

Disinfectant essential to calf health arsenal

Cleanliness is next to profitability when it comes to calf rearing.

Feed manufacturer and animal health product distributor NRM markets Virkon S, a popular disinfectant suitable for calf rearing operations.

The company says Virkon is more effective than other similar products because of its unique ability to kill all viruses, bacteria and fungi known to man and animals and is cost effective.

Dilution is typically 1:100 or higher and it is the product of choice by MAF for exotic animal disease outbreaks.

It is also safe to use around animals and humans, including as a sanitiser for drinking water at 1:1000 dilution.

Virkon S's effectiveness in the presence of dirt means it is suitable for treating calf rearing areas and transport decks or cages.

The company says viruses present a major challenge to livestock health and productivity. They are difficult to identify and for many no vaccine exists.

There are few diseases which are not virus related, and frequently bacterial infections develop following a primary viral challenge.

Once established, viral diseases cannot be controlled by medication. In addition, some viruses can survive in the environment for up to 300 days - cleaning with detergents alone will not kill them.

Many animal diseases are present at low, subclinical levels - you don't see symptoms but growth rates are depressed and production low. Appropriate use of Virkon S will eliminate many of the disease causing organisms the animals are exposed to. The result will be fewer disease outbreaks, fewer mortalities, increased production and reduced animal health costs.

Virkon S is a balanced, stabilised blend of peroxygen compounds, surfactant, organic acids, and an inorganic buffer. It comes in powder form and is readily soluble in tepid water giving a clear pink solution. The product is also non corrosive and non tainting.

Its use is recommended by the company before calf rearing facilities are restocked.

After cleaning and before restocking pens and buildings, NRM advises farmers to disinfect all surfaces with Virkon S (1:100 dilution). Trailers, gates and loading facilities should also be disinfected before use. This will prevent transfer of infectious scours and other diseases to new stock.

As part of regular cleaning, the company advises spraying occupied pens using a knapsack or fogger to apply a fine mist.

In this situation, it is acceptable to use Virkon S at 1:200 dilution. This will reduce problems with respiratory diseases such as the highly contagious viral pneumonia, and ensure disinfection of hard-to-reach areas such as corners and grating.

This should be done once or twice daily in the case of hospital and nursery pens to minimise disease spread. In set mobs once or twice weekly is sufficient to prevent new infection of stock.

Feed troughs and calfeteria equipment should be frequently scrubbed and sprayed with Virkon S at 1:100 dilution, in order to avoid disease spread from calf to calf, and keep milk tubes clear of blockages and functioning properly.

Items such as ear taggers, clippers and disbudding

equipment which come into contact with raw wounds should be cleaned and disinfected in Virkon S (1:100 dilution) between each use to prevent any septic infections.

The product can also be used in all situations where animals are intensively farmed, e.g. pig and poultry units, or housed, e.g. kennels and catteries, where there are large potential problems with disease.

Virkon S, because of its full spectrum effectiveness against micro-organisms is ideal to use for its cleaning and disinfecting properties.

NRM also offers a full range of whey and casein-based calf milk replacers, calf feeds and the advice from its two nutritionists.

More? www.nrm.co.nz



Spraying out calf rearing facilities on a regular basis will help to limit the potential for diseases to take hold and affect calf growth.

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