

# News from our Rounds

## East

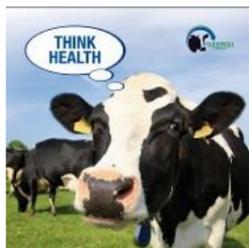
### Beth Reilly



After a weekend on call with the unsettled weather I saw a variety of sick patients from beef calves with pneumonia after torrential down pours to some rather sunburnt pigs! I think it's safe to say that no one quite knows what the weather will bring this summer, but it's certainly keeping us all on our toes.

We had a really successful client evening for the small holders last month, with the theme of 'Lambs from Stable to Table'. What a great time to stress the importance of regular worm egg counting to know your worm status and keep those growth rates on target. Key take home message about parasites was that if you are a sheep farmer, you are also a worm farmer!

The time has come for Bryan and myself to finish our internships at Synergy. Whilst I will be staying on and moving myself and three hens to the South region, sadly Bryan is returning to Ireland and will be greatly missed in the practice by all. The two new interns for 2019-20, Tom and Imogen, will be joining the practice in July and we hope you will make them feel very welcome.



## South

### Reuben Newsome



Obstetrics has been the theme of my month, albeit unseasonably. And it feels like "proper vetting" in a James Herriot sort of way: tricky calvings, twisted uteruses, caesarians, uterine prolapses and embryotomies.

Some explanations for the calving difficulties I've seen could be (1) rations are harder to control when cows are out, (2) grass needs cutting so cows don't get all the attention (please still remember to check for twins...!) or (3) the calf is too large.

Given the problems associated with large calves, a hot topic around dairies is a move back towards breeding to native beef breeds rather than continental. Whilst a live Belgian Blue calf will be worth more, what's the difference in mortality between breeds? What's the difference in the impact upon the cow, and going forward throughout lactation on: yield, time to getting back in calf or longevity? And, what is important to your farm? The answers vary between farms, so I would urge you to monitor performance figures of dams and calves by breed difference, as it may be enlightening.

Lastly, I would like to bid you a fond farewell as I'm moving back up to Leicestershire in early July. This is an exciting development for me, but I am also sad to leave the practice, West Dorset and everyone who I have come to know here. Thank you for all the laughs and the challenges we've shared, best of luck, and I leave as a friend to Synergy so may well see you around.

## North

### Gareth Foden



Last month was one of mixed fortune, many were able to get some good cuts of grass silage early in the month and some even got their second cut out of the way. Although we needed rain for maize it was in contrast reasonably cold. I have heard lots of people complaining about crows destroying maize fields as well. Only time will tell but for those with silage in the clamps it is a good idea to start analysing and planning for the summer and winter. Silage yields appear to be up but the jury is still out on quality. I had the pleasure of taking a short trip to Italy for a fertility conference last month and although there are no major advances, the hot topics apart from the beer included a focus on transitional health in particular nutritional management to reduce negative energy balance and maximising on early submission. This will all depend on feed quality so getting it right now is vital alongside good planning. Aside from that there have been some confirmed cases of lungworm around the moors as well as active rumen fluke burdens.



## Treating Milk Fever – Effecting a cure or creating a problem?

When I first started out in dairy practice over 30 years ago a good part of my days (and nights!) was spent treating milk fevers. A common morning call was to a cow that had been treated by the farmer in the early hours but was still down after breakfast. It was relatively uncommon for farmers to give I/V injections in those days and the often dramatic effect of my calcium in the vein made for a good callout. They say ignorance is bliss but what are the dangers of injecting this potentially lethal substance and how should we use it?

⇒ **The recommended route for a cow that is down is INTRAVENOUS; giving it under the skin runs the risk of it not being absorbed quickly enough due to the compromised circulation (the cows are usually cold to the touch). It is probably also painful.**

⇒ The DOSE for a cow is about 2g of calcium/100kg body weight – for a 700kg cow (the typical size of a modern Holstein) this equates to 14g; 1 bottle of Calciject No5 (40%) contains 12g.

⇒ Overdosing can cause fatal heart flutters and even at the correct dose it should be given over 10 minutes. In theory overdosing can also occur following I/V injection after calcium has been given under the skin as this is suddenly absorbed as the I/V calcium 'kicks in'.

⇒ The best vein to use is the JUGULAR. The milk vein, although easy to find, should ONLY be used in a crisis situation i.e. the cow is going to die if she doesn't get it quickly! Skin over the milk vein is usually dirty (and hairy) and loose – this means that when the needle is withdrawn blood will leak out under the skin and clot. If infection has been introduced with the needle there will be cellulitis and an abscess will slowly form. This is painful for the cow and likely to affect her feed intake – a big risk for a DA. Doing a proper I/V takes some skill but can be taught and is made much easier if you have a halter! (ALL farms should have one of these in 2019!)

⇒ **DON'T DELAY treatment.** Make sure the cow is on a good surface – even on a straw bed muscle damage will start to occur due to pooling of blood quite quickly. ALWAYS CHECK for a retained calf and mastitis.

⇒ FINALLY don't forget that nursing is crucial for any down cow including fresh food, accessible water and turning. Studies have shown that recovery rates were 50% higher in down cows with good nursing.

⇒ Following treatment calcium levels will be elevated for 5-7 hours so a repeat treatment shouldn't be given before 6 hours.

⇒ Giving calcium under the skin should be reserved for wobbly cows still on their feet – a good place is behind the shoulder or elbow, split between the two sides, as the movement of the cow will help dissipate the solution (although rub it in as well).

⇒ Whatever route you use always use a NEW NEEDLE and a clean flutter valve.

⇒ Calcium boluses like Bovicalc contain 43g of calcium but are not advised for down cows as the swallowing reflex



For DIY I/V injections a halter is an invaluable piece of equipment.

may be reduced and absorption may be too slow.

⇒ Combining injections and boluses and/or over treating is likely to delay the cows' own calcium control mechanisms and we can see 'delayed' milk fevers in cows calved a week or more. MORE IS NOT BETTER!

Have a chat with us next time we are on your farm if you think your treatment protocol can be improved – we'll be happy to help!



Mark Burnell  
Veterinary Surgeon

## \*\*\* SEASONAL PRICES \*\*\*



### SPOTINOR

2.5Ltr £145

Fly Pour On. Deltamethrin.  
500 x 10ml cattle dose =  
58p per head.  
\*4-8 week protection  
Zero milk withdrawal, 17 days meat

**FREE**  
APPLICATOR GUNS  
AVAILABLE  
Limited supply only,  
call for details



### ENOVEX

2.5Ltr £27.50  
0.5% Ivermectin Pour On



### EPRIZERO

6Ltr £250  
5mg Eprinomectin Pour On.  
Zero milk withdrawal.

Other products are available to suit your needs. Please seek Veterinary/SQP advice from Synergy Farm Health.

Date of print: 01/07/2019. EOE.  
All prices subject to VAT @ 20%

**UPDATE!**

**Tour de Synergy raised over £243 for Send a Cow & The Farming Community Network!**

Huge thanks to those who took part, baked cakes, organised and donated.

FCN THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK  
Send a Cow Change a family's future

## A sight for sore eyes...

With summer now upon us you will no doubt be facing some of the issues that come with it, from the beginnings of the famous 'farmers tan' to dealing with sweaty vets in our waterproof saunas. The summer throws a lot at us. One of those annoyances that comes at this time of year is flies and the problems they can cause, issues including New Forest eye.

**New Forest eye** (proper name Infectious Bovine Keratoconjunctivitis) is a disease of the eye caused by a bacteria called *Moraxella bovis*. The bacteria can be spread by flies and result in outbreaks with more severe disease tending to present in younger animals; however any age animal is susceptible.

The most prominent clinical sign associated with the disease is the classical **central white/cloudy raised lesions** on the eye. This can lead to ulceration of the eye and in serious cases rupture of the eyeball can occur.

### Other signs to look out for:

- Aversion to light
- Increased blinking
- Tear staining and matting of the eyelashes
- Loss of vision
- Reduced appetite and production

Good news though, it can be effectively treated. Mild cases can be treated with **topical antibiotics** (Opticlox eye ointment) whilst more severe cases will require either systemic or sub-conjunctival injection of antibiotics. The antibiotic we tend to use is **Oxytetracycline 10%** and the route of administration is made on a case by case basis.

If cases are very severe surgery can also be an option. There are various surgical approaches that can be considered to help the eye recover such as Tarsorrhaphy, in which the eyelids are sewn together in cases with perforated ulcers. However as with every disease prevention is the best cure.

### Methods of prevention include:

- Ensure you have a **robust fly control** policy in place, be that pour-on, fly tags or environmental control
- **Quarantine** replacement animals as this is often the route of entry onto a farm
- Ensure adequate space at feeders to minimize cow-cow transmission



One final note is that it's good to bear in mind that there are other differentials for sore eyes, these could include:

- IBR
- Foreign Bodies
- Silage Eye

So if you are having any problems this year with sore eyes or any other fly related issues and you would like to discuss them further then please don't hesitate to get in contact.



**Josie Burridge**  
Veterinary Surgeon



## Celebrating two decades of foot trimming

In a few weeks I will have been trimming cattle hooves for 20 years. That's a lot of feet- I wish I'd kept a total but must run into many many thousands.

Things have changed a lot in all that time, equipment for starters. Back then I used an old original wind up Wopa crush which was hard work-20 cows a day was a good day. I'm lucky now to be using a new modern hydraulic crush which is so much easier. Remote control means easier loading and an elevator kit which raises the cow so trimming can be carried out stood up straight. Quicker trimming means the animals are in and out much faster. Far less stress on the cow and bigger numbers can be easily achieved in a day. These crushes are a lot safer when trimming bigger bulls too.

We all now have a recording system on a tablet rather than the old clipboard and pen. All data is saved so we now have access to each farms trimming history- a great tool for looking back at individual



cows to monitor how well they are improving but also the farm as a whole to flag up any recurring issues.

A big change from back then is the attitude towards trimming. Not a lot of

farms were on board with routine trimming so we were doing mostly lame cows. Now a big proportion of our work consists of dry off/ mid lactation trims. We are expecting a lot more from cows these days, feeding more to achieve higher yields which definitely has an impact on feet and so more regular trimming is essential.

Trimming technique is one thing that hasn't changed over the years. As Vet Techs, we are all trained using the Dutch 5 step method. This is pretty much the industry standard in most countries and is proven to be the best way to trim an animal. Synergy insist we attend regular CPD days to ensure we all keep our trimming skills tip top!

**Colin Hayden**  
Vet Tech



## Synergy Events

For more information or to book your place, please get in touch with us: call us on 01935 83682, email us on [courses@synergyfarmhealth.com](mailto:courses@synergyfarmhealth.com), visit our Facebook page or [www.synergyfarmhealth.com](http://www.synergyfarmhealth.com)

Synergy will be running some of our courses at Mole Avon In Axminster. As well as continuing some of our popular courses there, we are also launching a new range of courses:

SUCCESSFUL WEANING MANAGEMENT  
MASTITIS WORKSHOP  
LAMENESS IN YOUR FLOCK

MOLE AVON  
COUNTRY STORES

### Coming in July

**Practical Calving Course**  
4th July 10.30am-2.30pm at Evershot

**Successful Weaning Management**  
4th July 10.30am-2.30pm at Mole Avon, Axminster

**Safe Use of Veterinary Medicines (General)**  
11th July 10.30am-2.30pm at Evershot

**Milk Sure Course**  
15th July 11am-1pm at Evershot

### Coming in August

**2 Day Foot Trimming Course**  
6th - 7th Aug 9.30am-4pm at Lower Coombe

**Safe Use of Veterinary Medicines (Sheep)**  
8th Aug 10.30am-2.30pm at Evershot

**Mastitis Workshop**  
12th Aug 10.30am-2.30pm at Mole Avon, Axminster

## "Hu" launched at the NSA South West Sheep Show!



Vets Charlotte & Emily with Animal Health Advisor Kath, attended the NSA SW Show in Devon on the 18th June. The day was a great success despite being a bit wet! This show was the first we have attended with our new Hospitality Unit (affectionately known as Hu). Be sure to look out for Hu in the upcoming shows!

### Coming in September

**Safe Use of Veterinary Medicines (Sheep)**  
17th Sept 10.30am-2.30pm at Mole Avon, Axminster

**Milksure Course**  
24th Sept 11am-1pm at Mole Avon, Axminster

## Dairy Apprenticeship Course

Applications have recently opened for the second intake of students on our level 3 Dairy apprenticeship programme which we run in conjunction with Bicton College. This new intake of students will start in September 2019. This practical programme is based at our premises at Lower Coombe, near Crewkerne, and is aimed at students in Somerset, Dorset and Devon. Synergy delivers teaching on a variety of dairy related topics, whilst administration and assessment are handled by Bicton College. About 50% is based on farm and practical (eg calving simulation, foot trimming), the other 50% classroom based teaching.

The programme is aimed at students aged 17 and over, with a minimum of one year of on farm experience, including adults who have not previously had any formal dairy teaching. With government funding this course is free for those under 19, £300 for more mature individuals! We encourage all employers or employees to consider the programme. Feedback from last year's students has been very positive and we are delighted to be involved in training the next generation of dairy professionals. For further details please visit: [www.synergyfarmhealth.com/training](http://www.synergyfarmhealth.com/training). All enquires and applications should be made to Peter Reed at Bicton College - 07976 328155.



You are invited to our...

## 10 Year Celebration Open Day

At Synergy Farm Health, West Hill Barns, Evershot

Saturday 14th September 3:30pm—late



Help us at Synergy Farm Health mark our first decade by joining us for our 10 Year Celebration.

- Hog Roast and Refreshments
- Live Music in our Marquee
- Come celebrate with our Vets, Vet Techs & Support Staff

Kindly Supported by  
**MSD**  
Animal Health  
The Science of Healthier Animals™



TO RSVP PLEASE CALL  
01935 83682

## Meet the Team Rachel Willcox

Rachel lives in the North of the Practice with her husband and 11 year old daughter, and originally comes from a dairy farming family in Dorset. Rachel was a veterinary nurse in practice for 20 years until she had her daughter, when she needed to devote more time to her. She joined Synergy Farm health in December 2017 as a Dispensary Assistant, which involves taking orders from clients, booking and dispensing orders. She also writes the feed prescriptions.

Rachel enjoys working as part of a team in Synergy dispensary, and being back in her beautiful Dorset home area. Rachel loves Singing in two four part choirs, and the friendship, fun and laughter this brings.

