

Attica Veterinary Associates

116 Prospect Street, Attica, NY 14011

585-591-2660 / fax 585-591-2898 / Text line 585-356-3420

www.atticacows.com



February 2021

Welcome to our new Cattl-Tek team member– Chris Curtiss

Chris has been making his rounds and working with Roy, some of you may already have met him. Please feel free to give him a call if you need something - (518) 378-2800.

Cold Weather Care – By Dr. Noah Seward

Unlike the last few years, this winter actually feels like, well, winter. Cold temperatures, wind, and snow have been abundant. As humans, we get to head into a nice warm house when the elements become too much for us. But, for the animals we care for, often times this luxury is not possible (unless of course you have a bottle baby).

So, what are some ways that we can help our youngstock get through the harsh winter? First and foremost, giving the animals the best start is essential. Feed colostrum to newborns NO LATER than 6 hours after birth. Getting colostrum in as soon as possible will help warm the animal up and provide the nutrients the young animal needs. If an animal is born and is severely chilled (most often due to dam neglect), the newborn should be properly warmed prior to colostrum feeding, otherwise absorption of immunoglobulins and nutrients will be severely inhibited.

Check on expecting mothers frequently. If they give birth, but do not go over to clean off their young, immediate action is needed. Dry off the calf, lamb, kid, etc. using CLEAN and DRY towels. The rubbing motion will also stimulate breathing and improve circulation. When do you know the animal is dry enough? Dry hair/wool does not stick to the animal's body. The hairs should be erect. This creates a barrier of stationary air that works to partially insulate the animal from his/her environment. Therefore, you should aim for "fluff" dry. Fluff means that the hair stands erect, not lying flat against the body. Thus, you get the stationary blanket of insulating air even though the individual hairs are not fully dry. Yes, you can use a hair dryer after "fluff dry" to get rid of the remaining moisture if time and location permit. Only put coats/blankets on the newborn AFTER the animal are "fluff" dry.

For housing in cold weather, make sure to keep an adequate layer of DRY bedding underneath the animals to insulate them from a cold base. Much of the insulation value of bedding is lost when it is wet. Wet bedding can have three times the heat loss as dry bedding. Also, you can control convection heat losses by adequate soft bedding (straw/hay with a sawdust base, not just sawdust alone) to allow "nesting". You can also use calf blankets in combo with straw to decrease convection heat loss. As always, make sure to allow proper ventilation and air exchange in order to help ward off pneumonia, but make sure not to allow a draft on the animals.

Vaccinations Subject to Cold Stress

Winter cold stress needs to be considered when timing heifer vaccinations. Cold stress for month-old calves begins when outdoor temperatures fall below freezing. Remember also, the colder the temperatures below freezing, the more likely that calves may become immuno-compromised due to insufficient energy intake.

These guidelines may increase the effectiveness of your investment in vaccines:

1. When possible, schedule vaccines during the warmest part of the day.
2. Consider postponing vaccinations 1-2 days if temperatures are below 10F. Check weather reports regularly to plan for more hospitable weather, both for you and the calves.
3. Avoid additional stresses around the time of vaccinations, including the days before and after. Potential stressors include changes in feed or housing, transportation, weaning, dehorning, sickness, or prior to treatment for parasites.
4. Postpone vaccinating sick calves until they have fully recovered.

Winter Vaccine Handling Tips:

1. Never let vaccine freeze, especially when a dose has been pulled into the syringe.
2. Protect vaccines from direct sunlight, even in winter.
3. If carrying several bottles, an insulated cooler is a great tool to carry supplies and protect the unused bottled. If the weather is severely cold, a warm pack can be added to prevent freezing without raising the vaccine temperature too high.

Wanted:

Looking for a great place to board heifers—

Age 2-6mos, room for 100-120 – contact Jim Woods 585-590-9115



We want to hear from you – what are some topics you'd like to see in our newsletter? Email us at atticavettech@yahoo.com