



MOOSLETTER

May 2010

What's new in Strep uberis control

The current season has been a bad one generally for mastitis, and the most common culprit is Strep uberis. A recent symposium (held in Melbourne) of international mastitis research scientists discussed some of the important features of this bacteria. It is consoling to know that Strep uberis is a worldwide problem, and nobody has any more answers than we do. They concluded there are some measures that can help Strep uberis control, but unfortunately they are not 'big ticket' items.

Apart from the standard mastitis control programs, some recent (and some not so recent) innovations that appear to have some merit in controlling Strep uberis mastitis include:

- teat spraying/dipping of heifers in the transition period (up to 3 weeks before calving) has shown some positive results. Whether this also works for adult cows is not known.
- The use of teat sealants in cows at drying off helps prevent infection during the dry period
- Some producers have successfully combined a teat sealant with antibiotic dry cow therapy – see following brochure
- The use of teat sealants in heifers about 3 weeks before calving has been used with some success.
- Clean bedding in loafing areas helps reduce Strep uberis populations

Strep uberis is a difficult bacteria to control for a number of reasons, including:

- apart from spreading through the milking plant, Strep uberis is more often an environmental bacteria. So traditional control methods such as teat disinfection are not always effective
- Strep uberis commonly infects dry cows as well as lactating cows
- Strep uberis is present in the gut of cows, so it can be found anywhere cows are kept. (The more cows, the more bacteria!) It is therefore an advantage to graze dry cows on cropping or sheep country
- in addition to being present in the milk in the udder, Strep uberis invades udder cells. This puts them out of reach of antibiotics.

Scientists have been beavering away at mastitis vaccines for decades. There has been some success with vaccines against E.coli, but so far little joy with Strep uberis (and other mastitis bacteria for that matter). Sadly a vaccine against Strep uberis is a long way off.

The Teatseal® Combo Program[^] - Trusted cure plus known protection

Australian trial data¹ have shown that when Teatseal[®] is administered at dry off with Orbenin[®] Enduro, mastitis in early lactation is greatly reduced compared to when Orbenin[®] Enduro is used alone.

That's the Teatseal[®] Combo Programme – Orbenin[®] Enduro plus Teatseal[®]

- ORBENIN[®] ENDURO – TRUSTED DRY COW TREATMENT TO DELIVER SUPERIOR CURE RATES
- TEATSEAL[®] – PROVEN TEAT SEALANT TO PROTECT AGAINST MASTITIS



The trial¹, completed during 2008, showed:

- A REDUCTION IN CLINICAL MASTITIS BY UP TO 69% IN EARLY LACTATION
- A REDUCTION IN SUBCLINICAL MASTITIS
- REDUCED BULK MILK CELL COUNT AT FIRST HERD TEST (BY OVER 100,000 CELLS/ML)

At an estimated cost² of \$230 per cow for a case of mastitis, the benefits from the Teatseal[®] Combo program don't need to be large to make it pay. The trial¹ estimated that if the herd incidence of clinical mastitis was 8% or higher in the first month of lactation, the Teatseal[®] Combo program would give a positive return on investment.

teatseal[®]
PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

Enduro[®] ORBENIN[®]
Dry Cow Intramammary Suspension

[^]Combination therapy claim pending registration finalisation
¹Runciman, Malmo, Davis, Maffra Veterinary Centre 2008. Final Report. Submitted for publication. 2. Countdown Downunder.
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Twin Dip

We have recently become aware of a teat dip product available in the Northern hemisphere, specifically designed to tackle environmental mastitis bacteria. It is called Twin Dip, a Westfalia product. We have no direct experience with this product, but the principles of its action appear to have merit. It is applied at 'cups-off' and is designed to seal the teat until it is removed by another product at 'cups-on'.

Unfortunately it is labour intensive because it needs to be applied as a dip rather than a spray, and it needs to be removed with another teat dip at 'cups-on' next milking. It also appears to be more expensive than the standard iodine based teat disinfectants.

After examining the information available on the product, we think that at least it appears to have a place in blitz therapy to assist controlling an outbreak of environmental mastitis.

Our understanding is that the product is not currently in Australia, but could be landed within a couple of weeks. Please contact us or Dairy Tech Services if you are interested in further information. (P.S. Tatura Vet Clinic is NOT on commission)

PASPALUM STAGGERS

Paspalum staggers is a disease seen in cattle (rarely in sheep and horses) grazing paspalum grass infested with a fungi called *Claviceps paspali* in the seed head. The clinical signs can vary but include tremor, head shaking, loss of balance (incoordination), falling and paddling convulsions. These signs can persist for a number of days and are exaggerated with sound and movement.

Recovery is spontaneous once they are removed from affected pastures. Care should be taken when moving animals and they should be allowed to move in their own time. Care should also be taken if animals need to be approached as their movements can be exaggerated and unpredictable.

Some cows may need help to sit up in sternal recumbency. Prolonged time in lateral recumbency can lead to bloat and possibly death.

Deaths are not common from paspalum staggers unless the cows find a ditch or channel or water trough to fall into and break a leg or drown or become cast. In other words misadventure is the most likely cause of death.

Beware if you are considering grazing pastures dominant with paspalum that has gone to seed. If seed heads are prominent or you think infestation with this black looking fungus is likely, topping the paddocks has been suggested as a possible technique to avoid paspalum staggers.

