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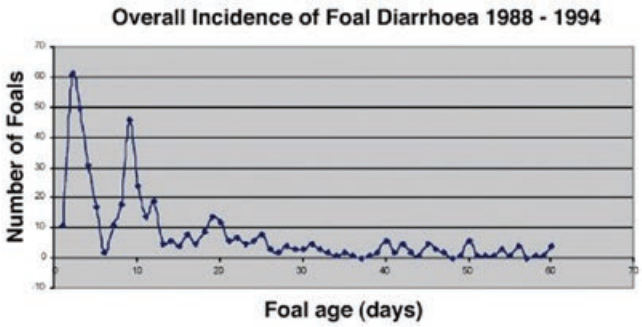
International Animal Health Products
THE AUSTRALIAN COMPANY

Probiotics and Foal Health

Chris Lawlor, International Animal Health

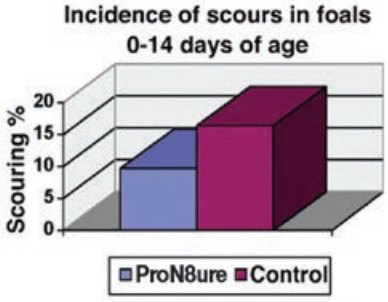
Stud staff and veterinarians are only too aware of how critically-important it is for neonates to get a good start in life and nowhere is this more crucial than in gut health. Horses rely on the assistance of a huge population of microbes in their gut (known as the microflora) to harvest essential nutrients from their diet. Newborn foals lack this population, which is established after birth and rapidly flourishes. However this process often goes astray and the all-too-common foal scours ensue.

The figure below shows data, kindly provided by Jim Rodger (Jerrys Plains Veterinary Clinic) and Clare Williams (Tatura Veterinary Clinic) and shows the incidence of foal scours recorded on a Hunter Valley stud over seven years (approximately 1600 foals). In this period about one third of the foals suffered from scours in the first 60 days of life and the graph clearly tells a story that stud staff know only too well, that despite the best of care scouring is very common early in a foal's life, especially around days 2-3 and day 9.

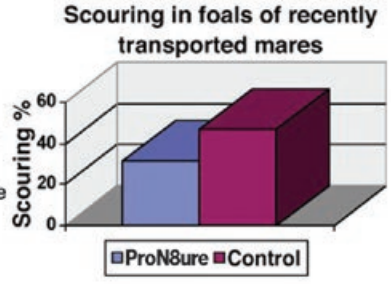


Researchers from the NSW Department of Primary Industry (DPI) in collaboration with the Hunter Valley Stud Vets Group used modern DNA techniques to monitor the makeup of the gut microflora of both healthy and scouring foals and were surprised at how few animals in either group carried members of the Lactobacillus family of organisms. As these are a well-known marker for gut health, their absence may help explain the high incidence of scours and consequently the DPI has recommended that all newborn foals be treated with ProN8ure starting from day of birth (Protexin is a multi-strain probiotic from International Animal Health).

In another trial in the Hunter Valley, ProN8ure was administered daily to a random group of foals for the first five days after birth. Of the 145 foals, which received ProN8ure, only 14 (9.7%) suffered from scours between birth and 14 days of age. This was compared to the 166 foals, which didn't receive ProN8ure, where 27 (16.3%) of them scoured in the first 14 days and showed a reduction of about 40% in the incidence of scours.

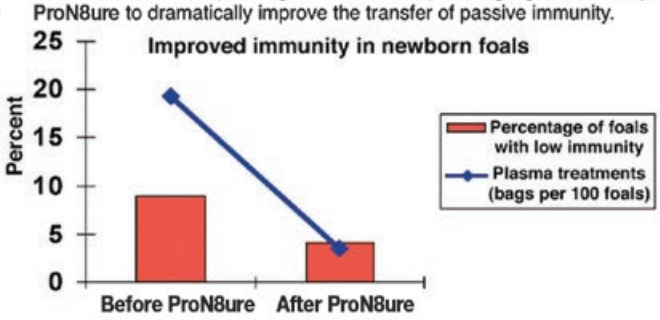


More challenging circumstances were encountered in foals subject to higher levels of stress due to the fact that their dams had only arrived at the stud within 30 days prior to foaling. In this group, 31.3% of ProN8ure-treated foals scoured within 6 weeks of birth, compared to an incidence of 46.7% in the untreated group.

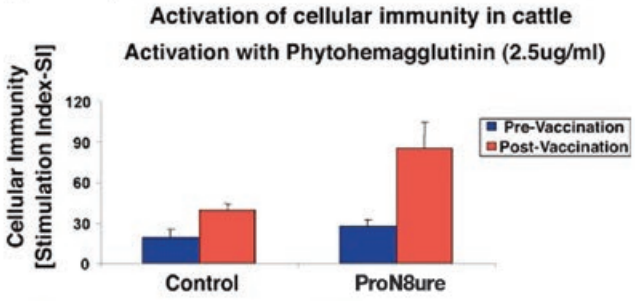


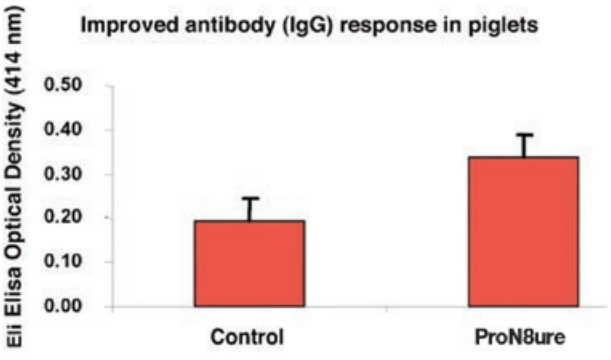
Another important issue is low immunity at birth and one large Hunter Valley stud addressed this problem by administering ProN8ure to the mares a few weeks before foaling.

The graph below summarises the results of three years before and after ProN8ure treatment (totalling over 1200 foals) and highlights the ability of ProN8ure to dramatically improve the transfer of passive immunity.



The mechanism for this probably involves improved nutritional status of the mares combined with the ability of the probiotic organisms in ProN8ure to beneficially stimulate their cellular immune system. This effect isn't just seen in horses, studies by the DPI show beneficial improvements in immunity in both ruminant and monogastric animals (see below)





Experts at the DPI explain that these effects occur via mechanisms within the immune system that are common to all animals and birds. Improvements in cellular immunity will result in better resistance to diseases, especially viral diseases, as well as enhancing the animal's capacity to respond to vaccinations.

ProN8ure is registered in Australia, not just for horses but for all animal and bird species. Its efficacy and safety are attested not just by Australian research but also by its well-established track record. It is available nationwide and comes in a variety of forms to allow easy administration to foals, growing and adult horses.

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ProN8ure
Multi-Strain Probiotic

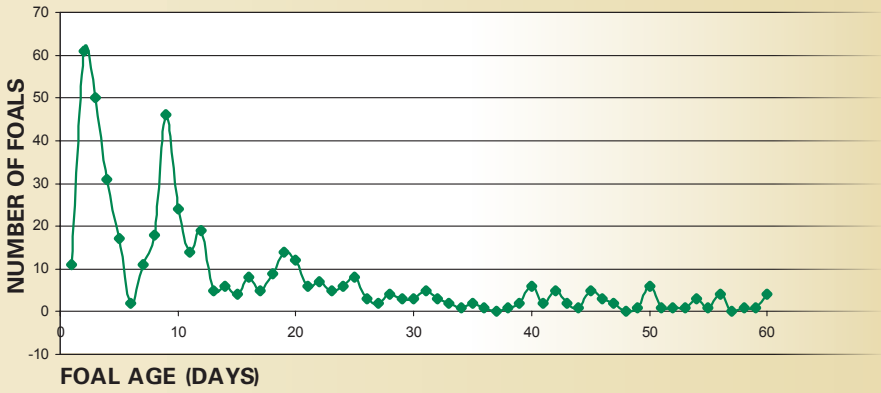
Get them off to a great start

A study by NSW Agriculture confirms the lack of lactobacilli in the gut of foals and recommends the use of ProN8ure because of the importance of lactobacilli as an indicator of gut health.

As a foal is born with a sterile gut it is quickly populated with beneficial and pathogenic bacteria from the environment. ProN8ure contains billions of naturally occurring and beneficial bacteria essential for intestinal good health.

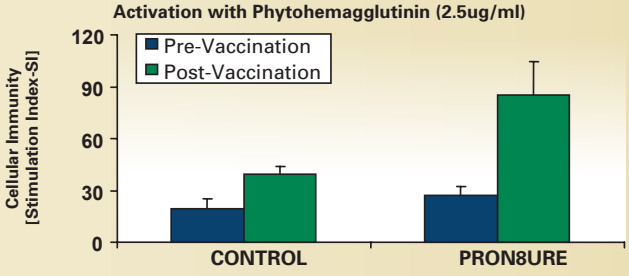
ProN8ure is recommended for at least the first 5 days to get your foal off to a healthy start.

OVERALL INCIDENCE OF FOAL DIARRHOEA 1988 - 1994



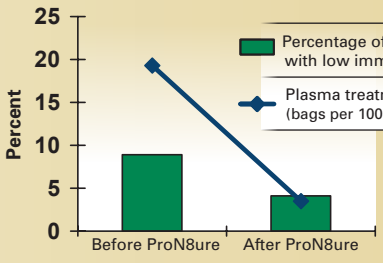
7 year Hunter Valley study with over 1600 foals by Rodger & Williams clearly demonstrates that at least 10% of foals will get scours in the 1st 5 days. It highlights the fact almost no foals scour on day 1, yet are susceptible to attack by pathogens especially in the first 5 days of life. This highlights the importance of using ProN8ure from day 1. During the first 60 days of life about 30% of all foals can be expected to scour.

ACTIVATION OF CELLULAR IMMUNITY



Published studies at NSW Agriculture confirm ProN8ure's role in activating cellular immunity with improved antibody response in neonates.

BOOSTING FOAL IMMUNITY



	Before ProN8ure	After ProN8ure
Percentage of foals with low immunity	8.9	4.1
Plasma treatments (bags per 100 foals)	19.3	3.5

This Hunter Valley study clearly shows improved foal immunity and a subsequent 80% reduction in foal plasma treatments when mares were dosed with ProN8ure prior to foaling.

ProN8ure, protect your valuable foals.

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