



BEEF Health Newsletter

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Now that those long dreary winter days are behind us, it is time to focus on spring/summer management. With the calving season winding down, cattle being put back out on pasture, and calf prices being strong this year, it is important to remember these preventative procedures in order to keep your cattle healthy this season and increase returns in the fall.

In order to make sure that every calf starts off on the right foot, it is important to try and ensure that calving's take place in as clean of an environment as possible. It is also recommended that each calf get one good feeding of colostrum within the first 8-12 hours. If for some reason this does not occur (Ex. Poor milk let down, poor mothering, weak/non vigorous calf, etc), then there are other oral colostrums substitutes (Calf's Choice Total *Hi Cal* or IMMU-START 50) which can be given to ensure that the calf receives an appropriate amount of IgG (150-200g) to boost their immune system to fight any potential infections or disease processes. All newborns navels should also be cleaned and dipped in a dilute iodine solution (1%) to aid in drying and prevention of infections. Injections of Vitamin E/selenium (Dystocel) along with Vitamin A and D are also advised. Injections of Vitamin E/Selenium should be re administered before putting the calves out on pasture in order to reduce the incidence of developing white muscle disease.

Prior to putting any cattle on pasture, remembering to vaccinate all calves up to two years of age for blackleg with Tasvax, an 8-way clostridial vaccine is imperative. Calves <3 months of age, will need to receive a booster at 4-6 months of age whereas calves that are >3 months of age, require a booster 6 weeks later in order to provide proper protection. Therefore, any previously unvaccinated animals should receive two injections 6 weeks apart. Protecting against IBR/BVD/PI3/BRSV and Lepto is also highly recommended. Any heifers around 6 months of age should be vaccinated and then boosted prior to breeding. Those that were vaccinated the previous year should be done again in the spring pre breeding in order to maintain a protective level of immunity. Additionally, those pregnant cattle that were vaccinated with Scourguard the previous year should be revaccinated 3-6 weeks prior to calving.

Another way to improve your herds overall health and rate of gain is the use of strategic dewormers. All cattle especially heifers(due to the reduced level of immunity to internal parasites), should be treated at turnout with a pour on product containing either ivermectin (Alverin) or doramectin (Dectomax). These products will aid in reducing parasite load out on the pasture due to the fact that some parasites have the ability to overwinter either within the cattle and emerge as adults in the spring or survive in the pasture itself. Therefore, it is very important to protect any cattle going out to pasture and to consider re applying the pour on 30 days after turnout. Additionally, by using these pour on products on pregnant cattle in the fall, it has shown to increase the ADG in their future calves. Fly tags are also beneficial in terms of aiding in the prevention of pink eye and increasing weight gain in cattle. Although it has been shown that flies are now gaining resistance to some commercial permethrin based fly tags, tags containing organophosphates (Ex. Ectogard) have shown to still be effective. However, calves less than one month of age should not be given a tag. Dehorning and castrating calves as early as possible in the

season and before going out on pasture are also recommended due to increasing fly populations and potential risk of infection. Finally, heifers that have not gone out on pasture yet should also be given a magnet in order to reduce the incidence of hardware disease.

By performing these preconditioning steps for your calves it will reduce morbidity and mortality and also aid in maintaining a high health status within the rest of your herd. Please contact the clinic if you ever have any questions or concerns regarding animals in your herd.