



updates from the field

News

New mobile clinic for Gunning

A new CVH mobile veterinary clinic – for small animal consultations and large animal calls – will commence at Gunning on 20 October and continue on the third Tuesday of every month. CVH now operates three regular monthly mobile clinics:

Taralga - 4th Thursday

Gunning - 3rd Tuesday

Bigga - 1st Thursday

To ensure our vets are prepared, please ring us on (02) 4832 1977 to book in all mobile clinic appointments and large animal calls.

Education Award

Crookwell Veterinary Hospital staff were thrilled to win the 2015 University of Sydney Faculty of Veterinary Science Education Award for Rural Mixed Practice.

As an accredited Partner Practice of the Faculty, we host Year 3 and final year vet students for up to 4 weeks – in 2015, six students are undertaking practical rotations at the practice.

The Education Awards are judged by a panel of Faculty staff. Award winners are selected after consideration of feedback from vet students about their experience in a range of vet practices throughout the year.

Lecturer and Unit of Study Coordinator Dr Peter Higgins said "Practices such as Crookwell Veterinary Hospital play a vitally important role in the education of young professionals. This award recognises the quality of effort and contribution its staff have achieved in the training of our students."

CVH Facebook Launch

CVH has a Facebook page! Visit us at www.facebook.com/crookwellvet or click on the Facebook icon on our website home page at www.crookwellvet.com.au. Follow CVH news including special promotions such as dental health month, services (puppy pre-school and obedience classes), interesting cases linked to fact sheets on our website, seasonal disease warnings and on the first of every month we'll feature Pet of the Month (see over).

Obesity in pets

Obesity is not only one of the biggest health crises facing Australians, on average 50% of Australian dogs and cats are overweight.

It can be a real challenge to rediscover the slim dog or cat under all that excess covering. Let us help you set up a weight loss strategy for your pet. First, is your pet overweight?



1. Your dog or cat should still have a waist
2. Run your fingers over the rib cage – you should be able to feel the ribs
3. Learn your pet's healthy weight – weigh your pet on the electronic scales in our waiting room, we'll give you the right target weight.

Health issues

Overweight pets suffer from many of the same health issues we do:

1. Diabetes (Type 2) is a growing problem in both dogs and cats, and obese cats can develop a potentially fatal condition called fatty liver syndrome.
2. Extra weight puts pressure on joints and makes exercise uncomfortable.
3. Overweight pets often develop deep skin folds, setting up the perfect moist environment for inflammation and infection.
4. Excess weight prevents pets – especially cats – from grooming themselves properly, leading to matted, dirty fur.
5. Dogs fed fatty meals are vulnerable to life-threatening pancreatitis.
6. Many human treats are dangerous – chocolate can be fatal for dogs.

How to tackle obesity

The first big step is to acknowledge your pet is overweight. The second is to acknowledge that you – not your pet – control the food dish. The third step is to develop a diet and exercise plan for your pet that suits your lifestyle. Let our vets set a healthy target weight. Then weigh your pet every 2 weeks – we encourage all our clients to drop in without a consultation to weigh their pets regularly.

Talk to us about dietary alternatives. If you feel you need assistance, we stock high quality, tasty weight loss biscuits and canned food. These are properly balanced with all the vitamins and minerals your pet needs and are designed to make your pet feel full and satisfied. Prescription diets such as Hills R/D provide 40 percent of the calories of regular food – they really do work.

Become disciplined. Never leave food out between meals and don't use your dog or cat as a compost bin to clean up the leftovers. Your toughest challenge will be ignoring the pleading eyes and manipulative behaviour, but we can guarantee you will be rewarded with a happier, more active and healthier pet.

updates from the field

Calf Scours

There's nothing more disheartening for a producer than seeing a healthy, bouncing newborn calf become weak, dehydrated and ill from diarrhoea. Calf scours is the most common cause of illness in young calves and the disease has a number of causes. Like all young and vulnerable animals, calves succumb rapidly to diarrhoea – regardless of the cause – and urgent treatment is required.

Common causes of calf scours

Infectious agents such as viruses (especially rotavirus), bacteria (*E. coli* and salmonella) and protozoa (including coccidia) are the most common causes of calf scours. More than one of these organisms can be involved.

Hand-reared calves are particularly vulnerable to scours, often caused by a poor quality milk substitute, over or under-feeding or poor hygiene and failure to properly clean feeding equipment. Once the gut becomes unsettled, bacteria and viruses can cause secondary infection.

Symptoms

Calf diarrhoea is obvious and needs little description. Other signs are important to monitor and include weakness, lack of interest in suckling and feeding, dehydration and sunken eyes. Scouring damages the gut lining allowing body fluids to enter the intestine from general circulation, causing dehydration. Pinch the skin behind the calf's neck between two fingers – if the skin springs back into place, the calf is adequately hydrated. If the skin remains elevated for more than 3 seconds, treatment for dehydration is required quickly.

Treatment

The most critical part of treatment is addressing dehydration and electrolyte and energy imbalances. In hand-reared calves that are still drinking, provide water with added electrolytes in between feeds. Calves with severe dehydration need intravenous fluids. This is the fastest and most reliable way to rehydrate any animal, and the most effective scour treatment – but fluids must be administered early.

Scouring calves need extra care. Separate from healthy calves and make sure they are kept warm and dry.

Faecal examination will confirm or rule out protozoa and worm eggs, although gastrointestinal worms are usually a problem in older calves.

The diet and feeding pattern of hand-reared calves must be evaluated, but regardless of the milk replacer being fed, the scouring calf should first be given two feeds of water with electrolytes four hours apart, then milk can be reintroduced. Additional feeds of water and electrolytes in between milk feeds will help maintain hydration.

Calves need about 10% of their body weight in milk or milk replacer each day to maintain hydration – ie a 30kg calf needs 3 litres daily. When dehydrated, up to 5 litres of fluid is

October Pets of the Month



Denny, Jet and Maddy – CVH Facebook Pets of the Month!

required orally to achieve adequate hydration. Often this is impossible to deliver if a calf does not want to drink – and this is when intravenous fluids become essential.

Most scours are not caused by bacteria so antibiotics will not be effective. When a bacterial agent is suspected (*E. coli* or salmonellosis) short-acting antibiotics may be administered. It's essential to take into account meat residues – calves treated with antibiotics must be withheld from sale until the residues have disappeared.

Calf scours prevention

Colostrum (first milk) supplies important protective antibodies to all newborns – calves should receive at least two litres of colostrum within 12 hours of birth. It's good practice to collect colostrum from older cows and store in the freezer to have on hand for emergencies.

Vaccination of cows and heifers in late pregnancy may be indicated in herds that have recurrent *E. coli* scours outbreaks. The vaccination boosts antibodies against *E. coli* in colostrum and helps protect calves from infection.

Human health

People and calves can share infectious organisms such as *E. coli* and salmonella. Always wear rubber gloves and pay particular attention to hygiene when treating sick calves.

Pink eye is already causing problems in cattle.

This painful and debilitating condition spreads rapidly through a herd and early treatment is essential to minimise eye damage and limit spread. Long-acting Opticlox ointment is still the most effective treatment for clinical cases.

Contact us

Opening hours 8.30am – 5.30pm Monday to Friday | 9am – 12pm Saturday

24 hour emergency service on (02) 4832 1977

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