

August 2023 Newsletter

NSAID use in lame and calving cows—Kieran Woodland

Rearing heifers is a substantial cost to the farmer, with return not being recouped until 2nd lactation. Research suggests that 17% of heifers are culled before they reach 2nd lactation, so it is vital to ensure heifers are well looked after during transition into the milking herd as they are still growing and developing. This is particularly important when it comes to foot health as evidence shows that lameness in cows starts as disease in heifers. This is primarily because the fat pad inside the hoof is thinnest in maiden and milking heifers. Inflammation around the time of calving may affect physiological processes in the hoof, such as breakdown of the digital cushion or weakening of the ligaments within the hoof, which could thereby predispose a cow to claw horn lesions causing lameness.



Studies illustrate that the administration of an anti-inflammatory (Metacam or Ketofen) at first and subsequent calvings as well as at lameness treatments (in conjunction to therapeutic trimming and appropriate application of hoof blocks) could reduce lameness prevalence by approximately 10% compared with animals receiving either no anti-inflammatories or only when treating lameness. Additionally, use of anti-inflammatories leads to a 3% reduction in severe lameness. Less lameness around calving leads to increased productivity from the heifer and a greater chance of achieving a second calving. This strategic use of NSAIDs around calving can not only manage pain, but also have a positive effect on levels of disease as well as increase milk yield for the subsequent lactation.

This strategy of anti-inflammatory use should be employed in conjunction with all the normal strategies of lameness reduction such as footbathing, regular trimming, ensuring tracks are well maintained, reducing walking distances where possible, avoiding poaching, etc.



Meeting on Calf Health and Rearing

We will be holding a meeting on calf health, where we will be discussing colostrum management and Johnes control, demonstrating the work our Vet Techs are carrying out regarding disbudding and growth rate monitoring, and discussing the importance of nutrition and growth rates.

The meeting will be held at Bickenhall farm, Bickenhall, Taunton, TA3 6TX at **11am on Tuesday the 8th of August.**

Lunch will be provided.

Please call the office to book on if you are interested in attending.

Honiton Show Art Competition

The art competition is returning for our annual stint at Honiton Show, with the theme being "On the Farm" so get creative and get arty. Please drop entries into any office or even bring them with you on the day. Prizes for 1st, 2nd & 3rd! It will be great to see you all again!

FASTEST, MOST ACCURATE WORM EGG COUNTING TECHNOLOGY AT FARMVETS SOUTHWEST

We are now one of just a handful of Veterinary Practices in the UK with brand-new technology for Faecal Worm Egg Counting. The Ovacyte© machine allows incredible increased levels of accuracy and speed of results in determining whether your sheep, cattle or goats need treatment for worms or not. This machine enhances the accuracy of faecal worm egg counting over the traditional McMaster Method with reliable diagnostic repeatability.



As you will know wormer resistance is a real problem in the sheep industry and it is beginning to rear its head in the cattle industry as well. Using wormers only when we need them rather than as a matter of routine will help maintain these products for when we need them. Furthermore, we frequently find where people are routinely worming cattle that there is no need due to there being no worms present in the cattle. So...Why not...

SAVE MONEY AND TIME

REDUCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESISTANCE

IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF YOUR STOCK

How to take a dung sample?

Walk into field with cattle/sheep and take 10-15 individual fresh dung samples in gloves. Cattle/Sheep will pass faeces as they run towards/away from you in the paddock. Pop them in a long glove/plastic container. Keep them in the fridge prior to submission. Please submit within 24-48 hours of collection.

Where to drop your dung samples?

All Dung Samples can be dropped to our Bridgwater branch. For our Ilminster and Yarcombe clients we will be providing a **sample pick up service** as part of our Vet Tech run on a Wednesday. We would kindly ask that you please notify the practice on **Monday/Tuesday** of the week with clear details as to *where the sample will be left on farm for the Vet Techs to collect*.

We will not be carrying out faecal worm egg counts in our Ilminster and Yarcombe branches so if you have a sample, please notify us for Wednesday collection or drop to Bridgwater directly.