

NEWSLETTER

In this issue:

- ◆ **Seasonal Reminders**
- ◆ **Vet Building Changes**
- ◆ **Piliguard (Pinkeye) Vaccination Availability**
- ◆ **Pinkeye Management**
- ◆ **Synchronisation Programs**
- ◆ **Bull testing**
- ◆ **Bulls and BVDV**
- ◆ **Other Bull Diseases**

Seasonal reminders:

- Vaccinate spring calves with 7-in-1 vaccine from 6 weeks of age followed by a booster 4 to 6 weeks later.
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- Bulls should have their fertility assessed and be vaccinated against vibrio and pestivirus (BVDV) at least 2 weeks before you plan to use them.
 - Autumn born calves may benefit from a fluke drench now. It is not usually necessary to treat spring calves until January.
 - If you have used a bull at the end of the autumn joining watch out for the possibility of early spring calving cows and heifers getting pregnant. It is possible for cows to get pregnant within a week of calving.

Vet Building Changes

In mid-October, our practice will be transitioning the practice reception and small animal services to the newly renovated side of the facility, enhancing its capacity to provide exceptional animal care. This expansion features modern equipment, and a spacious layout designed for both routine and specialized procedures, ensuring pets receive the highest care in a comfortable environment.

As pet ownership continues to grow, the new space will allow the practice to accommodate more patients and offer a wider range of small animal services.

Piliguard (Pinkeye) Vaccination Availability

The Coopers Animal Health Piliguard vaccination helps prevent pinkeye caused by *Moraxella bovis* strains.



Currently, this vaccine is on backorder and is expected to be available in December.

At this time, there are no alternative commercially available pinkeye vaccines.

There is a laboratory that produces autogenous pinkeye vaccines, but it requires swabs to be collected from pinkeye cases on your farm for culturing. The production of this vaccine takes approximately 12 weeks. The benefit of this type of vaccine is that it is specific to your farm.

Pinkeye Management

With the current commercial pinkeye vaccine being unavailable and fly season just starting, the focus needs to be prevention and early treatment.

Prevention is based around:
i) Vaccination:

Commercial vaccine (which is unavailable)

Autogenous vaccine

ii) Fly control:

Fly control is generally carried out via chemical backline treatment. Other measure of fly control consists of fly traps, predatory wasps, and beetles.

iii) Minimising risk factors:

If certain risk factors can be identified (such as exposure to UV light, dust, flies), strategies can be implemented.

Treatment of the individual consists of the following:

- For mild early cases (corneal ulcers ≤ 0.5 cm) treat with topical Orbenin® eye ointment (OEE) - $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ a tube applied, 72 hrs apart. Both eyes should be treated and the cream in the unaffected eye first. Pinkeye patches over the affected eye(s) can prevent further irritation due to flies, dust and UV light and reduce the transmission between calves.



- For more severe cases (corneal ulcers > 0.5 cm), calves require an anti-inflammatory (such as meloxicam), long-acting antibiotic and topical OEE. Pinkeye patches over the affected eye(s) or stitching the eyelids closed.

- All treated animals should be segregated to prevent further transmission in the herd.

- Treatment failure may reflect delayed/inappropriate treatment or resistance.

Herd pinkeye outbreaks where $> 15-20\%$ of the herd affected, it is often required to blanket treat all animals. This will assist in treating those affected, reduce the spread between calves and eliminate infection of carrier animals.

Synchronisation programs

There is no 'one size fits all' synchrony. We encourage you to talk to one of our vets about what program might best suit your needs.

Synchronisation programs can be confusing – there are many to choose from and lots of different terms used. We have been using Synch programs (and its variations) for many years with reasonable results.

Bull testing



When we test bulls, we find that about one in every five or six fails. The reasons vary but most often are related to poor semen quality. The bulls that we fail usually look otherwise normal.

Sometimes the bulls that we fail have problems that allow them to fertilise a cow but for the pregnancy to then fizzle out. These **non-compensable** bulls are worse than no bull at all as they stop other bulls from getting cows pregnant.

In order to test bulls, the main requirement we have is a good sturdy crush and yards. The job is easier if there is some shade where we can set up the microscope to examine the semen.

It is also a good opportunity to vaccinate bulls against vibrio and pestivirus if they are in the crush.

Bulls and BVDV

As we have mentioned in earlier newsletters, we have found that most local dairy herds are either currently infected with bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) or have a history of BVD.

Bulls usually spend their lives in small groups when they are young where it is less likely that they will be exposed to BVD. If their first exposure to BVD is while they are first put with a group of heifers or cows, then they will suffer from temporary infertility.

There is not likely to be any obvious outward sign of infection with BVD in a bull. All you will notice is that there are more empty or late calving cows.

We recommend that all bulls should be vaccinated with **Pestigard**. Initially bulls should receive two doses of vaccine 4 weeks apart. After that bulls require a booster vaccination a month or so prior to joining. If you use bulls twice a year, we recommend that bulls be vaccinated before each joining.

Other bull diseases

We also recommend that bulls should be vaccinated with **Vibriovax**. Vibriosis is a venereal disease that causes early abortions that we usually do not notice. It is a difficult disease to diagnose so we are not sure how much vibriosis is about. We think that there might be more vibriosis around than there was previously because more herds are split calving and carrying cows over.

The same rules apply to **Vibriovax** as **Pestigard**. If bulls have not been vaccinated previously, they require two injections followed by an annual booster.

It is probably a good idea to vaccinate bulls with **7-in-1** or at least **5-in-1** at the same time. Do not forget to worm and fluke drench bulls. Now is a good time to do all these things.

Lame bulls

Bulls are less likely to go lame if they do not go on the concrete and do not eat the milker ration. Because bulls are rotated in and out of the herd, they only get fed grain in bursts and are much more prone to getting acidosis and subsequent feet problems.