Although this article has appeared in Paws, Claws and Udder Things previously (December 2009), we have received a number of enquiries from practitioners during the current *B. ovis* season and thought that it might be useful to include it once again.

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 a 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 subgroups 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 second 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 or the *B. ovis* Scheme, please contact the serology department at Gribbles Veterinary Palmerston North, and Gail Ross and her team will be happy to assist you.

Fraser Hill
Podgy pooches and curvaceous cats

It’s not only us humans who have a tendency to over indulge during the festive period. What with the steady stream of friends and family dropping by with Christmas treats, and the BBQ being fired up with increasing regularity, it’s no surprise that the calorie intake of some pets may inadvertently increase at this time of year. Combined with the fact that exercise opportunities often diminish during the holidays, it’s little wonder that pets presenting at the clinic post-Christmas may be carrying a little additional weight.

Gribbles Veterinary have produced a brochure explaining to pet owners the health risks associated with obesity in companion animals. The brochure, written in plain English, explains the benefits of periodic health checks and the importance of seeking professional advice from a veterinarian. Available free of charge, these eye-catching sales aides are ideal to support existing in-clinic weight management programs.

Also available as part of the same PetCheck series, are brochures highlighting the specific needs of senior pets and pets requiring anaesthesia. We have also produced an extremely popular preventative health brochure which answers the question ‘what is pathology’ and helps veterinarians explain to clients why additional send-away testing may sometimes be necessary.

To obtain copies of these free resources, please contact your business development manager or your local Gribbles Veterinary laboratory.

Investment continues at record levels

Since July 2011, Gribbles Veterinary has spent in excess of $300,000 on new laboratory equipment, confirming the company’s commitment to continued capital investment in support of New Zealand’s animal health sector.

Purchases have included a new real time PCR machine to increase the capacity of the molecular diagnostics facility (in order to satisfy a rapidly growing case load), two new state-of-the-art Abbott Cell-Dyn haematology analysers, a gamma counter, additional microscopes, various centrifuges and incubators, a microwave histology processor, and a number of new computers.

In addition to the aforementioned capital items, Gribbles Veterinary is also in the process of upgrading all of its endocrinology analysers in partnership with Roche Diagnostics New Zealand. However, we will continue to also operate the Siemens Immulite system in order to be able to provide TSH analysis for companion animal veterinarians. Gribbles Veterinary is the only company in New Zealand performing this important endocrinology assay.

Facebook update

Approximately 4 months on from the launch of our Facebook page and Gribbles Veterinary now has over 100 followers, with the rate of new users ‘liking’ us increasing exponentially. Feedback from clients who regularly use the social networking site suggests that they particularly enjoy the What’s Up Doc? questions and value having immediate notification as to when new tests and services are launched.

It has to be said that our collective expertise in social networking and microblogging is limited to say the very least; however, in February two members of the Gribbles Veterinary team will be attending a social media seminar and hope to come back armed with the know-how to further enhance the site and it’s functionality. Watch this space!
What’s up Doc?

In the November issue of Paws, Claws and Udder Things we asked practitioners to make a diagnosis on a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, based on supplied haematology results and photomicrographs representative of the cells present in the patient’s blood smear. The correct diagnosis was:

Chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL). Because the cells in CLL are morphologically indistinguishable from normally differentiated lymphocytes, CLL is diagnosed in part by eliminating other causes of lymphocytosis (inflammation/antigenic stimulation are unlikely to cause a lymphocytosis of this magnitude). There is a mature neutrophilia with a mild monocytosis, indicative of concurrent inflammation. Mild anaemia is also noted; however, there is a regenerative response. Approximately 50% of all Cavalier King Charles Spaniels are affected with macrothrombocytopenia. This benign condition is hereditary in the breed and warrants no medical treatment.

Congratulations to Jos van Hees from Pet Doctors Hamilton who supplied the first correct answer drawn on Friday 23 December. We hope you enjoyed your bottle of wine courtesy of the team at Gribbles Veterinary.

Two plasmid-mediated AmpC B-lactamase (PMACBL) positive Escherichia coli isolates found in an Auckland cat and dog

Gribbles Veterinary recently isolated two plasmid-mediated AmpC B-lactamase (PMACBL) positive Escherichia coli isolates from separate unrelated cases at its Auckland laboratory (both from urine samples). The identification was confirmed by the ESR antibiotic reference laboratory in Porirua. This type of B-lactamase is not uncommon in human isolates (predominantly E. coli, Klebsiella, Salmonella and Proteus), but we are unaware of any previously confirmed isolates in New Zealand from animals. Typically, PMACBLs confer resistance to all B-lactam antibiotics, except the fourth generation cephalosporins and carbapenems. Both of these isolates were resistant to all of the cephalosporins tested and were only sensitive to carbapenems and aminoglycosides (e.g. gentamicin).

Contact us

Contacting Gribbles Veterinary couldn’t be easier:

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 us using our Free Phone number (0800 474 225) or by using the online enquiry service, available through the Gribbles Veterinary website: www.gribblesvets.co.nz

Last but not least, please feel free to contact your local Business Development Manager:

Lyndall Clarke (North Island) - 027 476 7714
Jack Gillman (South Island) - 027 476 7713

Breaking news

• In last month’s issue of Paws, Claws and Udder Things we included an article on monitoring for, and protecting against, facial eczema (FE). In this article we provided practitioners with a fax number for submitting spore counts for the national FE spore count monitoring service coordinated by Gribbles Veterinary. Please note that this number was incorrect and that the correct fax number is: 07 850 0770. We apologise for any inconvenience that this may have caused.

• Congratulations to Gribbles Veterinary’s Bronwyn Smits who has been awarded a Companion Animal Health Foundation Project Grant by CAS for her project ‘Canine Leproid Granuloma (CLG); a pilot trial hunting for an ecological niche’. The project is being undertaken in collaboration with Janet Fyfe of the Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory in Melbourne, and will also involve Gribbles Veterinary’s David Tisdall. More details to follow.