

TBAS

Cattle farmers across the High Risk and Edge Areas of England are eligible to receive FREE, bespoke advice on practical, cost-effective measures to reduce the risks associated with TB. The TB Advisory Service offers one-to-one on-farm advice visits, where experienced advisors can provide bespoke recommendations to prevent TB incursions in herds that are currently clear, whilst discussing trading options and measures to prevent repeated reinfection for farms that are currently under TB restrictions.



A telephone advice service is also available for farmers with specific questions about bovine TB and biosecurity. The project is funded by Defra and the EU through the Rural Development Programme for England and runs until 2020. Please contact the office to speak to us to for some free advice.

Start your fly control early

With the fairly dry, warm weather we've had this season, the flies are already out and becoming a nuisance. Economic losses can be expected from fly-worry. A reduced feed intake will result in a drop in milk yield as well as a reduction in liveweight gains in growing youngstock. Flies can also be implicated in the transmission of disease such as 'summer mastitis' - see the article below. In sheep, flies are responsible for the dreaded fly-strike, a condition where larvae/maggots bury into the fleece of the animal causing severe damage to the skin and underlying tissues.



Interestingly, **the flies you see are just the tip of the iceberg** - the majority of the fly population and life-cycle are in the form of eggs, larvae and pupae. These you won't see, as they are hidden away in the environment. The biggest breeding ground will be in livestock pens with straw bedding (like your calf pens) and any old compost/manure or bedding heaps which have been cleared from your sheds. **It is worth considering where you collect old bedding being removed from your sheds** as this is where the fly eggs are incubating.

There are many fly control methods aimed at the adult fly population but a new approach aims at controlling the early stages of the life-cycle in an attempt to prevent the problem before it happens. Products such as Neporex are available to treat the environment incubating the larvae, but you need to get in and use it early!

Applying a proven insecticide early in the season (such as Swish or Ectofly) will reduce the first wave of adult flies which will have a big impact in reducing the next generation numbers. **Killing flies early (or preventing them from feeding on your livestock early) is the key to controlling the population late in the summer when the real problem generally occurs.** FVSW stock a variety of fly control products licensed to treat fly-strike and prevent infestation in both cattle and sheep. Speak to a member of the team today to discuss the right product for your farm.



Your local farm veterinary service

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t: 01278 663399

Yarcombe

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Yarcombe, Honiton
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t: 01404 861214

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Dowlsh Ford, Ilminster
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Newsletter June 2019

Calving the Cow

Late spring always brings an abundance of calvings to the practice. Spring calving suckler herds using continental terminal sires can increase the chances of dystocia (difficult calvings) especially if the cows have access to spring pasture. The extra energy can lead to bigger calves, but also fatter and therefore smaller pelvises.... a bad combination. Whilst calving a cow for a client we often get involved in the debate as to when should we be intervening in a calving. Too eager intervention can certainly be detrimental but not intervening when the cow needs assistance is worse. The key is regular checking and recognising at what stage the cow is at.



First stage labour:

Signs include restlessness, nest building, tail up, occasional contractions and pressing. This stage should not last more than 6 hours in cows or 8 hours in heifers, so if the cow has been “messaging about all day” then she should be examined. Restrain her safely in a head lock and clean her back end. Wear gloves and ensure the calf is presented correctly. After 6-8 hours both front feet and head should be well engaged in the pelvis in a normal situation.

Second stage labour:

This begins with presentation of the “water bag” (allanto-chorion). This stage should only last 2 hours (3-4 in a heifer) and finishes with the calf being expelled. Note the direction of the calf’s toe; they point up in forwards presentation, down in backwards presentation. Lack of progress is the key danger sign. If the cow seems stuck at the same point in delivery, for longer than the times described above, then she needs help.

When to intervene:

- First stage labour lasting 6 hours+
- Second stage labour lasting 2hours+
- Calf not presented properly when examined, look out for head/legs back and backwards presentation.
- Cow in obvious distress or bleeding.

Medicines Course

As you are all aware new regulations and recommendations have come in to place in the last year as regards medicines usage on farm from both Red Tractor and Milk Buyers. This has involved changes in antibiotic usage and efforts to reduce antibiotic usage. There have also been stipulations as regards farm workers having attended a relevant training course in the administration of medicines. In our continuing effort to support our farmers we will be running a **Medicines course on Wednesday 31st July at Sedgemoor Auction Centre at 2pm**. This will cover all material relevant to these recommendations/regulations. The course is £40 to each farm.