

PORT PERRY VETERINARY SERVICES

-QUARTERLY-

PRUDENT USE OF ANTIBIOTICS

In this article we wanted to touch on an important topic that we probably don't discuss with our clients enough, using antibiotics with care.

In Canada, producers are lucky to be able to come into the clinic and pick up antibiotics they need on farm (mastitis treatments, injectables, etc) with little questioning. It is our hope, that through phone conversations and farm visits, we have helped educate and guide producers in figuring out the appropriate time to use an antibiotic, and which antibiotic to select for treatment. For our dairy clients already part of CQM, we sign a form each year illustrating we have had these types of conversations with you.

With the alarming statistic

of antibiotic resistance rising in people, the medical associations have looked at why this could be happening. One of the areas of concern is with overuse of antibiotics in animals. The blame isn't being placed entirely on the producer but veterinarians as well. The privilege of being able to pick up antibiotics without talking to a vet each time or having a vet look at the animal is something we should not take for granted. In the future there is speculation that there will be much stricter rules, and you may not be able to freely pick up these medications. Please think about this each time you use an antibiotic and have a well reasoned answer if someone was to question why you were using it. It is strongly

encouraged that you seek advice from the vets at Port Perry Veterinary Services before treating any sick animals. Milk and meat products are tested for antibiotic and drug residues, so sticking to label use of drugs and their withdrawal times unless you have been otherwise instructed by a veterinarian is also very important.

This all may seem like common sense information but it is important to think about daily with your routine sick animal cases. The use of antibiotics may become more and more select in the future and we all need to do our part to ensure we are not creating a further problem with human resistance.

WHAT'S NEW AT THE CLINIC?

We are very excited to announce that over the next several months, Dr. Rachel Busato will be taking time off here and there to attend an equine chiropractic course. Once she has completed it, she will be offering chiropractic services for our equine patients!

We would like to wish Kathy, a member of our reception team who also took care of managing inventory, all the best as she will no longer be working for the clinic after September. We welcome Pam, who will be taking over these duties. Pam comes to us with experience working with a variety of farm animals. The other new staff member you will meet at our office is Lauren, who will be working part-time in the evenings with us.

EASTERN EQUINE ENCEPHALOMYELITIS

You may have heard about the disease “Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis” (or EEE for short) lately as there have been more than ten confirmed cases in Ontario this year. Also, one of our veterinarians recently saw a case that showed clinical signs consistent with this disease; because of this we thought it would be a timely condition to talk about! In case you’re wondering why you haven’t heard of EEE before, the virus was previously seldom seen in Canada, but changes in weather and the insect populations have caused the virus to be present in Ontario and other provinces.

EEE is caused by a virus that affects the horse’s central nervous system which includes its brain and spinal cord. The virus is primarily spread from affected birds to horses (and humans) by mosquito bites. The birds themselves do not develop the disease. Once a mosquito bite occurs from a mosquito carrying the virus,

susceptible horses (primarily unvaccinated ones) get ill within less than a week. Luckily due to the nature of how this virus is spread, affected horses cannot directly spread the virus to other horses or to humans.

A horse affected with EEE will initially act depressed, and this will progress to impaired vision, circling, head pressing (holding the head against a wall), abnormal behaviour, wobbly gait, weakness, and seizures. These horses often become recumbent where they cannot get up, and death occurs in 90% of cases, usually within 3 days of showing the other clinical signs. The horses that do recover continue to show neurologic signs. There is no definitive treatment for this disease, only supportive care can be provided. Horses affected with EEE show clinical signs similar to those with Western Equine Encephalomyelitis (WEE), West Nile Virus (WNV), rabies, and other neurologic conditions

that can affect horses. Because some of these conditions also affect humans, we recommend that any horse showing neurologic signs be seen by a veterinarian.

Aside from using measures to minimize the mosquito population on your farm, your horse can be protected from EEE and other mosquito-borne diseases including WEE and WNV through vaccination. We recommend having the vaccine against these diseases given in the spring before the time of increased risk (mosquito season). For those with horses that receive the West Nile Virus vaccine already (or that ask for “whatever you recommend”) your horse is already getting vaccinated against EEE, WEE and WNV with their tetanus vaccination. If you have any questions about whether your horse is current on the Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis vaccination please call the office at 905-982-1243.

HERD HEALTH AND PREGNANCY ULTRASOUND IN SHEEP AND GOATS

As you all get started with fall breeding, now is a good time to start planning ahead for pregnancy ultrasounds in your small ruminant species. Pregnancy ultrasounds are best performed between 70 and 90 days gestation. The further you get away from this ideal range the less accurate the results will be with respect to number of fetuses and day of gestation. From an ultrasound, we can determine how many fetuses there are, how far along they are and whether there are any problems with the pregnancy. We can also ultrasound

the bucks/rams if many of the animals are open to see if they are the problem.

The ultrasound visit is also an excellent time to have a herd health visit. During a herd health appointment we will discuss any problems you encountered that year during lambing/kidding and any concerns you have currently. We also will have a look around and note any management practices we see that may affect your herd in the future and give you suggestions as to how you may be able to prevent these problems from occurring. We

will also address any reproductive concerns that may arise from the ultrasounds (ie ram/buck fertility, ewe/doe issues). We can discuss many other topics including but not limited to: nutrition and feed additives, deworming and fecal protocols, foot rot issues, pneumonia prevention, Clostridial diseases, kid/lamb scours and ways to increase productivity in the ewes/does. Keep in mind that it’s more economical to invest in preventing problems than to try and fix them when they occur.