



From the desk of Dr. Leon Roggenbuck

January 1, 2019

Once again it is that time of the year when we enjoy family, celebrate the birth of Christ and all to often deal with an increased incidence and severity of calf scours. The family and gifts are fun... the scours not so much!

Certainly, the cold weather itself is an added strain on baby calves. Pathogens that have been there all along are harder for them to fight off, because they are using more calories just to stay warm. Another key factor though, is the increased load of cryptosporidia (crypto) in the environment.

Cryptosporidia is a protozoal organism that sheds sporozoites into the feces. These not only spread the disease to other calves, they also re-infect the calf that shed them, and add to the pathogenic load that calf has to deal with. Deep bedded straw and frequent (daily) bedding reduce the pathogenic load.

According to Dr. Don Sockett from the University of Wisconsin Crypto sticks to plastic surfaces with amazing tenacity. Hard freezes and thaw cycles will destroy sporozoites, but they build up all summer long, so late fall and early winter is the peak of our crypto problems. Thoroughly cleaning plastic surfaces and spraying with Chlorine dioxide, especially before putting new calves into a hutch, is a key to reducing exposure.

Another very easy and inexpensive tool against crypto is to use Celmanax. Celmanax is a yeast fermentation product that can be added to the milk replacer by some manufacturers or added easily on the farm at feeding time. It reduces the ability of sporozoites to attach and invade the intestinal cells of the calf.

It also binds and deactivates many gram-negative pathogens such as E. Coli, and Salmonella. It is not a magic bullet, but it helps the calf battle a host of pathogens and seems to have no negative side effects. It comes in a convenient liquid or an even less expensive powder form. It costs 2 to 4 cents per calf per day depending on what formulation you use. You can double the dose during times of higher risk. I believe its low cost; lack of side effects and many benefits justify its use year around. If you go to YouTube and search Celmanax you will find an informative 6 minute video on this product.

Certillus is another product we are adding to milk. It is a probiotic that contains a strain of bacteria specifically selected because it inhibits the growth of clostridium. We have several clients that have substituted it into milk replacer instead of penicillin to prevent type A Clostridial Abomasitis in calves. The cost is the same as 1cc of penicillin and we don't have to worry about creating penicillin resistance and destroying good intestinal bacteria.

Merry Christmas and a Happy (and more profitable) New Year!!!!

- Jan 16th at 2 and 5pm: Colostrum and Milk Replacer - Concentration Matters. Come learn what "concentrations" are important to your success and the future of the calf. Bring a sample of colostrum and milk replacer to see exactly what you are feeding!
- Jan 29th at 5:30pm: No Kidding Around - Lambing and Kidding Tips. For all of our small ruminant clients, come learn how to prepare your barn and your soon-to-be moms for this busy season of fun!



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