

ISSUE 65 Winter/ Spring 2019

Livestock NEWS

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ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH AND PRODUCTIVITY

Staff News

Jenna Hickson

We are pleased to welcome Jenna Hickson to the farm animal team. Jenna started with us in December. She has taken on the role of Farm Animal Administrator and Vet Tech. Jenna is also a qualified SQP (suitably qualified person) in farm animal, small animal and equine, which allows her to advise and prescribe wormers and some vaccines. Before joining Paragon, she worked for an agriculture merchant for 9 years, so she might be familiar to some of you when you meet her. Jenna is a farmer's daughter, and keeps a small flock of Texel ewes on her family's farm.



Alec Kemp



We are very happy to welcome vet Alec Kemp to the practice. Alec started in January and has got stuck in to the work, some of you may have already met him. Alec has been working in mixed practice in Norfolk since he qualified in 2017. Alec made the move North in search of more cows and hills! He spent a chunk of his childhood near Windermere and is glad to be back in Cumbria. Away from work, he is looking forward to getting out running and walking the fells and hopefully finding some local rowing too.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Emily and husband Will, on the safe arrival of their son Harry Edward, who was born on Thursday 24th January weighing 7lb 1.5oz.



New Phone System



You may have noticed a different welcome message on our phone service with an option to select the cattle advice breeding services directly.

Press 1 for the breeding services, or continue to hold for reception for all other enquiries.

Preparing for Lambing time success

By Charlie Bradshaw



Although some of our clients may be nearly finished lambing for most it is just around the corner!

Most of you will be thinking about vaccinating ewes for clostridial disease and pasteurellosis about 4 to 6 weeks before lambing. **Body condition scoring (BCS)** the ewes at this stage will give you a good indication of how they are doing and how much supplementation they need. Depending on flock type, targets at lambing range from BCS 2 to 3.

Grouping ewes according to body condition score can help tailor feeding and give those who need it a bit extra and similarly ensuring over conditioned ewes don't have problems lambing.

A good way to assess **nutrition** prior to lambing is by blood sampling 10 ewes 2-3 weeks prior to lambing. We recommend sampling 5 twins and 5 triplets to check protein and energy status. These results can then be used to make any essential changes to the diet prior to lambing.

Protein and energy status of the ewes at this stage is vital for colostrum quality. Making sure that lambs get enough quality colostrum as soon as possible gives them the best possible start to life. This improves lamb survival – key for flock productivity. **Colostrum** provides lambs with **energy** and importantly **antibodies** which allows them to fight any infections. Colostrum quality can be easily checked using a brix refractometer – ask at the practice for more details.

We recommend ensuring all lambs received **50ml/kg of colostrum** in the first 2 hours (or as quickly as practically possible!). Within the first 24 hours of birth lambs should receive at least 200ml/kg.

Where lambs are born to triplet bearing ewes or the ewe has not got enough colostrum the best alternative is colostrum from another ewe. If this is not available pooled cow or goat(!) colostrum is the next best alternative. If cow colostrum is used ideally this would be cows from the same farm and importantly tested Johne's free. Powdered colostrum can be used if none of these are available but importantly these provide less immunity and energy.

Historically where watery mouth and joint ill are problems on farms blanket antibiotics have been used. Where strict colostrum management and **hygiene** is maintained it should not be necessary to treat all the lambs. Treatment should be targeted at triplets/weaker lambs towards the end of the lambing period.

We appreciate in a busy lambing period it may not be possible to clean out every pen. However, **disinfectant powder** can be applied on top of old bedding before fresh straw is then used. Similarly, areas of the lambing shed will be known hot spots for infection – around water and feed troughs and corners where ewes are prone to lamb. These areas can also be regularly disinfected and re-bedded which will improve hygiene dramatically.

Antibiotics may be needed for high risk lambs and in order to safeguard their effectiveness they should be reserved for these lambs.

Risk factors include:

- Triplets
- Thin ewes with poor colostrum
- Very small lambs
- Lambs which had a difficult lambing (usually larger lambs)
- Being born towards the end of the lambing period when disease levels have built up



Importantly there is a lot that your vet can do to help you this lambing time.

The above suggestions may be useful but there may be other specific measures more relevant to your farm. Please give us a ring if you'd like to discuss lambing management in more detail.

New Facilities at Dalston

The extension to the facilities at Dalston is just being finished off and the small animal section is open and being used. They help us provide a fantastic level of care for the small animal patients including:

- quick diagnostic tests such as x-ray, endoscopy, ultrasound and blood tests performed at the practice
- comfortable kennels and cattery to minimise stress during their stay with us
- clean and modern operating theatres to improve surgical outcomes and minimise risk to the patients

The farm animal section will also provide modern facilities for lambing, sheep cesareans and calf care at the practice.

If you are interested in seeing round the new facilities please just ask when you are next in the practice and we will be happy to give you a tour.



BVD Stamp It Out Initiative Update

By Jemma Reed

We had an excellent meeting last week with the first cluster group of farmers to be involved in this project. The meeting was run in conjunction with Kath Aplin from Boehringer Ingelheim and focused on the aims of the project, BVD control and vaccination.



We have a limited number of places available for further farmers to access funding. Our next cluster group will start later in the Spring. Please contact us to enrol as soon as possible!



The RDPE and DEFRA have made available £5.7 million of funding to raise the profile of BVD control amongst cattle keepers in England. The project has the aim of engaging 50% of the breeding herd (both dairy and beef) in England in BVD control over the next 2.5 years. This project is **free to cattle farmers in England** regardless of current BVD status. It is open to all whether you are testing, vaccinating or doing nothing at all.

Vet time is funded through the project so there is **no charge** to farmers to be involved in this.

What does involvement entail?

1. An initial group meeting to discuss the project and BVD control.
2. Followed by a 1 to 1 farm visit and check test. There is a testing budget for all involved. Initially there is access to a check test up to a value of £61.80 of testing which can include blood, milk and tag and test, if active infection is found then a further budget up to £440 is available to go on a 'PI' hunt.
3. A second 1 to 1 farm visit to discuss results and draw up a BVD action/control plan.
4. A final group meeting to discuss the findings and share thoughts.



The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas



Calf Pneumonia

By Paul Kirkwood



Bovine Respiratory Disease (BRD), or simply pneumonia is a multi-factorial debilitating disease. Due to the mild weather and severe fluctuations in temperatures we have seen recently, pneumonia has been a major problem for rearing calves this year. Commonly, calf pneumonia is caused by a mixture of infectious agents, environmental factors and individual calf immunity.

The causes of pneumonia are:

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parainfluenza 3 Virus (PI3) • Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) • Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR) • Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bacteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mannheimia haemolytica • Pasteurella multocida • Histophilus somni • Mycoplasma |
|---|--|

Signs to look for:

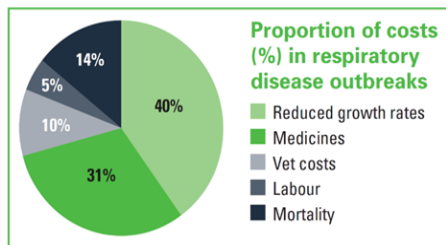
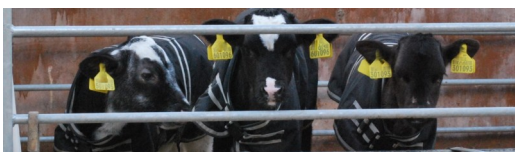
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased respiratory rate • Ocular discharge (from the eyes) • Nasal discharge (from the nose) • Reduced intakes (feed, water) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abnormal ear position • High temperature >39.4°C or 103°F • Coughing • Death |
|--|--|

The risk factors for calf pneumonia include:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate nutrition • High stocking density • Poor ventilation and air flow | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress • Mixing of different ages • Poor quality colostrum |
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Costs of pneumonia:

- Research shows that heifers suffering from pneumonia have a 4% lower milk yield in the first lactation and by 8% in the second lactation.
- The minimum cost of £43.25 per sick calf with an added cost of £29.58 per calf in the same group.
- Finishing time for beef can be delayed by 33-59 days for cattle with pneumonia.



Controlling pneumonia involves looking at 5 key aspects:



Immune status (colostrum)

- Remember the 3 Q's – **Quality, Quantity and Quickly**
- Ensure calves receive 10-12% of bodyweight within the first 12 hours of birth. Colostrum is vital for energy and contains antibodies that calves need to fight infection.
- Calves aged between 2-7 days old can be blood sampled to assess Total Protein to determine if they have received adequate colostrum. Colostrum quality can be measured using a colostrometer.

Nutrition

- A beef suckler calf at peak feed rate (roughly 2 weeks of age) will be drinking 10-12 litres of milk. A good aim for a dairy calf should be >6 litres of milk per day.
- Ad libitum water, roughage e.g. straw and starter pellets should always be available to calves and fresh feed should be given daily.

Vaccination

- Vaccines are useful to increase a calf's immunity. However, they must be used correctly because vaccines cannot compensate for poor management. A range of vaccines are available, and their use should be discussed with your vet.
- Calves can be blood sampled from 4 months of age to see what pneumonia pathogens are on your farm. Zoetis offer a subsidised cost for blood sampling calves for pneumonia.

Prompt treatment

- Prompt identification and treatment of cases of pneumonia are vital for a successful outcome and to limit the amount of permanent damage to the lungs. Please speak to one of the team about treatment options

Environmental management

- Calf jackets - Generally, if the temperature is below 10°C then a calf will benefit from a jacket. Jackets keep a calf warm leading to increased growth rates.
- Stocking density - Overcrowding can predispose to pneumonia, especially if there is poor air flow and ventilation in pens. It is important to keep calves of similar ages grouped together, ideally in a different air space to older calves.
- Good ventilation - There is a fine balance between having enough fresh air and it being draughty for calves. Our aim is to achieve 'The stack effect' - calves breathe out warm air which rises and leaves the building through an outlet in the roof. This then draws in cool, fresh air through inlets e.g. Yorkshire boarding.
- Stress - Aim to minimise the amount of times calves are moved between being born and weaning. Also, ensuring calves are eating enough concentrate prior to weaning off milk.

Upcoming Courses

3 DAY DIY AI AND CATTLE FERTILITY

Date: Mon 25th – Wed 27th Feb 2019

Venue: TBC

Cost: £525.00 + VAT

Limited spaces available

2 DAY FOOT TRIMMING COURSE

Date: Mon 1ST – Tue 2nd April 2019

Venue: TBC

Cost: £336 + VAT

Please contact Jenna on 01228 710208 for any more information or to book your place

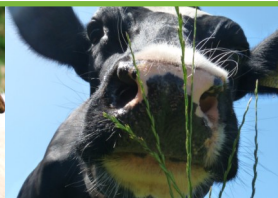
Upcoming Events



Dairy-Tech - Wednesday 6th February
Stoneleigh Park, Coventry CV8 2LG



Borderway Dairy Expo - Saturday 9th March
H&H Borderway Mart, Carlisle CA1 2RS



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