

# TECHNICAL BULLETIN

## Deccox vs. Bovatec

**Deccox** (decoquinate) is a coccidiostat that stops the growth of coccidia, but does not actually kill coccidia. It works by inhibiting the activity of the cell's mitochondria, interfering with energy production within the cell. Deccox provides the widest range of action of all the anticoccidial agents. Research has shown the total oocyst reduction with Deccox to be 98%.

**Bovatec** (lasalocid) is also a coccidiostat, but its action results in death of the coccidial cell. It is an ionophore that moves potassium, sodium, calcium and magnesium into the cell causing the cell to swell and burst. Bovatec works primarily on a single developmental stage of coccidia, providing a more narrow range of action than Deccox. Research has shown the total oocyst reduction with Bovatec to be 96%.

*Research studies evaluating the performance of both anticoccidial agents under the same conditions report similar levels of coccidia control.*

The amount of anticoccidial product the calf needs is based on its body size. As the animal grows and gets larger, so does the effective dose of the product. However, most calves

receive a fixed amount of milk replacer each day. By the time the calf is couple weeks old, it may not be receiving an adequate dose of anticoccidial agent.

As the calf grows it consumes more and more starter feed. To assure the correct amount of drug is consumed for adequate control of coccidia, the same anticoccidial agent that is in the milk replacer should also be added to the starter feed. With the same product added to both feed sources, the calf is assured of receiving adequate protection.

Rumensin is commonly added to growing heifer diets. Like Bovatec, Rumensin (monensin) is an ionophore and is an effective anticoccidial agent. However, Rumensin is not approved for inclusion in milk replacers.

Medicating the calf started feed with Rumensin and the milk replacer with either Deccox or Bovatec, may lead to a period of inadequate dosing and control of coccidia. If coccidia control in pre-weaned calves is the objective, providing a single, approved medication in both the milk replacer and the calf starter feed is a good course of action.

*Deccox and Bovatec are manufactured by Zoetis, Inc.*