Welcome to the first issue of *Paws Claws and Udder Things*, Gribbles Veterinary's new electronic newsletter. After three years and a staggering 36 editions, the decision has been taken to finally retire e-Bullet. Rest assured, however, that *Paws Claws and Udder Things* will continue to provide you with the same mix of topical and informative articles relevant to your practice.

I hope you enjoy the new format of our monthly newsletter. If you have any feedback that you would like to share please feel free to contact me.

Kevin Darling  
National Marketing Manager  
kevin.darling@gribbles.co.nz

**Brucella ovis** breakdown management

Even in the best-managed ram flocks, breakdowns in biosecurity can occur, and *B. ovis* infection develops. This will be detected at the annual ram screen when the rams are palpated and *B. ovis* complement fixation tests (CFT) on serum undertaken. If ram testing is too close to sale time a crisis ensues and questions are asked about the shortest allowable interval between testing. At this point the flock is infected and reverts to reaccreditation testing.

Faced with this situation, what should you do and how quickly can you do it?

**Step 1:** Request gel diffusion (GD) tests on the positive CFT tests. This test has high specificity. A positive GD test confirms *B. ovis* infection. For additional evidence of infection for the sceptical, semen culture of serologically positive rams could be an additional step.

**Outcome 1:** Negative GD test indicates a possible false positive CFT. Wait 3 weeks and re-test with GD. If negative again testing could stop.

**Outcome 2:** Positive GD test. Infection confirmed - move to step 2.

**Step 2:** Request *B. ovis* ELISA tests on all the sera negative to the CFT. This test has high sensitivity, as it will identify potentially infected rams earlier than either the CFT or GD.

Rams positive to the ELISA could be removed and culled at this point. If farmers insist on a re-test ensure these rams are isolated and tested again 30 days later.

**Step 3:** Separate the rams into smaller isolated sub-groups to more easily manage the disease if additional infected rams are discovered.

**Step 4:** A month later bleed the rams again. Request the ELISA test for earlier detection of positive reactors.

**Outcome 1:** All negative. This would rank as the first clear test. Wait 60 days and bleed again, requesting the CFT. If all negative at the 2nd test the flock is now accredited again.

**Outcome 2:** Positive results. Repeat step 4.

Shortcuts and earlier bleeding may lead to misdiagnosing infected animals and poses risks. If there is insufficient time available for all the tests prior to sale day the farmer may have to face postponing sales, notifying clients of the problem, or selling negative blood test, non-accredited rams with a “serologically negative to *B. ovis*” status.

If you have any questions regarding *B. ovis* testing, please contact the serology department at Gribbles Veterinary Palmerston North, and Gail Ross and her team will be happy to assist you.

Fraser Hill

Please note that the official *B ovis* Scheme accreditation certificates are now available directly from the NZVA.
Glucosuria in lambs

This test is often used as an aid in the diagnosis of enterotoxemia and this is how it should be used – as an aid, not as a definitive test. If you test normal lambs and lambs with enterotoxemia, you will find that normal lambs are not glucosuric but some lambs with enterotoxemia are. Hence, you can conclude that enterotoxemia is a cause of glucosuria. However, the real question to ask is whether there is a difference between lambs with enterotoxemia and lambs with other diseases with regard to glucosuria. The answer is no. Glucosuria also occurs in lambs with other diseases, especially nervous diseases. Try testing lambs with listeriosis and polioencephalomalacia and you will find that many are glucosuric.

The history will often give you a good idea as to whether you are dealing with enterotoxemia or not but, if you are unsure, what are the most useful post mortem findings in terms of pointing to enterotoxemia in lambs? Although changes are not consistently present, the most highly suggestive findings include pulmonary edema (heavy wet lungs and froth in airways) and excess fibrin-rich pericardial fluid. These findings reflect the action of the epsilon toxin on the vasculature. Pulpy kidneys occur in some cases but this also occurs in lambs dying of other diseases and cannot be relied upon.

So how is enterotoxemia confirmed in the laboratory? Currently, we rely on histological examination of the brain. Please ensure you submit the entire brain – lesions are not consistently present in any particular part of the brain and if only the cerebrum is submitted, as is often the case, histological examination may miss the lesions. Experimentally, some lambs dying from the disease had no brain lesions making the histological diagnosis impossible. Whether this is a problem with natural cases of enterotoxemia is difficult to determine.

Rob Fairley

Facial eczema
Spore count reporting resumes

The facial eczema season is upon us once again and we would like to encourage clinics to continue to send in their facial eczema spore counts for inclusion in the weekly facial eczema monitoring report. Counts can be submitted either by e-mail:

fe@gribbles.co.nz

or by fax:

07 850 0770

A spore count fax sheet is available from the Gribbles Veterinary Hamilton laboratory for this purpose.

The usefulness of the weekly facial eczema monitoring report (available on the Gribbles Veterinary website) is entirely dependent upon the amount of information we receive from practitioners and so we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed towards previous reports; we hope that you will continue to support this important service to the animal health sector.

For further information about the weekly facial eczema monitoring report and how you can become a contributor, please contact Lianne McClunie via e-mail:

lianne.mcclunie@gribbles.co.nz

Alternatively, Lianne can be contacted by telephone:

07 850 0777

As in previous years, a comprehensive facial eczema spore counting service is available from your local Gribbles Veterinary laboratory if required: single counts (pasture/ faeces) cost $21.75 (excl. GST); pooled counts (faeces) cost $38.00 (excl. GST).
Saccharomycopsis

The organism pictured (right), was an incidental and interesting finding in a faecal smear of a German Shepherd with chronic diarrhoea presenting to Tony Malthus, St Kilda Vets, Dunedin. The large cigar-like structures are a yeast species, Saccharomycopsis, which often arranges itself in stick-like figures. They are frequently seen in the faeces of normal rabbits and may be seen in the faeces of dogs with diarrhoea. They are considered to be of no pathologic significance.

In this particular case, the cause of the diarrhoea was never determined as the owner did not wish to investigate further. The dog died a short time later.

John Gill

Electronic submission forms now available

In response to overwhelming positive feedback from practitioners following the launch of our electronic equine submission form back in August, Gribbles Veterinary is delighted to announce that electronic versions of both our companion animal and production animal submission forms have now been created. Available in a PDF format from the Gribbles Veterinary website or by contacting your local laboratory, the forms are completely editable and so can be personalised with veterinarian/practice details and saved ready for use. For those not wishing to use the electronic format, our printed submission forms will continue to be available free of charge.

Shipper containers - a range of options

Following the publication of our article about the legal requirements for packaging diagnostic specimens destined for the laboratory in the October edition of VetScript, we have been inundated with requests for more information about the various shipping containers, or shippers, available from Gribbles Veterinary.

The photograph (right) shows the range of containers currently available - a pottle in the foreground provides an indication of scale.

The white topped shipper (third from the left) is the container of choice for most practices throughout the country. However, the larger volume shippers can be useful when submitting high volumes of work to the laboratory.

We recommend having multiple shippers in use, each permanently labelled with your clinic details. These will be returned to you routinely ensuring that you always have at least one available at the clinic at all times.

“Land Transport Rule:
Dangerous Goods 2005;
IATA Packing Instruction 650

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We recommend having multiple shippers in use, each permanently labelled with your clinic details. These will be returned to you routinely ensuring that you always have at least one available at the clinic at all times.

“The law requires the submitter to be responsible for the safety of specimens sent via courier or post”

Land Transport Rule: Dangerous Goods 2005; IATA Packing Instruction 650
Who owns BVD?
A seminar with Professor Joe Brownlie

Proudly supported by Gribbles Veterinary, the NZVA BVD Steering Committee invites you to a seminar with Professor Joe Brownlie.

Joe Brownlie is Professor of Veterinary Pathology at the Royal Veterinary College in London and is recognised as a world authority on BVD virus. He will be discussing the global perspective on BVD together with the latest on BVD control, both here and abroad. There will also be an update on New Zealand’s BVD control measures presented by local committee members.

Gribbles Veterinary is a principal sponsor for this event, along with the C. Alma Baker Trust, Intervet Schering-Plough Animal Health, LIC and Pfizer Animal Health.

Tuesday 2nd February 2010
ICLT, IVABS, Massey University, Palmerston North

Tuesday 9th February 2010
Southern Community Laboratories
444 Durham Street North, Christchurch

Thursday 11th February 2010
Heartland Hotel Croydon, Waimea Highway, Gore

Monday 15th February 2010
Tempero Centre, Ruakura Road, LIC, Hamilton

Seminars will run from 15.30 - 18.00
Afternoon tea will be provided before each event

Neonatal IgG testing

The TIA method of measuring serum IgG levels is quantitative, is recognised as the ‘gold standard’ for immunoglobulin analysis, and is accepted by major insurance companies. Due to the popularity of this recently introduced test for detecting the failure of passive transfer in foals, the special price of just $16.00 (excl. GST) per test has been extended until the end of the year.

Christmas operating hours

The Gribbles Veterinary network will be offering a full, uninterrupted service up to and including Thursday 24 December 2009. Our laboratories will then be closed over the Christmas period, reopening between Tuesday 29 and Thursday 31 December. Closing once again on Friday 1 January 2010, our laboratories will subsequently reopen and return to their normal operating hours on Tuesday 5 January 2010.

Breaking news

- Quantitative feline pancreatic lipase (fPL) and canine pancreatic lipase (cPL) testing now available - more details in the next issue of Paws, Claus and Udder Things. For further information in the meantime, please contact your local Gribbles Veterinary laboratory.

- Gribbles Veterinary has formed an exclusive strategic alliance with one of Australasia’s leading life science companies and, in doing so, will now be able to offer practitioners an extensive range of animal profiling and genetic disease and trait testing. Details of the partnership will appear in the forthcoming edition of Labtalk.

Contact us

Contacting Gribbles Veterinary couldn’t be simpler with our easy to remember e-mail addresses:

- auckland.vetlab@gribbles.co.nz
- hamilton.vetlab@gribbles.co.nz
- palmerston.vetlab@gribbles.co.nz
- christchurch.vetlab@gribbles.co.nz
- dunedin@.vetlab@gribbles.co.nz

Alternatively, you can contact any one of our five laboratories using our Free Phone number: 0800 474 225.

You are also more than welcome to use our online enquiry service, available through the Gribbles Veterinary website:

www.gribblesvets.co.nz

800 474 225
www.gribblesvets.co.nz