

Practice News:

Happy new year to all and hope you are keeping well in this cold weather, the nights are getting lighter and it will be spring before we know it! As you are all aware we had a few staff changes in 2016. Peter Shepherd retired for a more relaxing lifestyle of sailing and rock climbing and a couple of new faces joined the team here at Estcourt Vets. Some of you may have met them already.



Jodie Woods: Jodie has moved to us from Cornwall and has interests in large animal fertility and young stock management.

Matt Casey: Matt has moved to us from Devon and is interested in sheep and cattle medicine and all things equine.



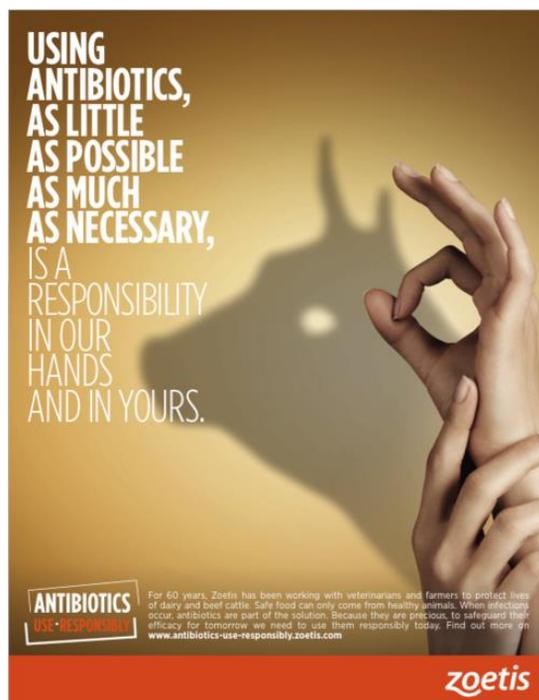
Responsible use of antibiotics:

Antibiotics will be prescribed for Farm animals to treat specific infections following veterinary examination, for controlling spread of a known bacterial disease infecting a herd or flock and if they are required for preventing at high risk animals from developing bacterial infections (as outlined in your herd or flock health plan). If you do not have regular veterinary visits or a annual vet visit and herd/flock health review then animals must be seen by a vet before antibiotics are dispensed.

Dame Sally Davies (UK's Chief medical officer, 2013) *"antibiotic resistance is one of the greatest threats to modern health and we face a future without cures for infection if antibiotics are not used responsibly"*. In order to limit the degree of antibiotic resistance, antibiotics must be used responsibly. This means that antibiotics should **ONLY** be used under strict veterinary guideline following specific veterinary instructions in the following circumstances:

- To treat and cure sick animals when a specific infection in an individual, herd or flock has been diagnosed.
- To control bacterial infections spreading between animals in a group.
- To prevent animals developing a disease when they are diagnosed as *'at high risk'* of bacterial disease.
- Antibiotics **MUST NOT** be used routinely.
- Antibiotics **MUST NOT** be used to compensate for poor hygiene or inadequate husbandry conditions.
- Antibiotics **MUST NOT** be used in situations when they have not been prescribed by a vet for a specific bacterial infection.

Under UK and EU welfare legislation, farmers are legally required to ensure that animals receive appropriate treatment if they become sick. If you have any questions or concerns then please don't hesitate to contact the practice. If you would like more information about the responsible use of antibiotics then please see RUMA responsible use of medicines in agriculture alliance (www.ruma.org.uk).



Bovine respiratory disease:

As winter draws in the incidence of pneumonia increases and we commonly find ourselves reaching for the antibiotics again. Pneumonia is a complex disease caused by several respiratory viruses and secondary bacterial infections. Antibiotics can be useful for treating these secondary bacterial infections but they do not work against the initial viral infection. To complicate matters, not all antibiotics work on bacterial lung infections. In order to get better control over pneumonia on your farm it is important to know what infections you are dealing with (viral, bacterial or both). When you know this, a combination of improved management and targeted medical approaches can be taken. This will aid productivity, healthy animals and help reduce any unnecessary use of antibiotics. Through Zoetis® we are now offering subsidised screening for respiratory disease in calves over 4 months old. This can be a useful starting point for targeting pneumonia in your herd. Contact the practice for more information or to arrange a visit.

Lungworm in cattle:

We have seen an alarming increase in the cases of Husk this year. Husk, caused by the lungworm *Dictyocaulus viviparus* causes significant production losses and can even lead to fatalities. For the last few years Farmers have been relying on wormers alone to combat this disease. However, not all wormers are effective against this parasite. We strongly recommend vaccination with Bovilis® Huskvac in the spring, as this provides protection against lungworm when given to cattle before they meet natural challenge on pasture, and helps effective control in herds with a history of lungworm. The vaccine is available to purchase between January and May 2017. Call the practice for price queries and to place any orders.



Poultry:

Just a finishing note on avian influenza H5N8. There have been further outbreaks of avian influenza. One in a small backyard flock near Settle in North Yorkshire the other in a Swannery in Dorset. Restrictions are still in place and will be until the 28th February 2017. It is vital that during this time all commercial and back yard flocks are kept separate from wild birds to help minimise the spread of this notifiable disease. The Chief veterinary officer Nigel Gibbens has said *"This finding in a backyard flock shows how essential it is for all poultry owners, even those who just keep a few birds as pets, to do everything they can to keep them separate from wild birds and minimise the risk of them catching avian flu via the environment. This means keeping birds in a suitable building where possible, and taking precautions such as putting up netting, keeping food and water inside and disinfecting footwear and equipment after contact with birds."* If you are unsure about what you should be doing with your flock or have any questions regarding this matter then please contact the practice or see either the practice website: www.estcourtvet.co.uk or the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu>. Or come along to one of our in house poultry expert, David Parson's chicken chats.

