

## FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 2019

### ROUTINE FERTILITY VET VISITS

All dairy farmers will be aware of the benefits of keeping the herd's calving index well below 400 days and minimising the number of cows needing to be culled for fertility reasons. Having regular, structured routine fertility visits helps achieve these targets.

At a typical visit, cows will be presented to us for the following investigations:



#### POST-CALVING CHECKS

Checking high risk cows for evidence of whites approximately 3 weeks after calving e.g. cows which have had twins, milk fever, difficult calvings, retained cleansings etc. so that infections can be cleared up before they are due to be served.

#### NOT SEEN BULLING COWS

Cows which have not been seen on heat by the start of the service period i.e. 40-50 days after calving, a decision can then be made as to whether the cow is:

- cycling normally and can be left to come on heat by itself
- quiet and can be injected with prostaglandin to make her come on
- needs treating for being anoestrus or cystic with a Prid or Cidr.



#### COWS NOT HOLDING

Cows not holding can be examined at the routine visit to determine if there is an underlying cause which needs further investigation e.g. damage to the reproductive tract, lameness, nutrition, BVD, etc.



#### PREGNANCY DIAGNOSIS

All cows over 30 days served which have not previously been confirmed in calf can be PD'd and any found not to be in calf can be treated to come back into service.

Depending on the size of the herd, most routine visits would be arranged fortnightly or monthly with the added advantage of a reduced hourly rate for pre-arranged fertility work and analysis of herd fertility performance.

If you are not currently having routine fertility visits and would like to start or for more information please speak to one of the farm vets.

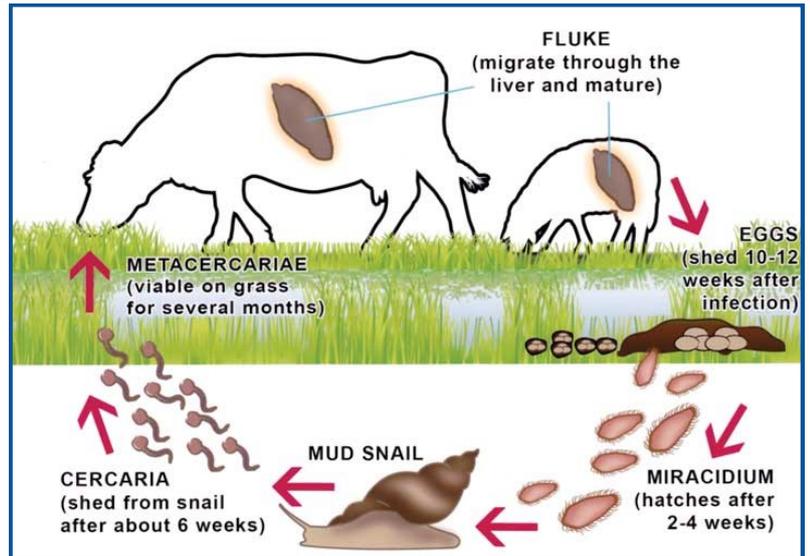
### 'BVD STAMP IT OUT' MEETING

'BVD Stamp it Out' is a national initiative which allows farmers to carry out BVD surveillance testing and drawing up of BVD control plans totally free of charge. Up to £500 of testing in total is available for farms showing evidence of infection. The testing and health planning is open to all herds with breeding cattle, even if you are already a member of a Cattle Health Scheme (e.g. Premium Cattle Health Scheme) and/or are already carrying out testing. We have an allocation of 100 farms who are eligible for funding and we already have 70 farms registered.

# FLUKE AND WORM TREATMENTS FOR CATTLE AFTER HOUSING

All the screening tests that we have been carrying out in September and October have indicated that the fluke challenge for cattle this autumn is coming later than usual. We recommend that there should be no need to treat cattle for fluke at housing but careful consideration be given to which product to use after the cattle have been housed for a while to ensure that all developmental stages are killed off.

From ingestion of the infectious metacercariae (immature fluke) off grass it takes 12 weeks inside the animal to become a mature egg laying adult fluke in the liver. Some products such as **Albex**, **Tramazole**, **Zanil** and **Rumenil** will only kill adult flukes so treatment with these drugs should be delayed until 3 months after housing so that all the flukes in the animal are adult and will therefore be killed. Waiting until the flukes are adult also allows for a pooled dung sample to be checked for the presence of fluke eggs to determine whether the animals require treating at all!



**Trodax** injection kills down to 7-8 week old immature flukes so waiting for 2 months after housing will ensure all flukes are eliminated. Triclabendazole based drenches such as **Endofluke**, **Tribex** and **Fasinex** kill down to 3 week old immatures although there is a growing problem with flukes becoming resistant to Triclabendazole on some farms.

If combined fluke and worm treatments are to be used, **Closamectin Pour On** kills down to 6-7 week old immatures, **Ivomec Super** or **Bimectin Plus** kill adult flukes and late immatures.

**On dairy farms treatment options are complicated by milk withdrawal periods:**

- **Bimectin Plus: 60 days plus 4 days after calving**
- **Closamectin Pour On: Not intended for use in dairy cows or young stock in the second half of pregnancy**
- **Trodax Injection: Not intended for use in dairy cows or heifer replacements in the last third of pregnancy**
- **Endofluke: 47 days**
- **Zanil/Rumenil: 108 hours**
- **Albex/Tramazole: 60 hours**

New fluke infections will not be picked up after housing (the silage making process will kill immature stages on grass) and no fluke product has a persistent effect so timing of treatments for maximum effect is important.

For further discussion about fluke, fluke control products, timings of treatments and milk withdrawals please speak to one of the farm vets.

## CALF JACKETS



There is definitely an autumnal nip in the air so here is a timely reminder of the benefits of calf jackets and that we stock them at the surgery!

Research has shown that maximising daily liveweight gains of dairy heifer calves before weaning results in extra milk production when they calve down. An extra 100 grams of growth per day up to weaning can result in an extra 250kg of milk produced in the first lactation.

We encourage farmers to have good ventilation in calf buildings to remove stale and humid air in order to reduce the incidence of respiratory disease. However, **it is also important that young calves are kept warm.**

As a general rule when the air temperature falls below 10 degrees Celsius at night the calf uses up extra energy just to keep warm, therefore it's growth rate will be reduced. If the calf is in a draft or has damp bedding the temperature at which it uses additional energy to keep warm will be higher.



The use of calf jackets to keep young calves warm in order to maximise their growth rates is becoming increasingly popular and is proving very successful. A recent study carried out at the practice found that calf jackets increased growth rates over winter by 0.2kg/day from birth to weaning. To achieve this with extra feed would cost over £27 per calf.

**Calves heavier at weaning tend to live longer, give more milk and are more fertile than those weaned lighter.**

We currently stock 'Cosy Calf' jackets at a very reasonable price of £20.00 plus VAT (direct debit/cash sale price).

For more information on the benefits of calf jackets and protocols for when they should be used please speak to one of the farm vets or farm vet tech Anna Ashworth.

## PASTEURELLA PNEUMONIA IN SHEEP

With the back end definitely upon us, sheep and lambs are at the increased risk of dying from or requiring treatments for pneumonia.

### CAUSE

The source of the infection is usually symptomless carrier adult animals that infect many lambs within the flock with *Pasteurella (Mannheimia Haemolytica)* bacteria which invade the tonsils but spread no further due to the lamb's immune system containing the infection. However, under certain circumstances, these organisms which have colonised the tonsils multiply rapidly and invade the lungs causing a pneumonia condition.

**Factors predisposing lambs to outbreaks of Pasterellosis include:**

- Housing
- Moving lambs from poor pasture to richer aftermath pasture in late summer
- Extreme weather conditions or changes e.g. frosty nights, warm sunny days
- Concurrent infections involving other respiratory pathogens including lungworm
- Liver fluke infestation, heavy gut worm burdens or trace element deficiencies which can all compromise the immune system
- Stress due to handling



### CLINICAL SIGNS

The clinical signs of Pasterellosis vary. Mild cases may involve a cough and discharge from eyes and nose, whereas in more severe outbreaks animals are usually just found dead. Treatment of clinical cases involves both antibiotic and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. We also say, don't waste a body. Any sudden deaths should be investigated. A post mortem can possibly identify the cause allowing prevention or treatment to protect other animals in the flock.



### PREVENTION

Vaccinating lambs with a *Pasteurella* vaccine (e.g. **Ovipast**, **Ovovac P**, **Heptavac P**, 2 doses 4-6 weeks apart) will give some protection against the disease **although not all strains of Pasterella are included in the vaccines**. Recognising the trigger factors (such as moving, handling, fluke burdens etc.) so as not to overstress lambs at vulnerable times will be beneficial.

Under certain circumstances, once a diagnosis has been confirmed, it may be appropriate to use preventative antibiotic injections on the group as part of a control programme in the face of an outbreak. For more information about vaccination protocols, trigger factors or managing an outbreak please speak to one of the farm vets.

## PRACTICE LABORATORY



Through the summer and autumn our practice laboratory has been kept very busy performing worm egg counts, coccidiosis counts, fluke egg counts and examinations for lungworm larvae on dung samples from sheep and cattle, with most results being reported on the same day that the samples were submitted. Skin scrapings and wool samples are also regularly checked for evidence of sheep scab and lice infestation.

There are other services which we can offer with a rapid turnaround time. For herds who don't milk record but want to know the cell counts of individual cows (e.g. when investigating a bulk milk cell count problem or checking on individual cow cell counts before drying off) we have a Delaval cell counting machine at the surgery which can provide same day accurate results. We can also perform bacteriology on mastitis samples to see what organisms are involved and carry out an antibiotic sensitivity test on the resultant growth.

Other laboratory tests performed in our practice laboratory include:

- Assessing colostrum uptake by calves under 12 days old from a blood sample, or assessment of colostrum quality from a colostrum sample.
- Examination of scour samples from young calves to check for Rotavirus, Coronavirus, Cryptosporidia and K99 E Coli.
- Assessment of blood samples taken from 'downer cows' to check for calcium, phosphorus and magnesium status and a test for muscle damage to predict chances of recovery.
- Liver and kidney profiles carried out on blood samples.
- Ketosis testing of blood and milk samples as part of transition cow health screening.



## RESPONSIBLE USE OF MEDICINES COURSE

**MONDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7.00PM**

**Knight's Table, Little Stainforth, BD24 0DP**

**Price: £25.00** (direct debit/cash price exc. VAT)

It is now a Red Tractor requirement for Dairy Farm Assurance for a member of farm staff to have attended a Medicines Course and a recommendation (soon to become a requirement) for beef and sheep farmers to have attended a course.

**To book a place on the course please contact the surgery by Friday 8th November 2019.**

## PRODUCT NEWS

### BOVILIS INTRANASAL RSP LIVE PNEUMONIA VACCINE

A new intranasal calf pneumonia vaccine (covering RSV and PI3) which can be administered from 7 days of age (earliest on farm application of any pneumonia vaccine). Contact the surgery for more information.

### DECTOMAX INJECTION

There are currently manufacturing problems with Dectomax with no new supplies expected for several months.

It is licensed as a single shot treatment for sheep scab (1ml/33kg i/m).

We have a small number of 500ml bottles remaining which will go on a first come first served basis.

### LEPTAVOID H LEPTOSPIROSIS VACCINE

After a year of being unavailable Leptavoid H is now back in stock but currently only in 50ml (25dose) bottles.

NOVEMBER  
2019



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