



FarmVets

SOUTHWEST



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Newsletter December 2014

MONITORING NUTRITION IN YOUR HERD

Pete O'Malley

It was great to see those of you who made it to our nutrition meeting earlier in November. For those of you unable to make it I thought I'd take you through my part of the talk in monthly instalments. The basic principles of nutritional monitoring can be divided into two parts:



During the routine-the 3 F's: Fertility, Faeces and Fresh Cows
Beyond the routine-the 3 S's: Sampling, Scoring and Statistics

This month I'm focusing on the first "F"- Fertility. Aside from the obvious benefits regarding fertility management, routine visits offer a good opportunity to monitor how your herd is responding to their ration. Energy is generally considered to be the major factor that influences fertility, with the associated problems reflective of the stage of reproduction of the affected individual.

Early lactation presents problems associated with uterine health and recovery from calving, including retained fetal membranes, metritis, and endometritis. The fertility problems we encounter further through lactation are associated with hormone imbalances as a result of, primarily, excessive negative energy balance. These include delayed and poor follicular growth, ovarian cysts, and early embryonic death.

If you are seeing an abnormally high number of any of the problems mentioned above, then it's likely your nutrition needs reviewing in order to (amongst other things) minimise the negative energy balance occurring in early lactation. This will reduce costs of hormone treatment and increase profitability through reduced days open, increased conception rates, and an overall decrease in calving interval.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR OFFICE OPENING HOURS

Our offices are open as normal over the Christmas period except for the following:



Christmas Eve: Close at 3 pm

Christmas Day: Closed

Boxing Day: Closed

Saturday 27th December: Closed

New Year's Day: Closed



Drugs can be ordered and collected by arrangement on Saturday 27th December
FarmVets SouthWest wish all our clients a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

BVD EAR TAGS

Jay Tunstall

It's good to see a number of our farmers looking into BVD ear tags for their calves, especially as BVD is considered the most damaging cattle disease today. As discussed at our BVD talks, vaccinating alone will not eliminate a BVD infection on farm. Eliminating BVD requires identification and removal of Persistently Infected (PI) animals, which may not always be the smallest, slowest growing animal.



BVD ear tags applied to new born calves may be the simplest and cheapest way to do this. They take the ear notch removed when applying the tag to test for BVD presence. If present – the calf can be removed from the herd as early as possible before it has had much chance to spread infection.

Nordic Star and CIS are two of the major suppliers of these tags, with prices for button management tags starting in the region of £4 + VAT (including testing) with discount for bulk orders. Orders can be made directly with suppliers Nordic Star 0800 7319465 or CIS 01923 695319. If interested please chat to one of the vets who can give you more information.

USE OF FLUCKICIDES IN CATTLE

Matt Swanborough

Although the drier weather this summer may have resulted in a lower than average fluke risk it is still important to dose your animals around housing. Whilst severe, chronic infections will be obvious (e.g. weight loss and chronic diarrhoea), many infected animals will go unnoticed, contributing to reduced herd productivity. Bulk milk sampling can demonstrate exposure **BUT** a positive result can be historical. It is possible to diagnose a current fluke infection by submitting a faecal sample to us for a faecal egg count.

For beef herds a single dose at housing with a triclabendazole product (e.g. Endofluke™) will be effective against all life stages of fluke. Products that only work against mature fluke (e.g. Endospec™, Closamectin™ or Ivomec Super™) can be used. However, to maximise their effects these products should be given at least 6 weeks post-housing to allow the egg and immature stages of fluke to progress and develop into mature fluke.

Treating liver fluke in dairy cattle can prove a little challenging given the restrictions in using many of the active ingredients in dairy animals. For example, Trodax™, Closamectin™ and Levafas Diamond™ should not be used in animals producing milk intended for human consumption. A product containing triclabendazole, Endofluke™, can be used in a cow's dry period up to 45 days before calving. An alternate product, Zanil™ containing oxcyclozanide can be used throughout the dry period but can also be used during lactation with only a 72-hour milk withdrawal. For any further information ask any of the vets or visit us at the office.

