

Goatvetoz Autumn Newsletter

Goat Veterinary Consultancies - goatvetoz

Autumn 2020

Cryptosporidiosis

Cryptosporidium are single celled parasites and hence similar to coccidia. There is one major difference however—cryptosporidia can infect people. In Africa, cryptosporidia is the second most important cause of diarrhoea and death in infants.

Like coccidiosis, there are a large number of species can be the cause, some more serious than others. Also like coccidia, normal adult animals can have cryptosporidia in their faeces. Clinical signs are seen in kids under 3 weeks and include:

- Watery yellow diarrhoea
- Diarrhoea has a very unpleasant smell
- Loss of appetite
- Possible fever
- Deaths

Even if kids recover, weight gains are severely reduced in these kids.

Unlike coccidia, cryptosporidia can cross species boundaries. This means it is zoonotic but also other animals can give it to your kids. Only 10 oocysts (equivalent to an egg) are needed to produce clinical disease and are immediately infective (no need for hatching or another stage). These oocysts can last a very long time – up to a year if kept in a fridge.

Also like coccidia oocysts, they are very resistant to disinfectants. Hydrogen peroxide is the best but is difficult to buy as can be used by terrorists for bomb making. There are some effective commercial disinfectants but read the label carefully and especially the contact time needed. Steam cleaning is the best method of killing these oocysts. However mechanical cleaning out all manure can help a lot. Lots of clean bedding to separate kids from the ground &/or manure also helps.

Scouring kids should be quarantined for 1 week after they stop scouring. The best method of prevention is to give kids colostrum and remember the 3 Qs of colostrum i.e.

- Quick feeding – ideally in the first 2 hours of birth & must be within 4 hours.
- Quantity must be large enough - basically feed as much as possible in the first day (10% of bodyweight should be the aim). If on the doe, ensure the doe's teats are working and the kids are kept close and actually suckling.
- Quality colostrum – thick and full of antibodies. Make sure however the colostrum does not have CAE virus, mycoplasmas or

Worm Control

You need to work with your vet about worm drenches prescriptions and ideally get a worm plan for your goats and your farm. Read this website - www.wormboss.com.au then choose goats.

There are only a few options for milking goats in Australia which are:

- Panacur and similar white drenches - but needs a vet prescription as must use at higher than the sheep dose

-Virbamec Oral (same as Caprimec which was registered for milking goats) but needs a vet prescription as must use at higher than the sheep dose

- Copper Oxide Wire Particle boluses such as Tracerite. These only act against barbers pole worms and can't use more than 4 times a year as risk copper toxicity. There is no with-holding period for milk. You can give in a bread sandwich with treacle, molasses or honey or a saucer of molasses.

- Bioworma - but takes time to work and must be fed every day. No with-holding period.

Johne's disease bacteria. A refractometer is often used on dairy cattle farms to check the quality of colostrum.

As cryptosporidia are excreted in older animals' manure, kids being hand raised should be kept in groups that are all the same age.

Treatment is generally:

- Keeping kids hydrated, including the use of intravenous fluids. Watch their eyes- they sink back into the skull if the kid is dehydrated or use the skin pinch test- i.e. pinch some skin up then let it go; if it stays up like a small tent, the kid is dehydrated. Most kids die of dehydration.
- If giving electrolytes orally, these should be given in between milk feeds.
- There are no products registered for kids in Australia, but a vet can prescribe a calf treatment containing halofuginone.

There is a new drug registered in the United Kingdom – paramomycin (called Paroflor) and is registered both for calves **and kids**. It is given as a daily drench (or in milk) for 7 days. This works against both *E coli* enteritis and cryptosporidiosis, the most common causes of diarrhoea in kids under 3 weeks. Unfortunately it is not yet registered in Australia.

Covid-19 Precautions

I now have a Covid-19 policy on my website -

www.goatveto.com.au .

This requires that for clients that need veterinary medicines use this esky at my front door. I leave the medicine plus any prescription (in a plastic bag) inside after spraying with diluted bleach. I then spray the lid. Clients pay by BPAY after an emailed invoice.



The Australian government regards veterinarians as essential services but require vets to obey social distances and have a policy in place (see under services on www.goatveto.com.au). Non-essential vet work can't be done so castrations won't be performed unless you don't have facilities to keep a fertile male separate and this puts doe kids at risk of being mated too early. Urgent work is still being done e.g. trimming back scurs growing into a goat's head but permissions will be done by email & goat penned ready for us to treat without the owner helping. I am also using tele-medicine and PhoneAVet.

What to do if your goat/s aborts?

There are many reasons for a goat to abort but many are also zoonotic diseases i.e. that can also cause diseases in humans. This is why it is always a good idea to consult with your veterinarian.

The most common reason for a doe to abort is stress e.g. recent transportation, shearing, very cold weather or anything that releases stress hormones or causes a sudden drop in blood glucose levels. Unlike cattle and ewes, a doe's pregnancy relies solely on the corpus luteum (CL) on the ovary, not on the placenta to produce progesterone (the hormone that maintains a pregnancy). This CL can easily be destroyed.

Infectious causes of abortions include Q fever, toxoplasmosis, listeriosis and vibriosis. It is important to get a diagnosis and for this to happen you must save a foetus and some of the placenta. As some of these diseases are dangerous to people, wear gloves and place the samples in 2 thick plastic bags. Spray the outside of the 2nd bag with disinfectant. Keep these chilled until you can arrange to deliver them to a vet or vet lab. Put a warning label on the outside of the container.

Do you get my Tweets?

Do you use twitter on your mobile phone? What was your favourite Tweet last season?

See all my tweets at

www.twitter.com/goatvet Mine was about using fearlscan for wild dog & fox sightings.