

Broughton Veterinary Group

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Newsletter July 2010

PregSure BVD supplies suspended

Pfizer has decided to voluntarily stop further distribution of PregSure BVD pending further investigations into the new disease in calves known as Bovine Neonatal Pancytopenia (BNP, also known as Bleeding Calf Syndrome). This is not a product recall, but Pfizer have ceased distribution and stopped selling PregSure BVD from 3rd June.

In 2007 a new disease called Bovine Neonatal Pancytopenia (BNP) was reported in calves, predominantly in Germany, but also in other EU countries. A number of investigations are underway to identify the causes of this disease, which manifests itself in newborn calves (up to four weeks of age), in most cases after colostrum intake. Characteristic clinical signs include internal bleeding; tiny red spots on mucous membranes; black diarrhoea, bleeding from intact skin; excessive bleeding from injection and ear tagging sites and spontaneous bleeding from wounds or orifices. BNP is likely to have a multi-factorial basis and the alleged association with BVD vaccination is one of a number of possible causes being investigated by Pfizer Animal Health, research bodies and academic institutions across the EU.

Earlier this spring, Pfizer voluntarily stopped sales of PregSure BVD in Germany in order to assess whether this action had any affect on BNP rates. The cause of BNP has not yet been identified, so Pfizer has now decided to voluntarily stop sales in all EU countries until a fuller understanding of this disease and its causes are available. Pfizer's actions are anticipated to be in place while further information on the exact causes of BNP is being established. As soon as further information is available, Pfizer will re-evaluate the status of PregSure BVD, together with the relevant regulatory authorities.

The alternative BVD vaccines are Bovidec (4ml dose, in 5 dose & 50 dose bottles) and Bovilis BVD. Owing to increased demand, Bovilis BVD is temporarily out of stock. **We would continue to advise and emphasise the importance of vaccination and protection against BVD.** If you have any queries or questions about BVD vaccines, please give us a call.

In addition, please report any suspected BNP cases to the practice for investigation. The VLA are currently offering free post mortems for any suspect BNP cases.

Farmer meetings

Our next NADIS farmer meeting is on Wednesday 21 July at 7.30pm at the Royal Oak, Bitteswell. The subject for this meeting is "Beef Fertility Part 2" (AI synchronisation and bull fertility). An invite with full details will follow soon.

Toxovax Sheep Abortion Vaccine – Manufacturing problem

Unfortunately, stocks of the sheep abortion vaccine "Toxovax", for prevention of abortion in sheep caused by *Toxoplasma gondii* will be very limited this year owing to a manufacturing problem. We have been allocated a small number of doses and we are very unlikely to be able to fulfil all orders for vaccine. We will distribute our limited stocks as evenly and fairly as possible but please contact us as soon as possible to reserve some vaccine stock. There is no alternative vaccine. Please contact us to discuss alternative means of preventing *Toxoplasma* sheep abortion.

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Bluetongue Update

Following a recent meeting of DEFRA with the EU, England, Wales and Scotland have now been granted Lower Risk Zone (LRZ) status for Bluetongue virus serotype 8 (BTV8). Previously, GB was part of a single Protection Zone (PZ) of BTV8 along with the BTV8 PZs on continental Europe.

The change in GB status to a Lower Risk Zone (LRZ) has the following implications:

- Vaccinations can continue within the LRZ
- The LRZ will no longer be confluent with the European PZs, and animals will only be able to be imported into GB under stringent conditions. These are:
 - Vaccination plus a 60 day wait; or
 - Vaccination plus a test 14 days after the onset of immunity; or
 - Booster vaccination (following a primary course) within the time stated on each vaccine's data sheet

(Note – Previously, animals could be imported from within a PZ in Europe without need for vaccination or further testing and GB has been reliant on it's own system of post-import testing to minimise the risk of importing infected animals. DEFRA's Bluetongue expert group has identified the most significant risk of entry of BTV into GB as being via importation of animals, particularly as much higher numbers of animals have been imported thus far in 2010, compared with last year.)

- This gives GB much greater security against the risk of importing BTV8 infected animals
- Additional monthly testing will be required within areas of GB closest to continental Europe (i.e. SE and E England) to demonstrate ongoing freedom from BTV
- This could be the next step towards potential eradication of BTV from the UK, with declaration of freedom of disease and the benefits to wider trade that that gives.

We continue to advocate vaccination against BTV8. Vaccination remains the single most effective BTV disease prevention method, as there remains a small risk of windborne incursion of BTV8 from Europe and of foetal infection from imported animals.