

Whilst driving around the countryside I have noticed that there has been an awful lot of news regarding antibiotic use this month. As many of you will know through discussions with us and through the communications from your milk buyers the use of antibiotics in farm animals is under intense scrutiny as the gaze of the world's health organisations focuses on combatting the emergence of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Earlier this week there was a great deal of press coverage about a new campaign to discourage human patients and doctors from demanding and prescribing unnecessary antibiotics. Over the past year human antibiotic prescribing has been reduced by 7% (the same figure for agriculture is 13%) and campaigns such as this are expected to reduce prescribing further, in part, by explaining that in many situations antibiotics are not necessary. On a different programme there was discussion about the likelihood of new antibiotics being developed and the experts involved said there was little incentive for pharmaceutical companies to spend money developing them as they are being asked to 'develop newer, cheaper antibiotics that will be used on a small, selected proportion of

the population for whom the traditional antibiotics don't work'. Hardly a good use of research funds. For companies to develop new farm animal antibiotics there is even less incentive as new antibiotics vital for human health are unlikely to be allowed to be used.

Whilst I was thinking about antibiotics I thought I would look at our practice usage. The best thing to look at is our dry cow antibiotic sales compared to Orbeseal and last year we sold almost twice as many tubes of Orbeseal. This would suggest that you are drying off around 50% with no antibiotics. A great improvement from a few years ago and shows that you are doing your bit to reduce unnecessary antibiotic usage. Well done to all.

Ben



New Public Health England Campaign

Lungworm (Megan)

August – October is when most outbreaks occur and we have seen quite a few clinical cases in the last few months. The adult larvae live in the trachea and bronchi (lungs) where they lay eggs. The eggs hatch quickly and are coughed up and swallowed and passed out in dung. Development on pasture to the infective stage can take as little as 5 days or they can sit quietly and hang out on pasture for months or until the following year. Cows onto fresh pasture or recently turned fields are at risk and especially if they have been heavily wormed meaning they are naïve. Disease depends on how many lungworm are eaten and how the cow's immune system reacts to lungworm. Cows are often more severely affected than calves due to re-infection syndrome partly due to the fact that they are heavily wormed to control gut worms. This is why it is such an unpredictable disease which can have major impacts very quickly. Don't get caught out!
Economic importance: milk drop and poor growth/ill thrift due to respiratory disease. Major costs associated with blanket treating the herd with wormer or losing adult animals to the disease.

The treatment often involves anthelmintics, followed by antibiotics for the secondary infections and steroids to reduce the host immune response. Not ideal if the cow is in late pregnancy if she hasn't aborted already. There is still a risk that cows may die following treatment due to the allergic reaction they have to the dead worms.

What can help? Vaccination!

Vaccination reduces the amount of wormer used on farm maintaining the wormers as resistance free for times when they are indicated for gut worms. It reduces the number of animals susceptible to Lungworm as they will have some immunity. It reduces money lost due to milk drop and poor growth and ill thrift. The unpredictability of the disease can be avoided. Please bear this in mind for the Spring time.



Image for illustration only. Supplied as single dose.

Knock down disbuds (Megan)

Many of you have expressed an interest in the knock down disbudding technique. This is a good option as calves are well restrained due to the sedation and local anaesthesia, allowing calves to be disbudded quickly and checked for supernumerary teats. If facilities allow we can get through many more animals per hour than is achieved with the conventional technique. We believe this is a competitive option for your farms as we can offer the service at a reduced hourly rate, getting through animals quickly. Feedback: *'This is a good option for stronger calves, and/or you are short of labour and have got a bit behind. It is a quick and efficient method allowing you to get through a large number of calves quickly. The calves transitioned nicely at weaning and there was little distress to calves or to farm hands'*; Tim Knapman. Please get in contact with myself if you wish to know more.

NOTICE BOARD

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SCWAP meeting (Sarah)

A reminder to all NSA and non members alike there is what looks to be a really good Sheep Health, "Wealth" And Production Conference on the 22nd November 2017 at the University of Surrey, School of Veterinary Medicine, Guildford GU2 7AD. Starting at 12.30 and running until the evening. There are some really good speakers this year and its not far or expensive to get to! There is an option to stay for dinner. I and some of our flock health club members are attending, if you are interested then you can either book your tickets directly through <http://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/events> or give the practice a ring asap. If we have enough people who want to attend we may try and organise some transport.

Young stock Rearing meeting (Megan & Claire)

At 2pm on Tuesday 21st November 2017 the Strudwick family have kindly offered to host the Autumn Youngstock Rearing meeting. As a follow up to the analysis of milk replacers we have been doing this year, Carsten Pedersen from Livestock Feed Consultancy will be joining us to speak about:
 Your calf milk replacer unwrapped- what is listed on the label, what the different ingredients are and how they differ. What is the impact of having a high fat and low protein ratio powder and vice versa?
 Weaning. What do you do? Which is the best method? What is your main focus and motivation for doing it the way you do. Is it age, weight, time, concentrate intake?
 How to encourage the best rumen development and how to navigate the AHDB Calculator.
 Finally, what can the calf's coat tell you? Just by looking at them can we know that we are feeding correctly or better still can we identify specifically what may be missing in their diet? You'll find out!
 Carsten is currently involved in an on-going study rearing Bull Beef and hopes to discuss some of the findings with you. Previous to this he has been involved in many calf feeding trials working primarily in the South West and runs his own independent feed consultancy business.



Image from FWI

We look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible as there should be ample time for you to discuss with each other your approach including the successes and failures of the methods you adopt. The feedback from the most recent Beef meeting was how much they enjoyed benchmarking against each other and the discussion the meeting generated. We hope to achieve the same here. Please RSVP to myself and Claire or the office directly and we shall give you the directions and details you require. There is no charge for this meeting.

Johne's Initiative (Maarten)

In a previous newsletter we wrote about the National Action Johne's initiative. Currently 82% of the milk supply pool is committed to supporting this initiative. This includes most milk buyers in our patch. These milk buyers will request their suppliers to undertake an assessment of Johne's risk and status in conjunction with their vets. Following this a written management plan should be put in place that is agreed by both vets and herd owners. All our vets are now trained to be BCVA accredited Johne's advisors to help you to control this disease in the best possible way in your herd. Everyone will be asked by your milk buyer to complete a form. It is really important that we work together as an industry to have active Johne's disease control plans in place to help manage the disease and ensure a sustainable milk supply.

