Brains from cattle submitted as part of the TSE scheme are currently fulfilling our OIE obligations for screening the population. Sheep and deer brain numbers have traditionally fallen short, however, and the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) encourages practitioners to collect more samples. MPI offers the incentives detailed in the table below for qualifying submissions.

To receive payment under the scheme, MPI must receive a completed TSE submission form, along with a copy of the laboratory report and a GST invoice itemising each case number. A maximum of two samples may be submitted per farm per year.

Clinical presentation in deer, sheep and goats:
- Progressive non-responsive nervous disease cases in adult sheep, goats, and deer
- Progressive non-responsive cases of illthrift in deer
- Acute or peracute pneumonia, or aspiration pneumonia in adult deer

Further information about the scheme, and a link to the printable TSE submission form, is available at the following webpage:


When submitting to the laboratory you need only send in the TSE submission form - a Gribbles Veterinary submission is not required. Heads can be submitted for brain removal here at the laboratory although there is a deduction applied to your incentive. Brains need to be removed without damage to the key sites: refer to “How to remove a brain for the TSE scheme”, available from your local laboratory, your BDM or from the Gribbles Veterinary website, for further details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Farmer incentive</th>
<th>Veterinary incentive</th>
<th>Deduction for brain removal</th>
<th>Age range accepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>$150 (excl. GST)</td>
<td>$290 (excl. GST)</td>
<td>$70 (excl. GST)</td>
<td>30 months to 9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deer</td>
<td>$100 (excl. GST)</td>
<td>$160 (excl. GST)</td>
<td>$60 (excl. GST)</td>
<td>2 years +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep &amp; goats</td>
<td>$50 (excl. GST)</td>
<td>$140 (excl. GST)</td>
<td>$30 (excl. GST)</td>
<td>2 years +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foal IgG testing

There are many factors which need to be taken into consideration when deciding if a foal IgG test should be performed and insurance is just one of them.

The IgG concentration of a mare’s colostrum should be between 4,000 and 6,000mg/dl depending on the breed. It has been reported that Thoroughbreds and Standardbreds for example, have poorer quality colostrum compared to Arabians and Quarter horses. This can be checked by measuring the specific gravity (SG) of the colostrum with a hydrometer: SGs greater than 1.060 are considered ‘good’ and generally this colostrum will feel sticky between the fingers. This should be taken into consideration if the mare has been dripping milk for an extended period prior to foaling as colostrum sources may be depleted and this could have an impact on the passive transfer of immunoglobulins to the foal.

Foals are not able to obtain antibodies from their dam during gestation due to their unique placenta. This means that at birth the foal will have an IgG concentration of 0mg/dl. The foal has specialised cells within the small intestine to combat this and to allow the absorption of larger immunoglobulin molecules. However, these cells only work at their full capacity for the first 12 hours of life and at a reduced capacity until the foal is approximately 24 hours old.

Up to 25% of foals are diagnosed with failure of passive transfer (FPT). It is the individual preference of some practitioners to wait until 24 hours before measuring IgG concentrations to ensure maximum time for immunoglobulin absorption; however, by testing before 12 hours, you create a window of opportunity to respond to FPT or partial FPT before a plasma transfusion may be required to boost the foal’s IgG levels.

Running an IgG test that results in an IgG concentration of greater than 800mg/dl indicates that passive transfer has occurred. If the IgG concentration is between 400 and 800mg/dl the foal is considered to have partial FPT. A result of less than 400mg/dl indicates FPT. Foals with a very low IgG (<200mg/dl) are more likely to suffer from a variety of infections, pneumonia and diarrhoea, as well as having an increased risk of joint infections which may be life threatening. This means that getting a quantitative result is important so that appropriate steps can be taken to improve the foal’s prognosis.

When insuring for cover for “all risks of mortality”, the IgG concentration is taken into account and the level of IgG in the foal serum must be 800mg/dl or greater to be assured insurance for this cover. Even if you are not thinking of insuring the foal, by monitoring IgG levels, especially within the first 24 hours of life, you are able to respond before the foal’s health is compromised.

Gribbles Veterinary offers the gold standard turbidimetric immunoassay (TIA) method for foal immunoglobulin analysis, a quantitative test that provides the exact mg/dl of IgG. With its superior turnaround times, the TIA method enables rapid detection of failure of passive transfer, thus facilitating earlier therapy and a better prognosis. Testing costs just $21.05 (excl. GST).

Rebecca Ham works from Gribbles Veterinary’s Clayton laboratory in Victoria, Australia and has almost 8 years experience in the equine, veterinary and animal health sectors. In addition to her role as a Client Service Manager for Gribbles Veterinary, she currently lectures on Equine Nutrition at the Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE.
Storing microbiology samples

We are frequently asked how you should store samples for culture prior to sending them to the laboratory. All microbiology samples should be placed in the refrigerator prior to sending to the laboratory. Bacteria will grow slowly at room temperature, so samples not refrigerated could grow larger numbers of organisms than were present at the time of collection. Contaminating organisms often grow faster than pathogens, so this could also result in a misleading culture result. So once a sample has been collected for culture, place it in the fridge until it can be transported to the laboratory. If you are sending samples to the laboratory via courier, include an ice pack to keep the samples cool and in optimal condition for testing.

For information on how to store your samples see this great How To sheet on our webpage [http://bit.ly/17s24Va](http://bit.ly/17s24Va). Alternatively, give your local Gribbles Veterinary laboratory a call (0800 GRIFFLES) we can help you out over the phone if you need advice!

Karen Cooper

Pet rabbits - teeth and skin

A recent Veterinary Dermatology article titled “Orodental diseases and dermatological disorders are highly associated in pet rabbits: a case-control study” may be of interest to clinicians dealing with pet rabbits:

When rabbits are presented with a skin problem, always check orodental health. Rabbits diagnosed with orodental disease (periapical abscesses, tooth malocclusion and dental spurs) have a strong statistical likelihood (63 times) of being diagnosed with dermatological disease compared to those without orodental disease. In this case series of 222 pet rabbits, rabbits were diagnosed with dermatology disease 5.6 months (+/- 0.6 months) after the diagnosis of orodental disease. The development of skin disease secondary to oral disease is likely influenced by poor body condition, hypersalivation, discharges (abcessation), and in particular, altered grooming patterns. The types of skin disease seen include otocariasis (15.9%), ulcerative pododermatitis (15.9%), moist ventral neck dermatitis (14.3%), dermatophytosis (12.7%) and wet chin dermatitis (11.1%).

D, d’Ovidio and D, Santoro. Orodental diseases and dermatological disorders are highly associated in pet rabbits: a case-control study. Veterinary Dermatology 2013 24(5); 531-534.

Bronwyn Smits

Pasteurella multocida septicemia in calves

We are now at that time of year when we will start to see cases of this disease in weaned calves. We have seen the disease in calves as young as three weeks of age but most have been weaned calves in the September to March period.

How might you suspect this disease? The disease typically presents with a number of calves sick or dead and at post mortem calves have a predominantly fibrinous exudate in the peritoneal cavity, pleural cavity, and pericardial sac. The exudate may vary from subtle to obvious.

To confirm the disease we need to isolate *Pasteurella multocida* from the exudate. Try to collect a sample before contaminating the exudate. A transport media swab of the exudate or some of the exudate collected into a small plastic container is suitable.

Practitioners have varied in their approach to treating the disease. Because of the seriousness of the problem (many calves dead within a short period) many have opted to blanket treat the entire mob.

If you encounter this disease see if you can find any possible predisposing cause. A formal study has yet to be done but from informally asking practitioners about these cases no common predisposing factor has been apparent.

Rob Fairley
What’s up Doc?

In the August issue of *Paws, Claus and Udder Things* we asked practitioners to comment on the case of an 11 year old domestic short-haired cat presenting with clinical signs inconsistent with subsequent laboratory results. The correct answer was:

After further discussion with the submitting veterinarian, he mentioned that they use 1.3 mL serum tubes to spin down urine occasionally, but discard these after use. He suspects that in this case someone was tidying up and found a clean looking, dry mini-red top tube lying about and placed it back in the drawer with the ‘clean’ tubes used for blood collection. Contamination with urine explains the “severe azotemia” seen in this case.

This a good reminder of how important it is to label all tubes used in clinic for laboratory testing, to dispose of all plastic-ware after use and to remember to interpret laboratory results together with the patient’s clinical signs!

Congratulations to Tania Wilson, Hopkirk Research Institute who wins a bottle of wine courtesy of Gribbles Veterinary.

IBR virus in calves with conjunctivitis

We have dealt with cases this season where farms have had many young calves with conjunctivitis (mainly in the form of a serous to sero-mucous discharge). They have not had rhinitis. Clinically, the problem does not look like pink eye and *Moraxella bovis* has not been recovered from these cases.

In one case the problem was suspected to be physical from the transportation of calves to the farm in open vehicles. This was concluded as the farm only had the problem in one line of calves from one farm, they were the only calves brought in like this, and tests for infectious agents were negative. Two other outbreaks were thought to be due to IBR infection. This was based on the detection of IBR virus by PCR from conjunctival exudate.

If you have cases of conjunctivitis that you do not think is pink eye and want to check for IBR virus then collect conjunctival exudate from several calves. This can be done by soaking as much fluid and mucus as possible in to a cotton tipped swab. The samples can then be combined in the lab to do a pooled PCR test.

Rob Fairley

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:

To be confirmed (North Island) - 027 476 7714
Jack Gillman (South Island) - 027 476 7713

Breaking news

- Sadly this month we say farewell to our North Island Business Development Manager, Janine Maultsaid, who has been head-hunted by a medical supplies company. Janine added significant value in clinic and will be missed by staff and clients alike. Rest assured that Janine will be replaced in due course and, if you require any assistance in the meantime, please contact your local laboratory without hesitation.

- A growing number of New Zealand practitioners have now completed the online Animal Forensics course offered through Gribbles Veterinary, preparing them for involvement in future animal investigations such as attacks on livestock, animal welfare cases and assisting Animal Control Officers investigating dog attacks. Everyone who successfully completes the course receives an animal forensics DNA collection kit which fits neatly in a vehicle glove box until required, together with a certificate that meets the Veterinary Council of New Zealand’s requirements for CPD credits.

0800 474 225

www.gribblesvets.co.nz