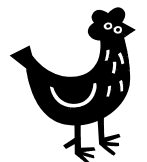


Livestock Matters

A series of newsletters/bulletins to the farming community

In this edition.....

**Use of veterinary medicines on
farms and small-holdings**



New Abattoir

The construction of the new abattoir is well underway but the facilities are only part of the requirements to meet the European Union standards. There will be many procedures that will have to be introduced to demonstrate food safety and periodically I will produce an article on a particular topic and associated issues.



If the Bulletin raises any questions please contact me and I will provide answer in the next issue.

The new abattoir on 19th March 2013 showing the eastern aspect of the build and from the left to the right the following entrances; casualty, hide room, gut room, office and hygiene. Then the two horizontal vents that will be louvered in the chiller area. On the gable is the raised entrance to the area above the slaughter hall and the ventilation mechanism. It is anticipated that the build will be complete in July but the abattoir may not be licensed for business before September.

1. Use of veterinary medicines on farms and small-holdings

VETERINARY MEDICINES :

Animal identification systems

It is essential that the correct animals are treated with the correct medicine. Individuals, groups or pens of animals must be clearly identified for the duration of treatment and the withdrawal periods and the use of any medication should always be clearly recorded. Further information on animal identification will be covered in a later bulletin.



VETERINARY MEDICINES :

Medicine security



Medicines must be placed in a secure location away from children, animals and thieves. Medicines must be kept in a lockable area of a building or in a lockable medicine cabinet if the building is open. Medicines must only be accessible to authorised staff. Unused medicines must be returned to the secure medicine store and not left around the farm.

Medicine security includes in-feed and in-water medicines as well. Any feed bins containing medicated feed must be identified and their position marked on a site map. The delivery of medication through water systems must be carefully managed to avoid medication mistakes. The water medication system must be secure in order to avoid interference by the general public or animals.

Medicine storage

Temperature requirements

Many medicines have specific storage temperature requirements so farm medicine storage areas should have maximum and minimum thermometers, and these should be monitored regularly to ensure appropriate storage. There are three main types of medicine storage:

- Frozen;
- Cold;
- Ambient.



Frozen medicine storage

Most medicines that require freezing need to be stored at -20°C in a freezer. Few farmers would store frozen medicines.

Cold medicine storage

Cold medicine stores such as refrigerators are used to keep products at between 2°C and 8°C . Some medicines on farms, including vaccines and open medicine bottles, have specific requirements to be kept within this range.

Beware many refrigerators do not run at the correct temperature and if vaccines are subjected to freezing, their activity is generally significantly reduced and they may be rendered useless. Penicillin and streptomycin injectable preparations often need to be transported and stored between 2°C and 8°C . Human food products must not be stored in a refrigerator used to store medicine. A medicine stores should be regarded as chemical stores and additional food storage facilities should be made available for staff.

Ambient medicine storage

Most medicines, including injections and in-feed/in-water antibiotic medications, have specified requirements to be stored below at 'room temperature' or 25 to 30°C . In the summer time temperatures may exceed 30°C particularly in vehicles making them an unsuitable place to store medicines.

VETERINARY MEDICINES :

Health and safety



Certain products may be more hazardous than others and need to be kept more securely so that if the bottle falls and breaks the medication does not come into contact with human skin. Prostaglandins are an example of a product that should be stored in a place where accidental exposure cannot occur. People with allergies to antibiotics need to avoid accidental exposure to those antibiotics. Inappropriate handling of medicinal products can expose staff to potential needle stick injuries. Needles must not be left in the tops of medicine bottles because it could allow the medicine to spill. Up to date medicine data sheets must be collected and stored in an accessible file.

Medicine hygiene

Medicine in a multi-use bottle which has a rubber seal, also called a septum, must be kept and stored in a clean state. If a multi-use septum becomes contaminated it can cause infection at the injection site following injection. A septum of a multi-use injection medicine should be covered and protected between uses and wiped clean before piercing with a sterile needle. The septum should be wiped in one direction using a sterile disinfectant and low-lint wipe. The septum should be allowed to dry prior to piercing it with a needle.

Vaccines should be used within 24 hours of starting a bottle so the multi-use seals are always clean.

Needles which are left inserted in a septum can allow dust and other materials into the medicine as can damage to the septum piercing it many time or by using large needles.

Syringes and needles are designed to be used just once and must not be used for multiple injections.



2ml plastic syringe cases make good covers for the multi-use seals on the tops of medicine bottles.

Equipment used to administer oral medication preparations must be thoroughly cleaned before re-use. Mould can affect the life span of medicines as well as vitamin availability and mould toxins may also affect the treated animal's immune system, reducing the effectiveness of vaccine programmes. Water quality can affect the solubility and activity of medicines delivered in drinking water, in particular, the pH and the presence of minerals.

Take care when using any washing materials to clean the water supply, feeding system or general medicine store. These washing agents may require chemical waste disposal.

Contamination by pathogens

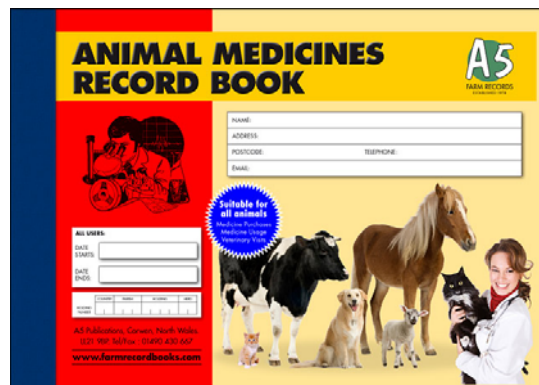
Medicine products can become contaminated by pathogens, which when administered can spread the pathogens further. Viruses and funguses can survive in antibiotic medication and bacteria, *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Enterobacter*, can survive in vitamins, painkillers, hormones, vaccines and metabolic mineral treatments.

VETERINARY MEDICINES :

Medicine use

Records of purchase and use of medicines **must** be maintained by the veterinary practice and the farmer. Records of any medicine treatment in animals **must** be kept for five years. The Veterinary Medicines Directorate's web page, <http://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/pdf/RUCOP.pdf>, has information on record-keeping requirements for farmers and veterinary surgeons and the use of the prescribing cascade.

A5 Farm Records www.farmrecordbooks.com



£5.95 (ex. VAT)

Age of products

All medicine products used on farm must be administered according to their data sheets and any labelled instructions. The age of the product, date of seal / septum breach and date of use of the product must all be recorded. Out of date products must not be used to medicate animals.

Administration route

All medications must be administered appropriately. Taking into consideration the needle length and gauge are important considerations, both for the welfare of animal(s) and the efficacy of the medication. Leaking drinkers and feeders that waste medicated feed and water into the slurry system result in financial losses and contribute to environmental contamination with medicinal products.

Accidents involving staff

Standard operating procedures should be in place to ensure that prompt and appropriate first aid action is taken if there are any medicine accidents or emergencies involving staff. All staff who suffer a 'needle-stick' injury should seek immediate medical attention and should take with them details of the veterinary practice, the bottle of medicine concerned and its data sheet. Where oil-based vaccines are involved, it is essential to emphasise the potential seriousness of the injury. It is recommended that the injured member of staff should not drive themselves to the hospital and should be driven by an associate and accompanied.

VETERINARY MEDICINES :

Accidents involving animals

Withdrawal period

It is essential that livestock keepers adhere to appropriate medicine withdrawal periods to protect consumer safety. Reliable animal identification enables all medicated animals to be easily and readily identified.

The Cascade is a long-standing legal flexibility providing a rational balance between the legislative requirement for veterinary surgeons to prescribe and use authorised veterinary medicines where they are available, and the need for professional freedom to prescribe other products where they are not. If a vet prescribes a product under the cascade the vet should determine an appropriate withdrawal period.

If a product is administered to a species not identified in the product literature, or to an authorised species at a higher than recommended dosage, it is necessary to apply at least the minimum statutory withdrawal periods or the withdrawal period stated in the product literature – whichever is longer. The minimum statutory withdrawal periods are:

- Seven days for eggs and milk;
- 28 days for meat from poultry and mammals.

For some substances, withdrawal periods that are longer than the statutory minimum withdrawal periods may be appropriate. Veterinary surgeons should use their knowledge and experience in deciding exactly what the length of time should be.

Food Chain Information

The licensing of the new abattoir requires that all animals presented for slaughter are identified and accompanied with 'food chain information' (FCI). Animals will not be slaughtered if they are not identified or if they are without FCI.

FCI requires the farmer to declare that animals on the holding:

- Are not under movement restrictions for animal disease or public health reasons; AND,
- No analysis of samples taken from animals on the holding or other samples has shown that the animals in this consignment may have been exposed to any disease or condition that may affect the safety of meat or to substances likely to result in residues in meat.

FCI requires the farmer to certify that with regard to the identified animals presented for slaughter:

- Withdrawal periods have been observed for all veterinary medicines and other treatments administered to the animals while on this holding and previous holdings; AND,
- To the best of their knowledge the animals are not showing signs of any disease or condition that may affect the safety of meat derived from them.

The FCI declarations will be available from the States of Guernsey Website to download or in hard copy format from Raymond Falla House Reception before the new abattoir opens.

Carcasses will be sampled to veterinary medicine residues randomly. Where there is suspicion that a carcass is contaminated with veterinary medicine residues the carcass will be detained and sampled. Suspect carcasses will not be released until satisfactory results are obtained.

VETERINARY MEDICINES :

Broken needles

A standard operating procedure must be in place to guide staff to record when a needle has broken off within the tissue of an animal and has not been recovered. Animals which possibly contain a fragment of needle must not be allowed to enter the human food chain.

Disposal of medicinal products

Medicine security includes the safe disposal of needles (sharps) and syringes as well as empty or partly used medicinal products such as multi-use injection medicine bottles, used intravaginal devices e.g. PRID, outdated wormers and insecticide pour-on's , etc. (clinical waste). Medicines must not be placed in normal refuse collection and farms must use suitable containers for sharps such as sharp safes and yellow clinical waste bags which are available from their veterinary surgeons. Full sharps and clinical waste containers must be sealed and labelled with the name and address of the farm of origin. The exterior of any containers must be clean and hygienic. Full, sealed, labelled, clean containers will be taken by the farmers' vets who supplied the medicines and consumables for collection and disposal at the veterinary surgery. A charge may be made for this service by the vet.



The British Veterinary Association supports the collection of sharps and clinical waste from farming premises by veterinary surgeons for disposal.

In-feed and in-water medication is not common place in Guernsey but these practices have the greatest risk of causing environmental contamination with medication. Advice on accidental leaks or planned disposal of in-feed or water medication can be obtained from the Environmental Health & Pollution Regulator Feed (EH&PR)(711161). Feed bins and water medication containers must be cleaned appropriately and the cleaning water disposed of according to EH&PR.

VETERINARY MEDICINES : Summary

- Farmers must store veterinary medicines' securely and in appropriate conditions.
- Medicine Records must be kept detailing the medicine supplied, the date, time and identification of the animal treated, withdrawal periods etc. These records must be available at all times for inspection by Officers of EH&PR, Health and Safety Executive and for Dairy Farms, Eddie Bromwell of the Dairy Quality Assurance Scheme. The records must be kept for at least 5 years.
- Carcasses will be randomly sampled for veterinary medicine residues. Suspicious carcasses will be sampled and detained until satisfactory results are obtained.
- Sharps and clinical waste must be placed in appropriate containers and when full they must be sealed and identified and the outside of the containers must be clean and hygienic.
- Sharps and clinical waste must be collected by the vet who supplied them for disposal at their Clinic.
- Carcasses must be collected by the knackerman, Alan Cox, 07781 101 383. If there is suspicion of 'Anthrax' the States Veterinary Officer must be informed, 234567, before collection.
- Where there is a risk to animal or human health placentas must be stored away from carrion feeders in strong plastic bin bags and collected regularly by the knackerman before they become putrid, fly-blown or a hazard to health.
- Where there is no risk to animal or human health placentas may be composted in a slurry store.

Ref:

Storage and safe use of medicines on farm, John Carr and Jenny Smith, In Practice, January 15th 2013.

Further Information

- Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs, Hazardous farm waste: treatment and disposal. <https://www.gov.uk/hazardous-waste-treatment-and-disposal>
- BVA Consultation document
http://www.bva.co.uk/Consultations/Documents/BVA_response_to_Defra_Smarter_Environmental_Regulation_Review.pdf
- Environment Agency, Guidance on Clinical Waste.
http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Business/appendix_6_sgn_506_1738716.pdf
- Environment Agency, Hazardous Agricultural Waste.
<http://a0768b4a8a31e106d8b0-50dc802554eb38a24458b98ff72d550b.r19.cf3.rackcdn.com/geho0309bqcw-e-e.pdf>
- Veterinary Medicines Directorate, Responsible use of animal medicines on farms.
<http://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/pdf/RUCOP.pdf>
- Health & Safety Executive, Veterinary Medicines.
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/as31.pdf>
- Health & Safety Executive, Reporting incidents of exposure to veterinary medicines.
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg141.pdf>
- Anthrax Ordinance 1950.
<http://www.guernseylegalresources.gg/article/93771/Anthrax-Ordinance-1950>