Cattle Chat: Knowing when to retreat an illness

Providing comfort care and understanding when to intervene are keys to wellness

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Strep throat, and ear and sinus infections are just a few bacterial illnesses that might lead a physician to prescribe an antibiotic. Oftentimes relief soon follows. But when the sickness lingers, sometimes it is necessary to retreat the infection. This can be true in cattle as well.

Treatment intervals and comfort care were two topics of discussion on a recent Cattle Chat podcast hosted by the Kansas State University Beef Cattle Institute team of veterinary experts.

“With respiratory disease that is treated with a long-acting antibiotic, I tell producers to wait for 5-7 days before they treat the animal again,” veterinarian Brian Lubbers said. “That is generally enough time for the antibiotic to work and the treated animal to show signs of improvement.”

BCI director and veterinarian Brad White noted that there are differences between the drugs and the treatment situations, so he advised working with a veterinarian to come up with a treatment plan.

“If on day two post-treatment, you notice the individual is looking terrible, you may need to retreat sooner and your veterinarian can help you with that decision,” White said.

He added that producers need to start a protocol and track the results.

“Research has shown that the response rate improved if we followed a 5-7 or 7-10-day window as opposed to an immediate retreatment,” Lubbers said.

Along with antibiotic treatment, veterinarian Bob Larson stressed the importance of providing cattle comfort care.

“As the human caretaker, we can make sure the animals are not stressed by providing them a comfortable place to lay down with plenty of access to water and palatable feed,” Larson said.
To hear more of this discussion, listen to the Cattle Chat podcast online.

-30-

FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story

K-State Research and Extension is a short name for the Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, a program designed to generate and distribute useful knowledge for the well-being of Kansans. Supported by county, state, federal and private funds, the program has county extension offices, experiment fields, area extension offices and regional research centers statewide. Its headquarters is on the K-State campus in Manhattan. For more information, visit www.ksre.ksu.edu. K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Story by:
Lisa Moser
785-532-2010
lmoser@ksu.edu

More information:
Bob Larson
785-532-4257
rlarson@vet.k-state.edu

Brian Lubbers
785-532-4012
blubbers@vet.k-state.edu

Brad White
785-532-4243
bwhite@vet.k-state.edu