



New Axminster Office

Our new office at Mole Avon's Axminster store opened on 5th November. Medicines ordered from our Evershot Dispensary in the usual fashion can now be collected from Axminster. Deliveries to Bartlett's at Bridport have now ceased.



Remember to call in to see Sheila or Jean and members of the South vet team when in the store. You will be assured of a warm welcome. We also look forward to seeing you at the Mole Avon pre Christmas customers open evening on 27th November.

Ed Powell-Jackson
Regional Vet Lead

November 2018

- New Axminster office
- Infectious Disease Screening
- Mental Health Awareness
- Meet the Team
- Preventative Trimming
- Events
- Regional News
- Offers



Infectious Disease Screening initiative

Synergy are pleased to be able to offer a new initiative so that every dairy and beef farmer is able to know their disease status for BVD, IBR and Leptospirosis.

We have been successful in securing funding from medicines manufacturer MSD to allow us to offer disease testing for these common and potentially costly diseases at NO COST to yourselves when performed as part of your TB test. The test will require blood samples to be taken from six youngstock over 8 months of age,



and will look for antibodies to these three diseases to see if your herd has had any exposure to any/all of them.

Once results are back from the lab, your regular vet will be able to discuss with you and recommend what the best course of action is, if any, for your farm. Such testing will also be a useful tool to help assess the effectiveness of any existing vaccination programmes that might already be in place and so provide a useful monitoring tool. For unvaccinated herds a better understanding of infectious

disease status may help to explain many aspects of herd performance – for example poor calf health, abortions or poor PD results.

Our receptionists will remind you of this initiative when your TB test is booked in. Our vets and TB testers will be happy to talk with you about the diseases and the problems they can cause and gather the necessary samples when on farm.

Ed Powell-Jackson
Regional Vet Lead



Mental Health Awareness

I attended a mental health awareness training day last week. It was one of the best courses that I have been on, and I took away from it some simple but potentially life-saving skills.

Good mental health is about finding the resilience to cope with the difficult things that life throws at us and maintaining a positive sense of well-being and an underlying belief in our own dignity and worth. Poor mental health can affect any of us at any time in our lives.

The agricultural industry as a whole and local communities are doing more to increase awareness of mental health with campaigns such as the Farmers Weekly – Fit2Farm. It is important that these conversations continue; to improve awareness of potential issues, to continue to remove any stigma attached to poor mental health and to increase the probability of people with mental health issues getting the help that they need.

During the course we were shown a short video produced by the World Health Organisation called

‘Black Dog’ which is on YouTube and I would recommend you search for it. It provides an insight into depression and could be useful for those that haven’t experienced it, or who maybe aren’t sure if they have or not.

Early help strategies for stress, depression and anxiety include exercise, eating a balanced diet with regular meals, socialising, and using relaxation techniques. It is possible that pub skittle leagues were an early form of help strategy for isolated farmers, allowing them to exercise, eat a ‘balanced’ diet of ‘something with chips’, socialise, discuss the weather, grass, price of feed etc and relax. Personally I get out for a run with my dog, it doesn’t have to be very far, just 20 minutes is often enough to clear my head, see things a little differently and get some positive energy flowing. I am also fortunate that my job allows me to spend my working day seeing different clients, many of whom have become friends, and I always try to make time for a chat. If you can find your ‘thing’ that helps you cope with the day to day stresses of farming and often working alone then it is vital

to find the time to do it.

The course I attended had 2 particularly powerful messages for me:

- **The vast majority of mental health issues are recoverable.** As with any health issues, the speed and quality of recovery are different for everybody but the earlier any intervention is made, the greater the chance of a full and speedy recovery.
- As farmers and vets if we see a problem we want to fix it – however often the first thing we need to do if someone is suffering from mental ill health is simply to **listen properly – without judgement**

I would like to encourage all of us to **keep talking** and **keep listening** to each other and to continue to look out for our friends and neighbours **everyday**.

Clare Eames
Veterinary Surgeon



Meet the Team — Jayne Starr

I joined Synergy in January 2016 as a TB Administrator. My job involves processing TB Tests, sending out the Test



Certificates, organising the job sheets for the Vets and generally anything else TB related.

Coming from a farming background hopefully helps me to understand the problems Farmers face with this challenging disease.

In my spare time I enjoy walking in the beautiful countryside and eating in one of the many fine dining places we have locally.

LAMB LOSS MEETINGS

Our annual lamb loss meetings are coming up in December, please let the office know if you would like to attend.



Drax Arms, Bere Regis	6th December 7.30pm
The Ridgeway, Smallridge Nr Axminster	12th December 7.30pm
Rose and Crown, East Lambrook	17th December 7.30pm

Preventative Trimming

The Vet Tech team have been getting used to a new computer programme for foot trimming. Much like getting used to a new phone, it takes a bit of time to get the hang of (especially for some of the older guys!).

Before you can enter any information on to the programme you have to select whether it is a therapeutic trim or a preventative trim. This makes a definitive choice of whether you are treating the foot for lameness or if it is a routine trim to prevent lameness.



In most cases when I have to press the therapeutic button there has been a failure to that cow in terms of lameness management.

Improvements in cow mobility can really be made by increasing preventative trimming. The number of cows needing a therapeutic trim will only decrease if the number of preventative trims increase.

The old adage prevention is better than cure could never be more true for cattle lameness. I get a lot of satisfaction from treating lame cows. Improving the mobility of the cows I look at, is probably the most rewarding aspect of my job (although a cup of coffee on a cold day comes a close second!). As foot trimmers we would rather be pressing the preventative trim button rather than the therapeutic. 'The primary objective of hoof trimming is to restore the foot to its correct shape and weight bearing surfaces. The soles of both claws are dished to produce a concave surface over the central sole ulcer area so that it does not bear weight' (Blowey, R. (2015).

I had the inconvenience of a driver awareness course recently. One of the points that struck me was that many of us have a pre set time in our minds for journeys that we do frequently. If we manage to do this journey quicker one day, then that becomes the new pre set time.

Many of us do not allow for any type of delay, I think this mentality exists in our jobs too, not just driving. If a problem arises, it can be very difficult to catch up to

where you should be, at that time of day.

When I speak to anyone on farm, it is clear that the pressure and time constraints farmers are under, can, at times, be a contributing factor to lameness. That is why it is always difficult for us, as Vet Technicians, to ask for more than is sometimes just not possible.

That being said, if time can be found to set up and implement a preventative foot trimming program the cows and foot trimmer will be very thankful.

James Perrett
Vet Tech



Roy Gray

Just as our newsletter was going to press we were very saddened to hear the news that Roy Gray passed away late on Saturday 10th November. Roy had worked for the practice for over 45 years in many roles but most recently as a foot trimmer. A full obituary will appear in our December newsletter. All our sympathies are sent to his family at this difficult time.



Events

Practical Calving

Weds 14th November
at Evershot

GETTING TO GRIPS WITH PNEUMONIA

Hosted by Josh Swain and Graeme McPherson

Frogmary Green Farm, South Petherton

21st November
5.45 for 6pm start

Dinner Provided after the meeting
RSVP by Monday 19th Nov

Progressive Dairy Discussion Group

First meeting 5th December, 2019

Farm walk to include a discussion on farming without soya, transition cow nutrition and adapting housing to improve cow health.

Venue: James Yeatman, Grange Farm, Pulham, Dorset, DT2 7ED

Please register your interest with Gemma Bowditch at the Synergy Farm Office or to gemma.bowditch@synergyfarmhealth.com

Coming in December

Safe use of Veterinary Medicines
4th December

DIY AI 11th—13th December

Safe use of Veterinary Medicines
(Flocks) 18th December

News from our Rounds

East

Andre Northey



October seems to have come and gone very quickly. Besides a lot of routine fertility work in the autumn, plenty of clinical cases, both ordinary and extraordinary, kept the whole team busy. We still saw a lot of new forest and silage eyes, particularly in younger animals. Rigorous fly treatment and checking your animals' eyes for any discharge, cloudy spots or excessive blinking will allow you to identify a possible problem quickly and to respond without any delay to ensure a rapid cure.

Several animals who had accidentally eaten wires came to my attention. The immediate application of special magnets managed to prevent worse. On some farms magnets are given as a standard precaution early in a cow's life.

A very happy event for us were the births of six healthy Limousin ET (embryo transfer) calves which I had transferred last Winter for one of our clients. What a very successful exercise it was to booster this already outstanding beef herd with the best French genetics available at the moment! Transferring embryos rather than buying livestock made it possible for the farm to afford and use such superior genetics and therefore to give breeding progress a massive push. If you have any questions regarding using embryo transfer in your herd, please get in touch with us.

South

Ben Barber



As weaning decisions are made for another group of Spring-born suckler calves, we need to start looking to next year's crop and start sorting the chaff. Variable costs for barren cows over the winter period will be in the region of £1.50 a day, perhaps more this year with forage and bedding looking scarce. Compare this with an approximate cost of £2-3 per cow to scan for a pregnancy it really is an easy decision; finding out whether these animals are just financial drains early on should make up standard management of the suckler herd. This is also a good opportunity to remind all suckler herds that if they want to be part of the suckler herd survey for 2018 then please do get your results in, thank you to all who have already done so!

I have been involved with a series of visits to a large dairy calf rearer — visiting the 29 farms up and down the country to review progress. We have been animal health consultants to them for the last three years focussing on preventative health care programmes along with achieving high standards of welfare and production. When meeting with rearers, building design is constantly on the agenda. Young calves - both dairy and beef - are most at risk from poorly designed environments and reviewing the ventilation, drainage and temperature of a building can improve their lives significantly. Whether it means asking your routine vet for their thoughts at the end of a visit or booking in some focused time with us to talk through your housing, please feel free to discuss your thoughts with us.

North

Charlotte Mouland



It's been pretty busy on the North the last few weeks. TB testing is ramping up and we're attending plenty of calvings in our seasonal dairy and beef herds. The colder, darker mornings have come as a bit of a shock after the long, hot summer and I have a feeling the woolly hat will be staying on all winter this year!

On the sheep side we are starting to get a few clients signing up to our Flock Health Advisory Package, the pay-monthly scheme for our medium-sized commercial flocks which aims to spread the cost of veterinary input on farm. Emily and I will be ringing around flocks in the coming weeks to remind you about this year's lamb loss meetings. Our aim this year is to get more flocks than ever represented in the lamb loss survey, so if it's not something you've partaken in before....this is the year to get involved! The meetings will be held at three venues again and confirmed dates can be found in this newsletter.

At home, we are just finishing a successful autumn calving block. With over 70% of the group calving within three weeks, producing a lovely bunch of even-sized calves, it has definitely paid-off getting our bulls fertility tested. Subfertility in bulls is not uncommon and fertility can change year-on-year depending on illness or injury so getting them checked annually before they go out to work is very important.

Housing Offers

As we head into the autumn months, many of you will be considering the treatment choices at housing for your cattle.

Virbamec Super Injection
500ml £90

Enovex Pour-on
2.5 L £35

Eprizero (Zero milk withhold for use in milking cows)
5L £291.38

OFFERS EXPIRE 30TH NOV 2018

Please contact Synergy dispensary on 01935 83682 to discuss the products with our SQPs and to place your order

All products have a discount on quantity purchased

Prices correct 01/10/2018 Ex VAT