



New Lameness Research

Foot trimming and lameness have been around for many years and I remember when Ed Malt started importing WOPA crushes into the UK when I was still a teenager. Foot trimming techniques have been passed on from father to son, vets, foot trimmers and others. In fact a trial last year showed that 70% of farmers learnt by watching others while 65% learnt by trial and error.

But what is the best technique? Vets will often look back at research or trials to gain evidence that what they are doing has been shown to be the right thing to do. Up to 2 years ago if you did this for lame cow treatments or foot trimming the research was incredibly sparse – in fact non-existent. The vet school at the University of Nottingham have recently been trying to correct that and put some of the commonly used methods to the test.

In the first study they mobility scored cows every two weeks to identify cows as soon as they went lame.

These cows were treated in one of four ways: they either received just a trim, a trim and a block, a trim and an injection of anti-inflammatory, or a trim with both a block and an anti-inflammatory. The cows were then reassessed to see if they had improved after 5 weeks. 70% of all the cows had shown some improvement whatever treatment they received. However for cows to become completely sound, a trim, block and anti inflammatory injection gave 2.5 times a better outcome than a trim alone!

Why is this? We are not totally sure, however there is also now increasing evidence that there may be a major role of the fat pad and possible associated inflammatory mediators leading to claw horn lesions in the foot. The anti-inflammatory will no doubt reduce pain, as well as possibly making cows tolerate the block better, but it seems as though there is more to it than that.

The study was then repeated on cows that had previously been lame or had

been lame for longer. Interestingly, there was very little difference in this case to outcome and less cows overall improved. It seems as though the damage had been done! We must pick up lame cows early.

In this second study however, they found that in the large majority of cases the other foot (that was not deemed to be the problem) also had an early lesion that required treatment.

Lameness research is beginning to increase, but these studies definitely show the importance of :

- Early detection and treatment of lameness is vital.
- If in doubt put on a block to the non-affected claw.
- Consider giving anti-inflammatory to these cows.
- Always check the other foot.



Jon Reader

Treatment	Percentage sound after 5 weeks
Treatment trim only	24%
Treatment trim + Block	36%
Treatment trim + Anti-inflammatory	29%
Treatment trim + Block + Anti-inflammatory	56%

Please use 01935 83682 when contacting the practice—this is our priority line.

Please check the number stored in your phone!

I've just Calved a Cow ... What Should I give Her?

For the cow, the time around the calving period is the most crucial time of year. Throw a rough, long, or assisted calving into the mix and it can be a long road back! However, if everything goes well she is well set up for a good lactation. Deciding drugs wise what and when to give her during those tricky assisted calvings can be difficult, but making the right choices can go a long way to helping determine the outcome of a stressful calving.

Anti-Inflammatory Drugs

The first thing to think about during problem calvings is whether to give Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs). These drugs include Metacam and Ketofen, which work in two ways. Firstly, the drugs provide a degree of pain relief for the animal. Secondly, they work by reducing some of the aspects of the inflammatory processes. Unfortunately at the moment, there is a lack of research that has been carried out in the UK environment looking directly at measurable or economic benefits of using NSAID's around calving. However, we would recommend giving anti-inflammatory treatment to all problem calvings that are likely to cause inflammation or pain, as this can support and aid in the recovery of the cow.



Antibiotics

The second question to ask is if a course of antibiotics is needed or not. It is important not to use antibiotics if they are not needed. A growing issue is the development of antibiotic resistance. Preventing overuse of

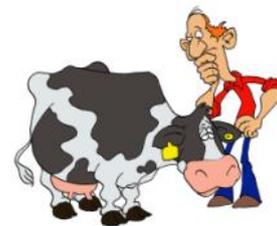
antibiotics limits this and it keeps the cost down for you as the farmer. It's therefore critical to pick the cases that you use antibiotics for carefully.



When you are thinking about incorporating antibiotics into treatment it is important to think about the process of infection. Normally during the calving process bacteria will get to the uterus through the cervix. Every cow post calving will have some bacteria present. What will normally happen is that bacteria will not pass through the uterus wall and it will stay inside the uterus. Within a few weeks most cows will naturally eliminate the bacterial contamination. In some cases however, the cow is unable to clear the contamination which can lead to a pyometra (whites). One of the problems to be aware of is when the bacteria from inside the uterus can pass through the uterine wall into the body or bloodstream of the cow. This can cause a serious infection and become life threatening. Causes of this are often due to a tear in the uterine or vaginal wall during calving, or the bacteria passes through the wall by itself, leading to metritis.

Therefore, only give antibiotics during calving if you suspect damage to the uterus or vagina, or

if there is a lot of blood present which may indicate a possible tear. Antibiotics should also be considered if the cow has a high temperature or is off colour and there is an absence of other problems (mastitis etc) which may indicate that she is developing metritis. Otherwise do not give antibiotics around calving time.



Energy and Metabolic Concerns

Lastly, the time around calving is a big change for the cow both metabolically and in energy balance. Going from providing for an almost fully grown calf, to suddenly having to produce large amounts of milk can have big effects on the cow. Around the calving period most cows are in negative energy balance, therefore a long or hard calving can really compound both energy and metabolic problems. This is a good thing to keep in mind, and providing high energy feed, Propylene Glycol and metabolic aids to those cows with long or hard calvings can make a big difference.

Tim Cameron



Bluetongue

Many of you may have heard that the Bluetongue Virus BTV8 is back in France again this year. The Outbreak originated in the Allier region of central France and as of the end of November 95 premises had been affected. The disease causes a swollen face and tongue as well as excess salivation in sheep; the clinical signs in cattle are less severe.

DEFRA has now issued a warning that there is a 10% likelihood of infection in the UK in the Spring and an 80% likelihood in the Autumn. As we are directly North of the affected region it is likely that Dorset, Devon and Hampshire are the counties

where infection may first be seen.

We are currently trying to source vaccine as there have already been enquiries from several clients. Unfortunately both the pharmaceutical companies and the government suffered costs of unsold vaccine production in 2008 during the last outbreak when the uptake of vaccine was not as high as first thought and they were left with unused vaccine. There is no stock of the vaccine available at present and we have been informed by the vaccine manufacturers that it is unlikely that there will be any before the Autumn.

This leaves sheep flocks especially vulnerable to infection. However if you vaccinated last time there is some evidence of a residual effect of the vaccine for up to 4.5 years although with turnover of sheep flocks it is unlikely that many previously vaccinated animals are still in the flock.

If you have any concerns about Bluetongue please contact one of the vets and we will be happy to discuss your risk and any actions you can take to minimize disease.



Andy Adler

Microchipping Dogs

Please note that from 1st April 2016 all dogs (including working dogs) must be microchipped, by law. Please speak to your regular vet for more information.

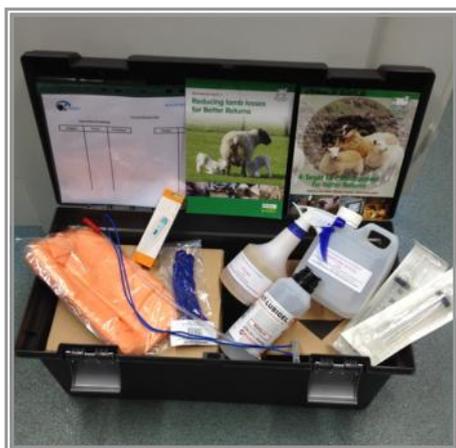
Synergy Lambing Kits

Get yourself organised for lambing with the Synergy Lambing Kit



Includes:

Synergy Guide to Lambing, template for flock record book, lambing protocols, 2 x 50ml dose syringes, stomach tube, lambing snare, 2 x lambing ropes, vet lube, arm length gloves, thermometer, iodine tincture and spray, propylene glycol, all enclosed in a free tool box



Meet Sid

Sid is a farmer with a poorly cow and he doesn't know what to treat it with.



Using the correct medicines, at the correct dose, for the right conditions and at the right time can help to reduce unnecessary antibiotic use and therefore prevent antibiotic resistance developing.

When you see Sid in our newsletter it means the article contains information on appropriate use of antibiotics or how to reduce antibiotic resistance.

Plan your Pre-Turnout Vaccinations

Turnout time will soon be upon us, so now is the time to start planning prevention of a few problems including Leptospirosis and Lungworm. We are also pleased to be able to offer a 5% discount on combined purchases of Leptavoid H and Bovilis BVD.

	Price per dose	Combi Price per dose
Leptavoid H (25 dose pack)	1.80	1.71
Bovilis BVD	2.00	1.90

News from our Rounds

Krispin Kannan



With the flood waters receding, the daffodils opening their faces up to the sun and leaves appearing on the trees, you could almost swear winter is over and spring has sprung. And with this epic change of season comes new faces (like mine) and new challenges.

For those of you who I have not met yet, I'm the new kiwi locum (yes, just another Kiwi in Somerset). Let me start by apologising in advance for my accent and the local lingo that I've dragged up from the deep south. I thought I would start with a little bit of background about myself; this information could help get our on farm convo's started when we first meet! I essentially hail from the central North Island, from a region called the Waikato where dairying is king and sheep and beef farming is a close second. I worked in New Zealand as a production animal vet for 6 years before deciding to do a years sabbatical overseas. We are in the UK just for a year sadly, cramming in as much work and travel as possible!

Now down to some technical talk; over the past few weeks we have seen a number of cases of twin lamb disease (Ovine pregnancy toxemia) cropping up. As ewes bearing twins get close to lambing please keep an eye on them because we know prevention is always better than treatment. Clinical signs appear as dullness, loss of appetite, loss of condition (sometimes hard to see, so make sure you feel for it), which then progress to disorientation, blindness and finally recumbency. To prevent this disease, feed ewes with multiples on high quality roughage with supplementary concentrates along with molasses to promote appetite in the last six weeks.

Well that's all from me for now; I look forward to meeting you out and about on farm during the spring.

Alasdair Moffett



We have had several meetings in the South area of late and last week the Ham Hill discussion group met in the Eagle Tavern to discuss 'Coughing Calves'. Despite starting with a somewhat comical 'How many male vets does it take to set up a projector', the female amongst us, Esme, was unflappable and delivered an intently listened to presentation, with plenty of audience participation; and was able to highlight how best practice youngstock rearing procedures can be realistically applied to your farms. The power of social media was highlighted by a snap of Jon Reader's BVD talk to Somerset Young Farmers up at Sedgemoor this week being immediately 'liked' by veterinarians in the US. We are keen to utilise social media to help produce positive stories regarding agriculture and promote all things agriculture. Please check us out on facebook and twitter.

A recent survey regarding the cost of milk production in the South West has put only 1% of farms producing milk at less than 25p per litre. A sobering thought in the current economic climate. We are keen to help however possible.

On a personal note, Esme is getting ready for the London Marathon in April; and by the next newsletter, I will have run along the coastal path from Charmouth to Studland over three days. Marjorie, Betty, Doris and Ethel (our chickens) are doing well, still breaking into the neighbours' garden and I am still struggling to keep up with daily egg production.

Tom Clarke



Spring calving herds are well under way calving with most seeing good calf health but unfortunately more mastitis than would be liked. A long, mild, wet winter has not helped conditions, and high stocking rates in the calving yard are often putting pressure on udders when the immune system is low around the point of calving.

In all year round herds the winter has been a tough one on a number of units with Winter Dysentery outbreaks and grumbling respiratory disease in milking cows. Often the respiratory disease is related back to old lung damage and festering abscesses from episodes of pneumonia as a calf which then rears its ugly head during times of stress in the milking herd. Mycoplasma bovis infection is also a problem circulating on many farms now and requires careful management to reduce the effects of clinical disease as no commercial vaccine is currently available.

Ticks don't seem to have gone away during this mild winter with one client reporting a cow with a head full of them coming into the parlour the other day. Watch out for tick related diseases and remember to contact us about using the vaccine against Red Water if you plan to graze naive or purchased cattle on red water land this year. The imported vaccine is due in imminently.

I realise the poor milk price is putting a lot of strain on all dairy enterprises at the moment and we want to help you all through this difficult time so please feel free to talk to any of us about any concerns you have and we will endeavour to help find a solution.

EVENTS



Workshop—Cow Tracks/Cow Flow -
Wednesday 6th April

Please visit www.cattlelamenessacademy.co.uk for more information or call Rhi on 07792 726338

AI Course—
6th-8th April

Safe Use of Veterinary Medicines
11th May 2016

For further information or to book your place on any of these events please contact 01935 83682 or email courses@synergyfarmhealth.com

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