



## February 2023 Newsletter

### The Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) scheme - annual health and welfare review

As of this year the government is offering funding to farming enterprises. Farms are to be given a flat rate of funding per hectare of land, as well as up to an additional £1000 funding for management. Farms will also be given funding to allow vets and their teams to assist them in improving the health and welfare of their livestock. The funding will pay for the vet visit and time and will also include some compulsory disease testing.

To be eligible to apply for the SFI annual health and welfare review you must have the following:

- 11 or more beef cattle. - **£522 funding for the review**
- 11 or more dairy cattle. - **£372 funding for the review**
- 21 or more sheep. - **£436 funding for the review**

Currently you must also be eligible for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS) and have at least 5 hectares of BPS eligible land. However, the review is likely to be extended to those currently ineligible for the BPS later this year.

Some disease testing **MUST** be carried out for a review to take place. The specific tests are as follows:

- Beef cattle - blood sampling for Bovine Viral Diarrhoea virus (BVD) in up to 12 animals.
- Dairy cattle - a bulk milk tank test for BVD.
- Sheep – Faecal worm egg count testing for internal parasites (worms) and, based on results, a repeat test to assess the effectiveness of the worming treatment used.

Once this testing has been carried out, the remainder of the funding goes towards creating a bespoke assessment and plan for improving health and welfare on your farm. This can include anything from more testing for other specific diseases, to vet advice about housing and ventilation in calf sheds, to a vet tech coming out to administer vaccines to your animals. The SFI also gives farms access to grants. These grants can go towards many things, ranging from equipment to new livestock housing.

This will be an excellent opportunity for you to work closely with your vet and their team. It is designed to help us work together to resolve any problems that you may have but were unsure how to approach, or felt you were unable to afford vet involvement for.

Currently this is a time limited offer, with the government stating that this will be available for 3 years as of the start of this year. Don't miss out!

To access this funding, you need to apply for the SFI standards agreement online via the Rural Payments service. More information and a guide on applying is available on the government website [www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-apply-online-for-an-sfi-standards-agreement-on-land-outside-a-common](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-apply-online-for-an-sfi-standards-agreement-on-land-outside-a-common) or you can use this QR code.

The SFI has many rules, terms and conditions that require more than a newsletter to explain. We will be holding a **MEETING** on the SFI health and welfare review to explain more about what is included and what to expect on **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February at Sedgemoor Market at 7.30pm SHARP**. If you are interested in coming, please call the office and confirm a place for yourself on 01278 663399.



## Could mastitis vaccination reinforce your mastitis control plan?

Prevention is at the centre of a forward thinking, professional and more successful dairy industry. One area of focus for many farms is reducing the impact mastitis has on their herd; both in terms of direct costs and losses surrounding damaged productivity.



The long-term success of any mastitis control strategy relies on attention to detail, realising that sometimes even the smallest of changes can add up to make a big difference to your herd. The focus for most mastitis control plans is to decrease the bacterial challenge on farm and prevent bacteria entering the udder. However, what if we could also use a mastitis vaccine, such as UBAC, to stimulate active immunity and contribute to mastitis control from every angle?

When used as part of a mastitis prevention plan UBAC can:

- Reduce the incidence of clinical intramammary infections caused by *Streptococcus uberis*
- Decrease the somatic cell count in *Streptococcus uberis* positive quarter milk samples
- Reduce milk losses caused by *Streptococcus uberis* intramammary infections.

Given the persistent and frustrating nature of *Streptococcus uberis*, having a vaccine available that can support and contribute to significant improvements within a herd can really shift the balance of mastitis control success.

**If you feel you could be doing more to control mastitis, contact the practice and ask about making vaccination part of your mastitis prevention plan.**

## Subsidised respiratory testing

This time of year can be difficult for young cattle, as they are housed and must cope with extremes in temperature from lows of below 5 degrees Celsius in the night to above 15 degrees Celsius in the day. We find that this is a common time of year for youngstock to experience increased incidences of pneumonia. Improving housing and ventilation, focusing on hygiene and maintaining an appropriate stocking density are all proven ways to reduce the risk of pneumonia in calves. Another tool in your arsenal for protecting your youngstock is vaccination.

MSD and Virbac are currently offering subsidised pneumonia testing for up to 5 calves. This testing should be done on calves that have been affected by pneumonia that are at least 4 months old at the time of testing. The results can help to select the correct vaccine to use on farm to protect your youngstock.

If you are having respiratory issues with your youngstock and are interested in carrying out some testing please call the office so we can arrange time to take the samples.



## Congratulations Eoghan!

Eoghan has recently passed his post-graduate Certificate in Cattle Health, granting him the title of Advanced Practitioner.

This qualification required many case reports, many exams and literature reviews. Well done Eoghan McAlonan BVMS **Cert AVP** MRCVS!



## SHEEP AND GOAT MEETING FOR SMALL FLOCKS

The next meeting of our Small Flock Club '**The Essentials of Lambing**' will take place on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm at Sampford Farm, Sampford Arundel, Wellington, TA21 9QN. Mrs Kathleen Hill produces Pedigree Suffolk breeding stock with a keen attention to detail and thus this event will be informative for all.

This event is FREE to 'Sheep and Goat Club Members' and £15 to non-members.

Food and refreshments will be provided.

Please call any of our branches today to book your place OR to sign up to become a 'Sheep and Goat Club Member'.