

Topic of the Month

Newsletter of White Oak Veterinary Clinic, PC

Mycotoxins

It is a pretty common happening for me to get asked about toxins in the feed. It's a much more complicated question than it sounds.

First of all, mycotoxins are naturally occurring substances that result from mold growth in feed. They are always present at low levels and for the most part, they survive the ensiling process. It becomes a problem when the levels are too high.

There are multiple forms of mycotoxin and they can manifest in different ways. The most common ones we encounter are probably aflatoxin, DON or vomitoxin, and zearalenone. Fumonisin is also a mycotoxin.

The signs they cause depend on the toxin involved but may include reduced feed intake, estrogenic effects, liver damage, immune suppression, decreased milk production, diarrhea, abortion, and death.

The molecular size and structure of each toxin is also different. That is important because it means that there is not a single toxin binder that can be added to a ration that will tie up every mycotoxin.

Mycotoxins are always going to be present but if they are suspected of causing a problem, it is important to test which one and how much and then adjust the ration accordingly.

Commodity Futures Prices

As of October 31, 2021

Corn	\$5.68/bu
Soybean Meal	\$332.60/ton
Milk (Class III)	\$17.85/cwt
Beef (Live cattle)	\$127.38/cwt

Practice News

- Many farms have been filling out or updating paperwork related to FARM audits or inspection. This process can be intimidating and overwhelming, but we are here to help and welcome the opportunity to be involved in this important aspect of your operation. The process starts with a signature page for a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship and moves on to document protocols for treatment, record keeping, and employee training, among other things. If you need to start or renew your paperwork, we are happy to help. Give us a call at the office.
- We have purchased a small ruminant probe for our electroejaculator and will now offer breeding soundness exams for rams and bucks.
- The *Farm, Field, and Garden* insert in the *Daily American* newspaper has been discontinued effective immediately. Both Dr. Bill Croushore and Dr. Dan Zawisza had been monthly columnists for this paper.

Upcoming Opportunities

- The Center for Dairy Excellence is hosting a series of free roundtable meetings for dairy farmers. These meetings are offered in partnership with the Penn State Cooperative Extension Dairy team and are intended as a first step in generating a business plan for your dairy. Registration is required. The two closest meetings will be held November 16 with the morning meeting being held in Martinsburg and the afternoon meeting in Grove City.
- The CDE is also offering sets of free safety signs upon request with warnings ranging from toxic gas to falling silage and even the presence of a bull.