

# **Diagnosing and Treating Calfhood Diseases**

**Always work with the farm veterinarian when diagnosing and treating calfhood diseases. He/she will advise you regarding:**

- **Threshold of symptoms that indicate treatment is needed.**
- **Selection of the drug most likely to succeed in treatment.**
- **Prescribed dose of the drug to achieve minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC).**
- **Prescribed duration of the treatment most likely to restore health and prevent relapses.**

## **1. Managing scours (diarrhea):**

- Increasing resistance through good colostrum management and adequate nutrition.
- Reducing pathogen exposure (good equipment sanitation, clean housing, and adequate ventilation).
- Reducing impact of parasite infections by feeding a coccidiostat.
- Matching fluid intake to fluid losses.
- Providing electrolytes as needed.
- Observing carefully and regularly for secondary diseases.

## **2. Managing respiratory illness**

- Increasing resistance through good colostrum management and adequate nutrition.
- Reducing pathogen exposure (housing, adequate ventilation).

- Early diagnosis and treatment (including BVD-PI screening, bulk tank sampling for mycoplasma as needed).

### **3. Managing infected navels and hernias**

- Increasing resistance through good colostrum management and adequate nutrition.
- Reducing pathogen exposure (clean calving conditions, navel dipping, avoiding exposure to adult cow manure).
- Early diagnosis and treatment.

### **4. Managing external health problems such as lice, ringworm, flies, fly maggots, pink eye**

- Reduce exposure through good environmental sanitation.
- Seasonal patterns permit seasonal treatment.
- Early diagnosis allows treatment of a few infected animals rather than all the heifers housed together.

See also the companion resource, “Managing Calf Diseases: HACCP Application” – click [HERE](#) .