



Lameness Workshop 2008

Objective: To be able to identify, treat and prevent lame cows in your herd.

1/ Introduction

Definition of a lame cow. "Cow not bearing full weight on at least one leg and walking is affected"

Economic loss: The reproduction and production cost of lame cows is \$565 per lame cow!

Risk of inhibitory substance/ antibiotic grade.

Stress/ welfare issue for owner and suffering cows.

Incidence Rate. <7%

2/ Identifying lame cows

95% of lameness is in the feet

(Hip dyslocation from slipping on yard or bulling; Hip Arthritis of old cows or old injury; fractured leg)

Mostly in hind leg

Mostly outside claw

Locomotion scores (see chart)

3/ Examination

Equipment: Sharp hoof knife, Hoof knife pouch, hoof testers, hoof trimmers, leg rope and sharpening stone/ file

Knife sharpening- shape new knife with grinder or stone then touch up with diamond file.

Exam procedure:

- 1. tie up foot**
- 2. clean foot**
- 3. check between claws (stones & footrot)**
- 4. examine sole for holes, splits or cracks**
- 5. test claws with hoof testers for painful areas**
- 6. scrape sole and follow down any dark lines with hoof knife**
- 7. if nothing found then check further up leg**

4/ Common conditions (anatomy & photos)

A- Footrot- 10%

Cause=bacteria between claws from damaged skin

Appearance= swelling and smells

Treatment= clean out crack, spray and inject with intracillin 25ml daily for 3 days.

Prevention= find problem areas of track and repair.

B- Bruising

Cause= trauma to sole (concrete, stones on concrete, bulling on hard surface)

Appearance= red areas on sole and often affecting more than one foot

Treatment= keep off hard surface and close to shed. Milk once daily.

Prevention= Reduce time on yard by splitting herd, let cows drift up tracks and don't push cows with backing gate. Prevent stones coming onto yard with 5-10cm nib wall.

C- & Sole abscess- 35%

Cause= hard object penetrating sole eg stones on concrete

Appearance= dark hole or crack in sole leading to a pocket of pus.

Treatment= Remove foreign body and pare all under run sole. Cowslip on good claw.

Prevention= reduce stones on yard. Maintain tracks, allow herd to drift along tracks and be gentle with backing gate.

D- White Line Disease (WLD)- impaction, abscess & then joint infection- 30%

Cause= Damage to white line between wall and sole from pressure on cows on race or in yard or damaged sections of track

Appearance= discharging above hoof and /or splitting of white line often filled with dirt and gravel.

Treatment= open up hole for drainage, apply cowslip to good claw.

Note: 1 in 12 get into the joint even when treated early. Very painful.

May need amputation by Vet.

Prevention= Multiple problems normally including race problems, poor cow flow (race and shed), pushing cows on race and yard.

E- Others: cracks (vertical, horizontal, medial), growths, overgrown – 20%

F- Upper leg -5% (previously mentioned).

5/ Treatment options

Paring with hoof knife, Cowslip, Shoof boot, antibiotic spray, antibiotic injection, Claw amputation, Cull or Slaughter on farm.

Principals of treatment:

- 1- Remove all under run sole and wall
- 2- Create drainage
- 3- Transfer weight bearing away from injury site
- 4- Avoid bleeding

6/ Demonstration and Practical session

7/Prevention (See "Prevention of lameness" handout)

Cow behaviour, Race design & maintenance, Shed design and surface.