougher than her first one she says. Anyone who has been around anyone who does this sport knows that the elevator isn't going to the top floor for these folks. Get Edwina to show you photos of her blisters if you need convincing of this fact. Nonetheless, we're all massively proud of her, well done champ!

Not all copper products are equal

To maintain outstanding bioavailability Animax manufacture their own copper wire product to ensure that they achieve less than 1% unoxidized copper in their Copasure boluses. This attention to quality assures vets that they are giving the copper that an animal needs. There is large variability in the amount of unoxidized copper in some products. For example, Animax tested product in our market and showed that one contained 40% un-oxidised copper (Animax, data on file). Unoxidized copper is undesirable because it is rapidly bound up in complexes in the rumen that are useless to the animal.

Another feature of Copasure boluses is their sizing (12.5 or 25g) vs the industry standard 10 or 20g products. Consider the average weight of the growing animal during the full period that a capsule is releasing copper. A 5 month old calf will grow 100kg before the bolus is done. Therefore a nominal 10g/100kg capsule dose given to the starting weight of the animal means that you will be underdosing for nearly the whole duration that the bolus is used. However the 12.5g Copasure, labelled for a 100kg calf, delivers 20% more copper so that there is sufficient quantity optimised for the growing calf. The result is liveweight gain that farmers can bank on. For example in one trial Copasure and Tracesure treated calves were 19kg heavier at day 107 than untreated controls, representing a 4:1 ROI (Judson et al 2013).

If not all copper products are equal can Copasure be used while treating for Facial Eczema?

I'd like to bring your attention to a recent article published in the Australian Vet Journal last year which showed that Copasure used with Zinc boluses gave no deleterious effects on either Zinc or Copper levels in Ewes. It was concluded that *"concurrent treatment with Copasure did not result in reductions of serum Zinc values, suggesting that simultaneous treatment with zinc and oral copper in these formulations does not result in antagonistic effects".* This is very interesting. The old rule of thumb has been to wait until Facial Eczema treatment was over before thinking about copper, which is potentially annoying for timing/handling of animals and in prolonged facial eczema seasons can mean animals begin to experience copper sufficiency challenges before they can get their levels topped up.

If you'd like a copy of the paper ask your rep.

Please contact our Agilis team today

Orders E orders@agilis.nz

Mike Froger
Business Manager
T 027 337 5070
E mike.froger@agilis.nz

Sarah Harrison
Territory Manager
T 021 713 942
E sarah@agilis.nz

Ann Wilkinson
General Manager /Technical Vet
T 027 405 1716
E ann@agilis.nz

Hadyn McKinley
Territory Manager Lower North Island
T 027 205 2610
E haydn@agilis.nz

Edwina Wooderson
Territory Manager Upper North Island
T 027 245 9301
E edwina@agilis.nz

agilis
0800 AGILIS | info@agilis.nz
www.agilis.nz