Coccidiosis in calves and lambs:

Coccidiosis is caused by a parasite that infects 3 week to 6 month old calves and 4 to 6 week old lambs.

Clinical signs are caused by damage to the gut lining and include;

- Loss of condition
- Reduced appetite/feed intakes
- Scour (often with blood or mucus)
- Calves may be seen straining with their tail heads raised
- Long term ill thrift

With lambs and beef calves it is often the best in the group that are the worst affected as they will be ingesting more from the pasture.

Risks

- Overstocking
- Dirty bedding/feeding area
- Mixing groups, feed changes or other stressful events
- Pasture contamination

Diagnosis:

- Clinical signs and the age of the calves affected is of suggestive
- Worm egg counts – However not all coccidia cause disease; therefore the species needs to be determined by the lab in order to prove if they are causing disease.

Prevention:

- Avoid overcrowding and stress
- Cleanliness and hygiene
- There are various treatment/prevention medications available which your vet can put in place.