



Bovine TB — What's going on?

Are you worried about bovine TB?

Do you feel powerless to do anything to prevent an outbreak in your stock?

As with any other disease, the more information you have, such as where it is and how it is transmitted, the more you can potentially do to reduce the risk in your herd.

There are a number of good information sources available now to farmers and the general public about bovine TB in the UK, if you know where to look.

The TB Hub

The TB Hub is 'the home of UK TB information'. It is a clear, comprehensive easy-to-use website which can be found at:

www.tbhub.co.uk

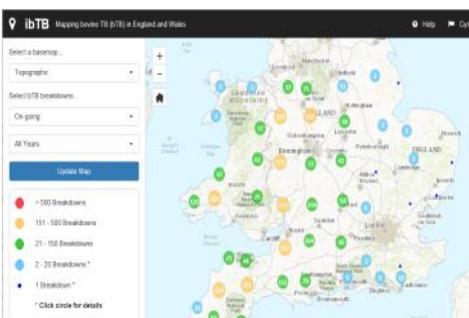


The TB hub explains most things you will need to know about TB, including:

- ◇ How the disease is transmitted between cattle, wildlife and other domesticated or farmed species
- ◇ Biosecurity advice and guidance for cattle and other stock
- ◇ Government policy and disease statistics
- ◇ Public health risks and how to protect your family and staff
- ◇ Genetics, with links to AHDB TB advantage page
- ◇ Practical guidance on dealing with a breakdown, including trading options whilst under restriction.

ibTB

If you are buying in cattle, or indeed other stock such as sheep or camelids, you may want to know if they are coming from an area with high TB incidence.



www.ibtb.co.uk maps TB breakdowns anywhere in the UK.

Farm Level Data Reports

Last year APHA introduced the individual Farm Level Data Reports, which are being issued on any premises which suffers a TB breakdown from 2017 onwards.

These reports collate and summarise the outbreak, stating numbers of reactor cattle along with age groups, herds of origin and any post mortem spoligotype information that may be available.

If you are unfortunate enough to have had a breakdown and receive one of these, we would encourage you to discuss it with your routine vet or TB tester in case there is any useful pattern which can be drawn from it.

Biosecurity reports

We can carry out a basic biosecurity risk assessment on your herd for TB in a similar way to that for Johnes or BVD, based on your individual farm practices

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and a farm walk to look for signs of wildlife activity. Please ask for more information.

Have your say

If TB is having a big impact on your business, make sure your voice is heard by contributing to any public consultations released by DEFRA.

DEFRA's 'Call for views on options for Simplifying TB Tests' which ran from 30th Aug to 8th Nov last year received 48 responses, of which 35 were individuals including vets and farmers, and 11 were organisations including NFU, BCVA and various wildlife organisations. Policy is influenced by the outcome of views expressed in these consultations, so these are your chance to get your point of view across.

Look out for future consultations on defra.gov.uk.

If you do not have access to the internet, please feel free to contact the Synergy TB office who can help answer any questions or get one of the Vets to call you back and discuss any queries you may have about any of the above.



Paula Hunt

New Forest Eye

We have been involved in a number of outbreaks of New Forest Eye in recent weeks, in both youngstock and adult cows.

The disease is more common in youngstock but we have recently seen adult cow outbreaks. Flies help to spread the problem, by carrying the causative bacteria *Moraxella bovis* from one cow to the next on their feet, so acting as a mechanical vector.



Most eye lesions are first noticed by tear-staining of the face/cheek area. This can become increasingly thick and puffy, resulting in matting of the eye lashes and hair. There is marked pain when the eye is exposed to direct sunlight. Lesions in both eyes can cause temporary blindness with the affected animals tending to wander aimlessly and separate themselves from the group. In severe cases this can disrupt grazing/feeding behaviour and so cause poor performance and even weight loss.

Early cases will respond well to treatment. The *Moraxella* bacteria is easily killed with antibiotics BUT

is essential to treat before severe and damaging ulceration develops. Specially formulated antibiotic cream for use in the eye is our recommended first line treatment (Opticlox eye ointment). A sign of successful treatment is that tear production has stopped - this means that the infection has been cleared. Some scarring may well remain on the surface of the eye as a white spot/mark. In calves good results can be achieved with intramuscular injections of Alamycin LA or Shotaflo.

Upper eyelid antibiotic injections can be useful, but are potentially difficult in fractious cattle and require good restraint. It is absolutely essential that a clean, fine needle is used to avoid creating major irritation - we have seen abscesses develop in eyelids from unhygienic and dirty injections! A small volume of oxytetracycline 10% (such as Alamycin 10) can be injected under the eyelid - this relies on leakage onto the surface of the eye from the injection site each time the animal blinks. NB Long acting oxytetracycline preparations (Alamycin LA) must NOT be used for eyelid injections as these are highly irritant. *Off datasheet so minimum withdrawal periods need to apply (7 days milk, 28 days milk)

In severe cases suturing the eyelids together can be used to speed up healing. After two weeks the sutures are removed and healing is often well advanced by this stage.



In more extreme cases where there has been rupture of the eye it may be necessary to remove the entire eye ball. This is very much a technique of last resort but may be the only way to resolve the pain and discomfort.

Prevention very much centres around good fly control (ear tags and pour-on insecticides) and pasture management is essential in reducing exposure of cattle to flies which can transmit the disease. Keeping cattle off high risk pastures in the summer months (low lying, wet pastures with a high fly population) can play a big part in reducing this risk, but is never absolute.



Ed Powell-Jackson

Medicines News



Spotinor

Special offer

2.5 L **Now £148.50** + VAT 60p per cattle dose

2 x 2.5 L **£305** + VAT 61p per cattle dose

4 x 2.5 L **£595** + VAT 60p per cattle dose

Offers end 31st October 2017

Enovex pour on 2.5 Litres

£35 + VAT

(Ivermectin 0.5%)

Enovex Pour on 2 x 2.5 Litres **£65**

Ham Hill Discussion Group Summer Farm Walk

Nearly 70 Synergy clients gathered at Hoemoor Farm, Upton for the Ham Hill Discussion Group summer farm walk on 8th August. Kindly hosted by Kevin and Pauline Phillips, we enjoyed a tour of their well run dairy unit in the Otter Valley, where the emphasis is on producing milk from forage whilst maximising cow longevity, bull calf value and cull cow value. In recent years this has been achieved using Flekvieh genetics.

Further insight into the Flekvieh breed was provided by Synergy client Tom Voizey of Marsh Farm, Hardington who is well known in the area as a Flekvieh breeder and enthusiast! An informative evening concluded with a hog roast and homemade cakes in the farm's wedding barn. Many thanks to all for making the evening such a success. Our program of evening meetings at the Eagle Tavern will start in the autumn.



Ed Powell-Jackson



Uterine Prolapses

In the last few weeks we've seen a few prolapsed uteruses. These always stimulate discussion in the practice about how best to replace them. There is very little scientific research telling us which methods are best, so here's a little summary of top tips from vets across the practice.

Know the risk factors. The prolapse occurs as the uterus turns inside out and "follows" the calf out. It is more likely to occur after a large calf or a traumatic calving. Therefore, care when calving, applying gently traction and using plenty of lubrication are critical in prevention. Heifers and older cows are also more likely to prolapse, and milk fever often plays an underlying role in the older cows. Know and manage the risk factors to help reduce complications.



Time is key. This is one of the true emergencies of farm veterinary work, so keep an eye on cows post-calving and call the vet immediately if the uterus prolapses. The longer the uterus is outside the body, the more swollen and damaged it becomes, making it harder to replace and more likely to become infected, traumatised or bleed once replaced.

Position the cow correctly. Once the vet gets there, and provided the cow is down, position her sitting up with her legs flexed back in a "frog-like" position, ideally facing slightly downhill – this means the uterus can be pushed back into the cow in a downwards direction, rather than battling uphill with it. The vet will also place an epidural to help stop the cow pushing against the replacement.

Fully invert the horns. Once the uterus is back inside the cow, the uterine horns must be fully inverted to their normal position, all the way to the tip. If not fully inverted, the uterus is likely to re-prolapse as it contracts down.

To stitch or not to stitch? A suture can be placed around the vulva in an attempt to stop re-prolapsing. Many believe that provided the uterus is fully inverted, it will not re-prolapse, mitigating the need to stitch. It is also argued that if the uterus were going to re-prolapse, a stitch would be unlikely to prevent it, and simply tear through instead. There is no scientific evidence for or against placing a suture so we cannot know for sure, but vets can have high success rates either with or without it, so it is not an essential part of the treatment.

We'd always give anti-inflammatory pain relief, and if there's contamination, use of antibiotics would be advised.

So, know the risk factors and try and prevent them. But for when one occurs, in order to give everyone the best chance of success at replacing them, keep a close eye on "at risk" cows after calving and call us as soon as you notice it.

Reuben Newsome



News from our Rounds

North

Charlotte Mouland



What a frustrating August we've had. Despite it being such a dry year so far, it has been a challenge to fit harvest in between the bands of wet weather. Warm, wet weather creates the perfect environment for parasites! Of recent years, ticks have been on the increase in the UK. Ticks can transmit a number of diseases, including red water in cattle. Red water is so aptly named because it causes blood in the urine; it can also cause high temperatures, anaemia, abortions and diarrhoea. The drug used to treat redwater carries a very long milk and meat withhold but there is some hope that a vaccine will be available in the future to protect against the disease.

At the home farm, all efforts are focused on getting harvest in and getting the ewes ready for tugging. Body condition score of ewes is central to a successful sheep calendar year. If we get that that right at tugging (i.e. 90% of ewes BCS 3 – 3.5 at tugging) it will have positive knock-on effects not only on scanning percentage, but on milk yield of the ewes next lactation. Weaning lambs at 10-12 weeks and managing the ewes in different mobs according to BCS in order to prioritise grazing are some ways to achieve this. Before we know it, lambing will creep up on us again!

East

Mark Burnell



The phrase 'common things are common' has served me well in my (long!) career to date but some things which used to be very common can catch us out these days as we see less of them. One of these is lungworm and is something to be on the lookout for at this time of year. With the very (over?) efficient worming products that are used on young cattle as well as the use of Huskvac (some of you may even remember the Dictol days!) this disease is far less common than it used to be but it certainly hasn't gone away. Immunity requires an occasional exposure to remind the animal to be prepared to fight the parasite off – more housing, better worming of 1st season animals and the very unpredictable appearance of the parasite on pastures can all mean the 'occasional exposure' may not be often enough and as a consequence disease in adults can occur. Often affected animals are not coughing madly and a milk drop and/or weight loss with increased breathing rate may be all you see in adult cows. We can look for the larvae in the dung to try and confirm it but this is far from 100%; a blood test can indicate recent exposure but it may be best to treat with an appropriate wormer without delay.

My best day of this month was doing a 'foot trimming refresher' session on a farm for the morning. This always involves plenty of debate and discussion and hopefully is hugely beneficial to the participants, including the cows! If you would like one for your farm in preparation for the winter housing period (foot bathing assessment included) call the practice – I'll be happy to oblige!

South

Abi Charlesworth



As some of you may know, I have recently migrated from the East to the South (West) region of the practice! It was a big move, but I'm quickly finding my feet and getting to know new faces.

Due to the gorgeous weather we've been having and the bouts of rain in between, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of cases of *Haemonchus contortus* (a blood sucking gut worm) this summer. At the beginning of the month I came across a ewe which had over 100,000 eggs per gram of faeces, which I'm almost sure is a record by far at the practice – she was anaemic with very pale mucous membranes, lethargic and had a swollen mouth and face. Although this particular case was showing clinical signs of the disease, *Haemonchus* can often go unnoticed and the first sign can sometimes present as what appears to be sudden death.

This highlights the importance of being in tune with parasite forecasts, (such as NADIS and SCOPS) and having a good worming protocol in place, which includes taking regular faecal egg counts in order to identify whether to treat or not. If you're unsure about whether your flock may be at risk, feel free to contact us to discuss your flock health plan. On a lighter note, I look forward to getting to know more of you on the south side!

EVENTS

Visit our website for further details or email courses@synergyfarmhealth.com

Large Flock Discussion Group

Road Trip

Tuesday 19th September by kind invitation of Mr M Blythe, Didling Farms, West Sussex

Organic Sheep Discussion Group

Wednesday 20th September 2pm–4pm
Kindly hosted by Mr J Hancock, Axminster

4 Day Professional

Foot Trimming

25th–28th September

Cattle Lameness
ACADEMY

0-6 Youngstock Workshop

Combating

Calf Scour

Thurs 12th
October



Join us at Agrifest
South West
November 8th
in Exeter



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