



Notice: Changes to TB testing arrangements

From September 1st this year, Defra will be changing the TB test arrangements.

It appears they are planning to do much more testing using their own staff and only ask the local farm vets to carry out the routine annual tests.

Obviously we will do all we can to try and help you manage the hassle of regular TB testing and to help ensure TB control on your farms. However as you can imagine we will be having much less input than we have had in the past.

We will keep you up to date as to how things progress. If you have any questions relating to this issue then please feel free to discuss with one of us.



Calf Pneumonia

During the busy summer months calf pneumonia is likely to be the last thing on our minds, however as with so many things prevention is better than cure and now is the time to start thinking about various management strategies that may help to reduce the incidence. Calf pneumonia is a multi-factorial disease, therefore many different preventative measures are required. Some simple ideas may include ensuring adequate colostrum intake is achieved within the first twelve hours of life, checking records - if the disease tends to follow a particular trend, it may be possible to alter routines to prevent an outbreak - and ensuring stressful procedures such as disbudding and castration occur at least two weeks before weaning. Housing and hygiene within the house are other major areas, ensuring stocking densities, air space and air flow is appropriate.

Knowledge of disease status on each individual farm is also crucial; many diseases such as BVD are highly immunosuppressive and have an extremely important role to play in pneumonia. There are vaccinations available for many of the infectious causes, once individual agents have been identified.

Used appropriately, with correct management changes vaccination can be a particularly successful way of preventing disease. Please give us a call if you would like to discuss further, alternatively there are still a few remaining herd health plan subsidy schemes running - why not take advantage of the significant financial benefits of these schemes to build in a control strategy with your herd health plan.

Health Planning Systems

As you will know, DEFRA has set a target of all livestock farmers having a working Health Planner as part of their business by 2014.

Nationally, the beef and sheep sectors are lagging behind the dairy farmers in taking up this concept. At present there is funding available to assist in the creation of such plans distributed by the NFU.

In Scotland the SAC have been promoting this idea longer and have created an on-line Health Planner System for Sheep and Beef Farmers. This was originally aimed at their own farmers but is now available to others over the border.

We are pleased to report that as a practice we have subscribed to this package from the beginning of this August and will be using it for all future Beef and Sheep Health Plans that we create. Any current Beef and Sheep Health Plans will be converted to this on-line format at their annual review.

Please contact us if you do not currently have a Health Plan and are interested in creating one while the funding is still available!

New Product: Closamectin Injection for Sheep

New Closamectin Injection for Sheep is the first 4 in 1 injection for adult and late immature fluke, worms and scab available in Europe. This brand new product contains the same unique combination of powerful early-acting flukicide (closantel) and broad-spectrum wormer (ivermectin) as the popular Closamectin Pour On for Cattle.

Recent reports from the VMD show that suspected cases of triclabendazole-resistance have more than tripled in the last year. Studies show that closantel is effective against triclabendazole-resistant fluke.

Closamectin Injection for Sheep is effective against the majority of economically important parasites in sheep and treats adult and late immature flukes aged 7 weeks and older. Closamectin Injection for Sheep also gives control against sheep scab although for complete elimination of the mite a second ivermectin-only injection (such as Noromectin Injection) must be given 7 days later. Closamectin Injection for Sheep is safe to use in rams and pregnant and lactating ewes and due to its broad-spectrum control it is suitable for use during any fluke risk period. It has a short 28 day meat withdrawal period making it ideal for use in fattening lambs. We are currently supplying 100ml, 250ml and 4x250ml multipacks. The multipack contains enough to treat 333 sheep weighing 75kg and also includes a free injector gun and neckstrap. For more details about using Closamectin Injection for Sheep for your flock, contact us direct



BVD vaccination and 'bleeding calf syndrome'

In our previous newsletter we discussed the disease known as 'bleeding calf syndrome' seen in newborn calves that are bleeding from everywhere without any apparent reason. This disease is still very uncommon with the current UK case rate being 1 affected calf in every 24,000 calves borne.

It is still unknown how this disease is caused but in Germany, where they have seen more cases, one university professor suggested that there might be a link between the disease and the use of the Pregsure vaccine (Pfizer). As a precaution the vaccine was then taken off the market.

At the moment it is not proven that Pregsure is related to the disease and apparently disease is seen in calves borne to dams that were not vaccinated. But to play it safe, Pfizer UK has recently decided to follow the Germans and have taken Pregsure off the market in the UK as well.

As there is no Pregsure available for a little while we have started using other BVD vaccines.

BVD is endemic across the UK and the chances of having a BVD calf borne into an unvaccinated herd is around 1 in 200. On top of that BVD can have a devastating effect on the fertility and production of the herd. We therefore feel very strongly that it is still advisable to continue vaccinating. If you have any questions or worries about the vaccine or if you have calves with suspicious signs please ring us to discuss.

Cattle Passports

Did you know that there are currently 18,000 head of cattle without a valid passport ?
(this according to the BCMS)

This obviously means that these animals can not be sold.

Any animal that is older than 28 days and does not have a passport, can only receive a passport if the application is accompanied by a proof of parentage. This means a simple blood test of both dam and calf which are then checked for DNA.

To avoid last minute panic, just before the sale, we recommend checking your records and to find those missing passports. This gives you enough time then to apply for a new one.

If any of your cattle turns out to be one of the 18,000 then give us a ring to discuss the procedure involved to make it legal again!

