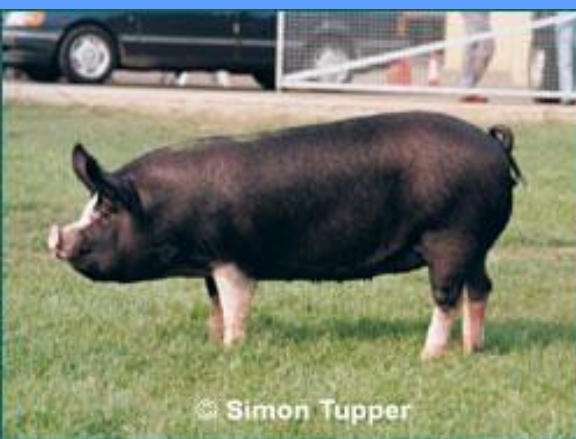


Chicken and Pig Husbandry

Fenland Goat-keepers and Smallholders Club –
27th March 2011

Katharine Jennings BVetMed MRCVS
Norfolk Farm Vets



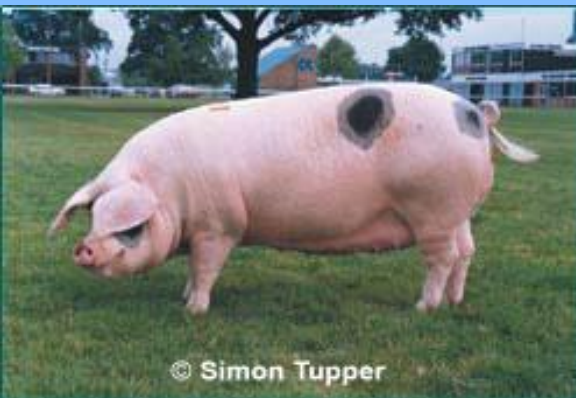
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Feeding

- Don't they just eat anything?
- Commercial pig feed:
 - Allen and Page etc.
- 1lb of feed per month of age per day up to 6lbs - Weigh to be accurate.
- Split into at least 2 feeds per day
- Troughs vs off floor.
- Other veg scraps etc.
- Nothing of animal derivation.

Housing



Environment

- Enrichment
- Water and mud
- Exercise
- More than one
- Handling:
 - Pig boards
 - Snare
 - Feed
 - Patience



Health Issues

- Pigs often don't require direct veterinary attention, however, prevention of certain problems is essential
- Safe injection and handling
- Normals:
 - Temp: 101.5°F (38.5°C)
 - HR: 70
 - Resp rate: 25-35

Vaccines



Clostridia

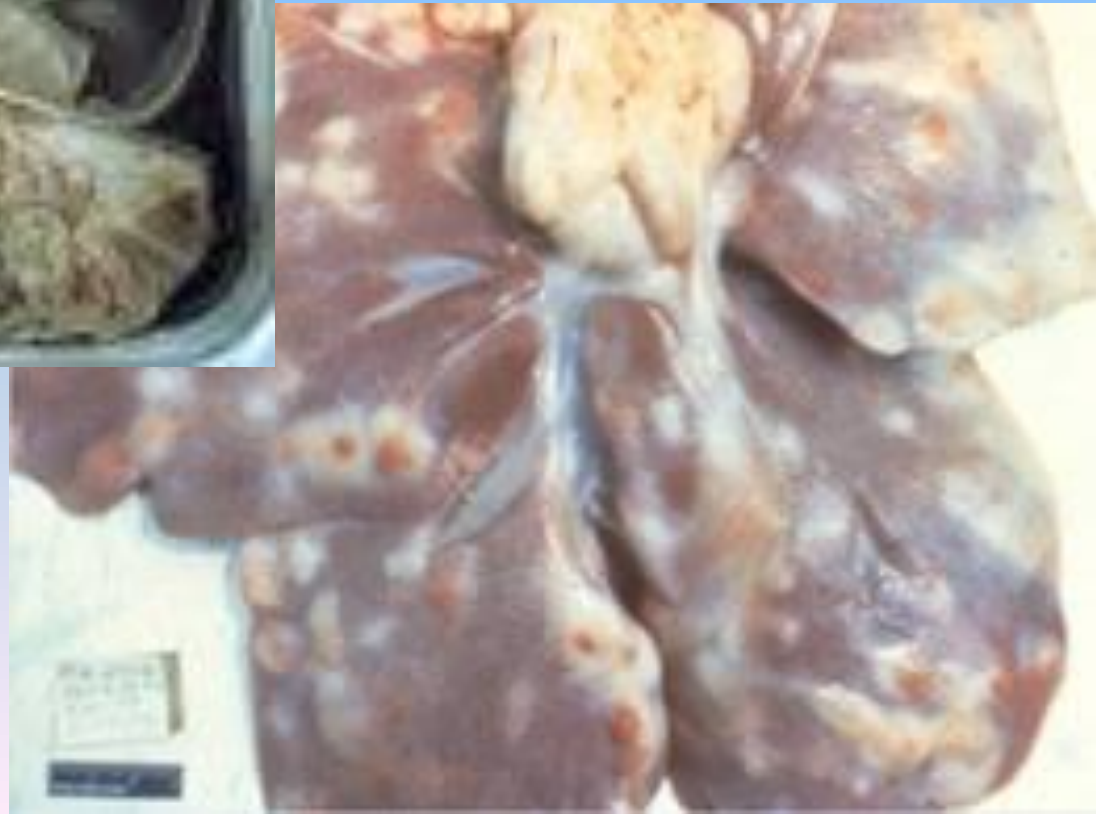


Treatment and Prevention

- Treatment is aimed at stopping bacterial multiplication, but is often too late.
- High dose penicillin.
- Vaccination:
 - Gletvax
 - Lambivac
 - Cheap:
 - From 50p/dose



Worms



Sows - Clinical signs - Piglets

- Coughing.
 - Loss of body condition.
 - Hairy pigs.
 - Vomiting.
 - Blood in faeces but rarely.
 - Anaemia.
 - Diarrhoea - sloppy.
- Coughing.
 - Stiffness.
 - Pain.
 - Vomiting.
 - Bloody diarrhoea.
 - Some mortality.

Weaners and Growers

- Strongyle infections (poor growth and sloppy faeces) within 3 to 4 weeks.
- Coughing.
- Blood in faeces.
- Pneumonia / Heavy breathing.
- Pale pigs.

Diagnosis

- Symptoms and faeces tests.
- Abattoir reports – milk spot etc.
- Treatment and control depends on understanding the life cycle:
 - Direct e.g. most gut worms.
 - Indirect e.g. lungworm and tapeworm.



Coccidiosis



Clinical Signs

- Sows – nothing, carriers.
- Piglets:
 - Diarrhoea is the main clinical sign in early stages.
 - In later stages the faeces vary in consistency and colour from yellow to grey green, or bloody according to the severity of the condition.
 - Dehydration is common.
 - Wasting.

Diagnosis and Treatment

- Faeces samples
- Post mortem examination
- Control is effected by depopulating and washing out the pen to remove the coccidial oocysts.
- Treatment is either by injections of sulphonamides or oral medication.



Lameness

- Very important condition.
- Affects welfare and productivity.
- Causes can be infectious or physical
- Routine foot trimming is sometimes necessary.
- In smallholder scenario, physical/traumatic causes are most common, and foot problems are the most common of these.

Salt poisoning

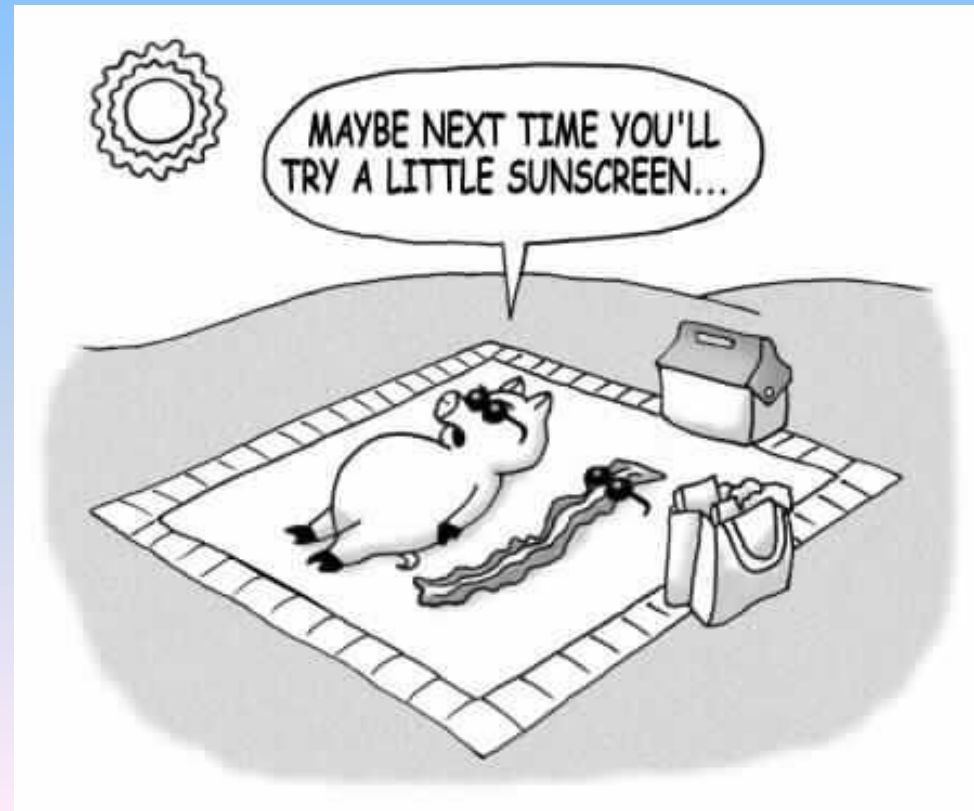


Diagnosis and treatment

- Based on clinical signs and lack of water.
- Confirmed by histo. of brain at post mortem.
- Response to treatment in advanced cases is often poor.
- Rehydration orally/per rectum.
- Sterile fluids into abdomen.
- Poss steroids.
- Check water daily.

Other problems

- Scour
- Respiratory
- Wasting
- Sunburn
- Heatstroke





CHICKEN RUN

The GB Poultry Register

- Requirement to register with DEFRA if over 50 birds.
- Although not required, they encourage flocks of less than 50 to register on a voluntary basis.
- Registration is easy:
 - Phone: 0800 634 1112
 - Post or Online at [GB Poultry Register \(http://poultry.defra.gov.uk\)](http://poultry.defra.gov.uk).

Poultry

- Selecting your chickens:
 - Specific breeds
 - Eggs vs meat
 - ‘Rescue’ hens
 - Replacements
- Why...
 - Relatively easy to keep
 - Supply of eggs and/or meat for home or sale
 - Fertilise garden and eat ‘pests’
 - Show birds

Housing

- Somewhere for your hens to roost overnight and lay.
- Secure and fox proof.
- Large enough.
- Homemade/commercial/building.
- Nest boxes and perches.
- Ventilation.
- Dust box.

Feeding

- The design of feeders is important as some diseases are spread faeco-orally so feeding should ideally be off the ground.
- A commercial layers pellet is best as this provides a balanced diet with all that the birds need. Mix with a little grit.
- Extra snacks are fine but are better fed in the afternoon to ensure the birds don't fill up on this and forget their balanced diet!
- Don't forget – no scraps of animal origin.

Handling



So What Goes Wrong??

- Respiratory problems
- Parasitic problems
- Breeding problems
- Digestive problems
- Skin conditions
- Feather conditions
- Skeletal conditions
- Nervous conditions

Positive Signs of Health

- Dry nostrils
- Red comb
- Bright, open eyes
- Shiny feathers
- Good weight and musculature
- Clean vent with no smell
- Smooth shanks
- Straight toes
- Alert and active bird

Respiratory Diseases

- Newcastle Disease
- Avian Influenza
- The biggest problem – MYCOPLASMA
- Chlamydophila
- Infectious Bronchitis
- Aspergillus
- Infectious Laryngotracheitis

Avian Influenza



Newcastle Disease



Mycoplasma



Mycoplasma gallisepticum: Clinical signs

- Foamy eyes
- Sneezing
- Nasal discharge
- Swollen eyelids and sinuses
- Reduced egg production
- Gasping
- Swollen sinuses (waterfowl more commonly)

Mycoplasma synoviae: Clinical signs

- Swollen, hot joints
- And/or respiratory signs as above



Mycoplasma: Treatment

- Antibiotics
- Tylan Soluble (Tylosin)
- Baytril Oral 2.5% (enrofloxacin)
- Tylan 200 injection (Tylosin)
- Ronaxon (Doxycycline)
- Culling



Mycoplasma: Prevention

- Minimal Stressors
- Biosecurity
- Keep dust and ammonia levels low
- High quality food
- Anticipate weather changes
- Order
- Quarantine
- Vaccine??

Chlamydophila

- Psittacosis in parrots
- Zoonotic
- Ocular /nasal discharges with distressed breathing
- Typical history – non responsive to antibacterials
- Doxycycline

Parasitic Problems

Lice: *Menopon gallinae*



Red Mite: *Dermanyssus gallinae*



Northern Fowl Mite



Scaly Leg Mite



Worms

- Gut worms are very common in chickens and the common signs include:
 - Diarrhoea
 - Poor quality shell
 - Loss of condition
 - Dull/lethargic
 - Pale wattle
 - (Death)
- *Syngamus trachea* – the gape worm is also quite common.

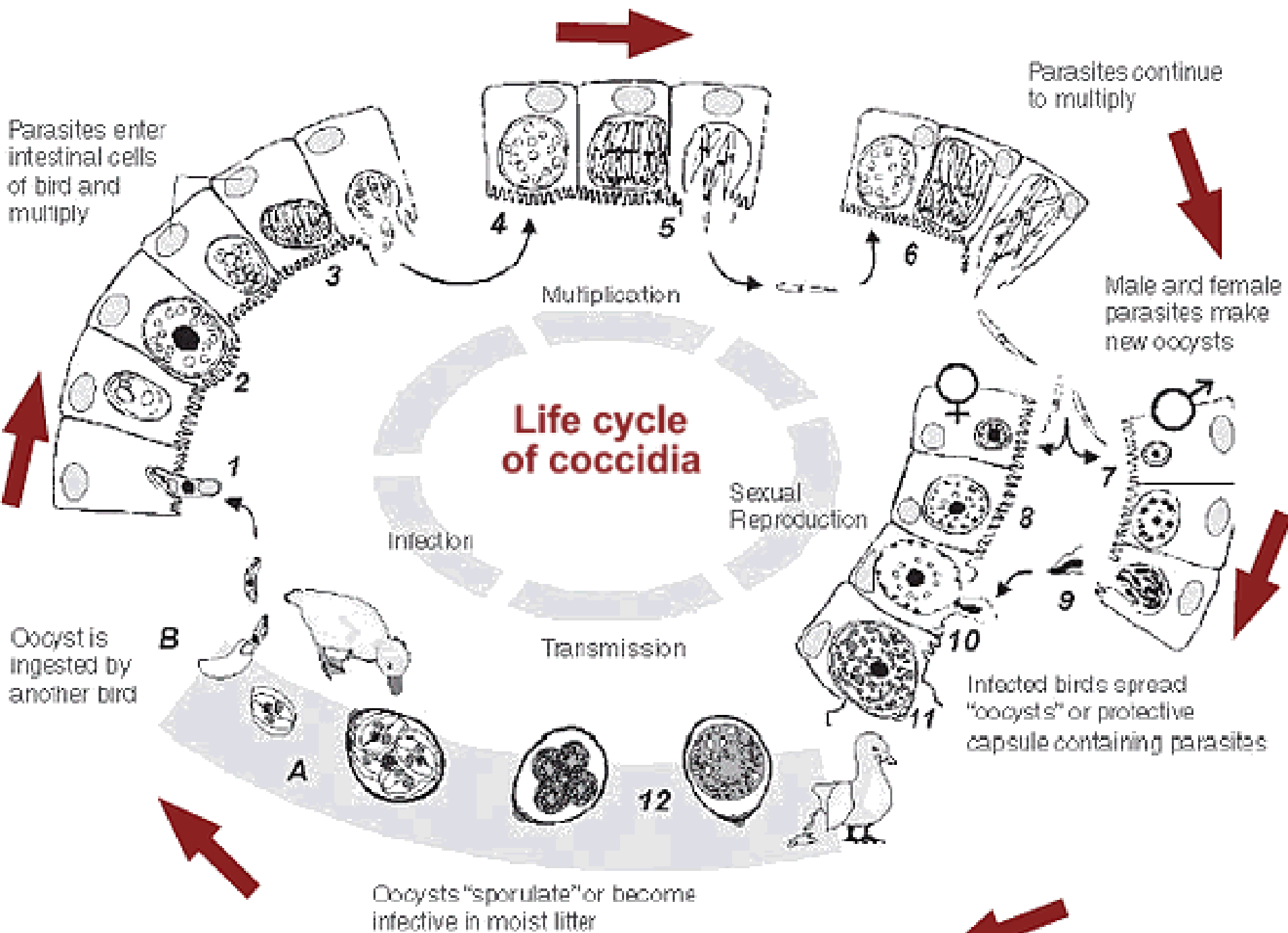
Treatments

- There are a variety of alternatives on the market, some more effective than others...
- Flubenvet is licensed and is effective and is also relatively cheap.
 - 60g tub is enough for 20kg of feed and is used for 7 days.
 - No egg withdrawal at this level.



Coccidiosis

- Coccidiosis is a parasitic disease that can cause severe losses in poultry meat and egg production.
- The parasites multiply in the intestines and cause tissue damage, lowered feed intake, poor absorption of nutrients from the feed, dehydration, and blood loss.
- Birds are also more likely to get sick from secondary bacterial infections.
- In poultry, the parasites responsible are all from the genus *Eimeria* (species specific)
- They have a 4-7 day life cycle.



Clinical Signs

- Tends to affect young birds (3-8 weeks) but not always.
- Clinical signs can be split into clinical disease and sub-clinical:
 - Sub-clinical:
 - poor feed digestion,
 - poor weight gain,
 - poor feed efficiency

Clinical Disease

- droopiness and listlessness,
- loss of appetite,
- pale combs and wattles,
- ruffled, unthrifty feathers,
- huddling or acting chilled,
- blood or mucus in the faeces,
- diarrhoea,
- dehydration,
- and even death.



Control and treatment

- Management
- Natural immunity – especially small scale:
 - But – correct load and species
- Sanitation:
 - Feeders and drinkers
 - Don't mix ages
 - Cleaning out
- Rotation

Treatments

- Natural:
 - Good general health
 - Raw milk/probiotics
- Drugs – for prevention and treatment:
 - Baycox 2.5% (Toltrazuril)
 - Amprolium
 - Paracox
- Control – good management with drugs as a backup.



Breeding Problems

Egg peritonitis

- The presence of yolk material in the abdomen, outside the oviduct.
- Normally associated with infection
- Signs are lethargy and depression but can just be found dead. They are also often anorexic and display pain.
- Treatment with antibiotics is sometimes successful.

Egg bound

- Signs of being egg bound include:
 - Endlessly sitting and straining but not laying
 - Quiet and listless
 - Distended belly
 - +/- smell
- Treatment:
 - Removal with a well lubricated, gentle finger and patience!

Digestive Problems

Crop Impaction



Skin Conditions

The comb.....

- White or pale
- Purple
- Black
- Yellow
- White spots
- White scabs and flakes



Bumblefoot



Nervous Conditions

Marek's Disease



Marek's Disease

- Herpes virus
- Affected from 6 weeks
- Signs frequently seen at 12-24 weeks
- Females>>males
- Progressive spastic paralysis of legs and wings
- Acute form: sudden death
- Passed from chick to chick
- Vaccine

I told her she was
no spring chicken...



Any questions?

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