

## **ADDITIONAL ADVICE FOR VETS AND FARMERS ON THE CORRECT THE PRESCRIBING AND USE OF CHLORTETRACYCLINE (CTC) IN CALF MILK REPLACER**

In December 2012 and June 2013, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate issued advice regarding the prescribing and use of chlortetracycline (CTC) in calf milk replacer.

The VMD advice stated that there are no veterinary medicinal products containing CTC or any other antibiotics authorised for incorporation into calf milk replacer feed by the manufacturer, in advance of immediate feeding to calves. We welcome that this appears to have been heeded, however, we still have concerns about the prescribing of CTC oral powder to routinely treat groups of calves where the veterinarian has not diagnosed respiratory disease.

The VMD has recently been made aware that, at the request of farmers, some veterinary surgeons are routinely prescribing a CTC oral powder, Chloromed Oral Powder for Calves, for groups of pre-ruminating calves for prevention of disease. We are also concerned that it is being prescribed and used for longer than the 7 days recommended in the marketing authorisation summary of product characteristics (SPC).

### **The VMD reminds farmers and veterinary surgeons that the CTC oral powder:**

- is only authorised for the **treatment** of **individual** animals, following a **clinical assessment** of those animals by a veterinarian; and
- is authorised to be administered for 7 days.

In addition:

- **Veterinarians** must be able to justify their prescriptions for CTC oral powder and keep appropriate records.
- **Farmers** should seek advice from their veterinarian, they must not request prescriptions which are against the veterinarian's professional judgement.

The routine administration of antibiotics to prevent disease, particularly when administered for long periods beyond the duration of treatment is not in accordance with responsible use of medicines. These practises promote the development of resistance which could lead to treatment failures in the future. The RCVS Code of Professional Conduct requires veterinarians to prescribe in a manner that minimises the development of resistance.

Veterinarians should advise farmers on best farming practice principles in order to minimise the occurrence of disease and therefore the need for antibiotics. Further

guidance on the responsible use of antibiotics is available from the BVA and the Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture (RUMA) Alliance.

Antimicrobial resistance threatens human and animal health and must be taken seriously. On receipt of any information of inappropriate prescribing and use of antibiotics, the VMD will take appropriate action.

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