

Valleywide News



VALLEYWIDE VETERINARY SERVICES

The Many Masks of Mycoplasma

Mycoplasma is a contagious bacteria that causes mastitis, arthritis, pneumonia, ear infections, and may be involved in pinkeye in cattle. Mycoplasma mastitis does not respond to antibiotics, so it's best to find and remove infected cows as soon as possible. The best way for farmers to control this bacteria is by knowing what to look for. Mastitis or pneumo-

nia that doesn't respond to antibiotics, calves with tilted heads and any aged animal with swollen joints are all red flags pointing toward possible mycoplasma infections. One cost effective measure for surveillance of a herd is through monthly bulk tank milk cultures and testing all new additions to the herd. All milk samples cultured by Valleywide's milk lab

will be screened for Mycoplasma unless stated otherwise.



Mycoplasma grows best without oxygen. These jars with lit candles inside create an anaerobic environment where mycoplasma grows over 5-7 days.

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¿Qué es un CL?

El veterinario usa un ultrasonido para ver si las vacas están preñadas y si tienen un CL en uno de los ovarios. Un CL, o cuerpo lúteo, forma en el ovario de todos los mamíferos cuando están preñada o pasando ciclos del celo. El CL forma en el lugar donde el folículo estaba y produce una hormona que se llama progesterona. Progesterona mantiene

la preñez. Sin CL, un feto en desarrollo se morirá. Las vacas que no están preñadas pueden tener un CL también. Un CL en una vaca que no esta preñada nos dice que la vaca ha estado en celo durante las tres semanas pasadas.



What is a CL?

A veterinarian uses an ultrasound machine to see if cows are pregnant and if they have a CL on one of their ovaries. A CL, or corpus luteum, forms on the ovary of all mammals that are pregnant or going through heat cycles. The CL forms where the follicle was

and produces a hormone called progesterone. Progesterone maintains the pregnancy. Without a CL, a developing fetus will die. Cows that aren't pregnant can have CL's too. A CL in a cow that is not pregnant tells us that the cow has been in heat within the past three weeks.

Not All Calcium Boluses Are Created Equal

Dr. Elizabeth Martens

Calcium boluses are an important part of any fresh cow program. They help prevent milk fever and play a role in preventing other fresh cow diseases such as ketosis, metritis, mastitis and DA. Bovikalc is one well known calcium bolus that has been thoroughly researched and shown to supply the right amount of calcium to fresh cows. It contains 2 different forms of calcium, one of which is immediately available and another that is slowly released over about 12 hours. There are many oral calcium supplements available for cows but they aren't all equal - in fact, some barely provide any calcium at all!



When considering a calcium supplement, make sure it has at least 42 grams of calcium. More calcium won't hurt a cow because her intestines won't absorb more than she can handle. This is unlike calcium bottles given in the vein where high blood calcium will cause heart attack and death. Excessive calcium given orally will simply pass through the cow and go to waste.

Calcium is available in many forms. Calcium chloride is rapidly absorbed, an excellent ingredient in a calcium bolus. It has a strong, bad flavor and is caustic enough to irritate the mouth and throat. For this reason, solid boluses are better than gels. Boluses with a coating are even better to protect the cow's throat. Broken boluses should not be used because they have sharp edges and exposed calcium chloride. Calcium sulfate is also well absorbed, but as a sustained release over a longer period of time. These two forms of calcium combined make up the Bovikalc bolus.

Absorbable Forms of

Calcium:

Calcium chloride

Calcium sulfate

Calcium propionate

Calcium propionate is a useful form of calcium, but must be given in a liquid form. Some alfalfa drench mixes contain calcium propionate and can help prevent milk fever.

Calcium carbonate (also known as limestone) is found in some calcium boluses but is not very well absorbed by the cow. Dicalcium phosphate is commonly used as a feed additive but as a bolus, it has not been studied. Calcium oxide is another calcium formulation that is unavailable to the cow. Be careful with products that have these ingredients listed because they may contain a suitable amount of calcium, but it won't be absorbed into the cow's blood stream.

Be sure to ask your veterinarian if you have any questions about calcium supplementation, and let us know if you come across any other forms of calcium for sale for use in cattle!

