

Case Study: Johne's Disease

On my travels I have recently noticed what seems like an upsurge in the number of cattle suffering from clinical Johne's disease. Perhaps this is due to stress caused by the onset of the colder weather. These cows, which were previously healthy and productive began to scour and rapidly lost condition despite having a good appetite.

Johne's disease is one of the most frustrating diseases we have to deal with.

- There is no cure,
- It is newborn calves that are most susceptible to infection. These calves then carry the disease, without showing any symptoms, often for many years, before they begin to show clinical signs
- Johne's tests are often not sensitive enough
- The disease underlies many other problems on farm, such as mastitis, lameness and poor fertility

For me, this highlights the need for increased scrutiny of calving protocols on farm, for if we can prevent calves from becoming infected, we can stop this disease in its tracks! Even with the best Johne's testing protocols in place it is still possible for cows (or heifers) that tested clear to start to shed the Johne's bacterium during calving, which contaminates the calving area. For this reason, calving pens should be the cleanest part of the farm, and ideally, cows should be calved in individual pens.

At Shepton Vets, we now have several qualified Johne's veterinary advisors who are trained in designing and implementing effective Johne's control strategies. Make sure you get in touch if you would like to make the most of their expertise.

Andy Tyrer



February 2019 Edition

Farm Newsletter



Directors Focus “

Inspiring the next generation of farmers ”

As some of you are aware the team at Shepton Vets are the farm vets at Cannington College. Not only do we provide veterinary services, we also have the privilege of offering training support to the students. This year I was asked to hold a session at Cannington's annual agricultural careers day, being passionate about encouraging the next generation of farmers, I was delighted to be involved. Other presenters included John Alvis (who is a governor at the college), Velcourt (who manage the dairy), Barclays Bank, For

Farmers and Smart Agriculture. Around 70 students were split into groups to promote discussion within each session.

We all focussed on how our businesses support the industry and are potentially future employers. Here at Shepton, we are very keen to support such apprenticeships, and we are lucky to have two former apprentices in our team in Jess and Tom.

By coincidence, in the same week I was asked to present to a group of students about a

topic of my choice. I chose 'Farming Futures'. where I discussed the long term effects of the reduction in the use of antibiotics and alternative preventative strategies to prevent disease; such as breeding for disease resistance, the importance of ongoing training, the need for adaptability, and the use of new technologies.

This week I am attending Dairy Tech Day at Stoneleigh and look forward to seeing what new technology is on offer.
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Office opening hours

Monday – Friday: 8am—5.30pm

Saturday: 8.30am—12pm

Emergency Service

We provide a 24 hour emergency service.

If you need assistance out of our normal working hours, please telephone

01749 341 761

If you would like to receive your farm account and this newsletter by email please advise the farm office.



BVD Stamp it Out

We are seeing brilliant uptake of our BVD funding, with over 50 farms now benefitting from this fund to access testing and advice to eradicate BVD from their herds. We still have funding available so if you would like to take part, please contact the Farm Office Team and we will get you booked in.

BVD is a highly infectious disease and eradication requires ongoing vigilance to ensure that any exposure is picked up and dealt with promptly.

For this reason we would **ALWAYS recommend running a check test once a year.** This involves taking blood samples from 6-10 youngsters before they have been vaccinated. It is a quick and cheap way of monitoring for BVD problems and bloods can easily be taken at a routine visit or TB test.

If you join **BVD Free** (a national campaign to identify stock free from BVD), once you have two consecutive negative annual check tests uploaded to their website, your herd will be accredited as BVD free for as long as you continue to submit annual check tests.

Many of our herds need to vaccinate to ensure sufficient biosecurity to keep BVD infection out of their

herd.

Bovilis BVD vaccine has recently changed its dosing regime and to ensure effective protection it is essential that the new protocol is followed.

Animals from 8 months old (and any purchased animals – cows and bulls) have 2 doses 4 weeks apart, to be completed at least 4 weeks before first service, followed by a booster 6 months later and then annual boosters.

There is a different vaccine, **Bovela**, that only requires heifers and bought in animals to have one dose initially, so please call the practice to find out more about this if you think it would simplify things for you!

Finally, we would like to congratulate all our farms that have eradicated BVD from their herds.

We are getting more herds eradicating BVD all the time and look forward to a time when we may be able to eradicate it from our region completely.



Lottie Mayo

Lungworm

Lungworm also known as husk, has economic losses associated with reduced growth rates, treatment, veterinary costs, lost milk revenue, reduced fertility performance and mortality. It is not unusual for all calves in a group to be affected, with death varying with size of infective dose and speed at which treatment is instigated. In approximately one in three outbreaks at least one death can be expected, rising up to 14% in severe outbreaks with losses averaging £50-£100 per head.

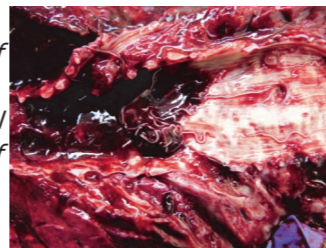
Following the introduction of widespread vaccination in the early 1960's, reports of disease in adult cattle were rare, but since 1993, lungworm has become the most common diagnosed respiratory disease of adult cattle. A move by some farmers away from vaccination to long-acting wormers has meant young animals do not develop immunity to lungworm as they are not exposed to their larvae. When animals are turned out for a second season without being wormed, exposure to lungworm larvae results in clinical disease in second season or older animals.

The most effective way of controlling lungworm is vaccination with Bovilis Huskvac (MSD Animal Health). Healthy animals 8 weeks or older should be given two doses 4 weeks apart. Lungworm immunity is maintained from season to season by exposure to lungworm larvae, which in most cases occurs from the grazing of normal pastures after vaccination. Cattle must not receive a wormer within 2 weeks of the second dose of Bovilis Huskvac, or irradiated larvae are killed before they can generate a suitable immune response.

It is important lungworm vaccination is continued each year in all new groups of calves. On average, 63% of farms which cease vaccination have an outbreak in succeeding years.

"Adult lungworm in the bronchi of the lungs. .

Photo courtesy of M. Millar, School of Veterinary Science, University of Bristol"



Oliver Tilling

Farmer Focus: Responsible use of antibiotics

Across the UK, the livestock industry has proved its commitment to the responsible use of antibiotics by voluntarily reducing their use by a staggering 40% over the past five years. There is now a new government led initiative that aims to achieve a further 25% reduction compared to 2016 levels within the next five years, which the UK is well on track to achieve.

These changes in antibiotic use are being reflected in our prescription habits here at Shepton Vets. Indeed, within the last 12 months alone, our sales of Pen & Strep are down 38% and sales of Tetra-Delta, our most commonly prescribed mastitis tube are down 10%.

These reductions are especially remarkable when you consider that it was 2018 in which Red Tractor also banned use of critically important antibiotics (CIA'S), apart from in very specific situations. Shepton Vets has seen a 100% reduction in the prescription of

these CIAs to farm clients.

We appreciate that a lot has changed very quickly with regards to our prescription habits and that many of you are having to adapt to increased scrutiny with regards to the way in which you use these products on farm.

At Shepton Vets we are always trying to support our farmers as much as possible and have a number of new courses and products in place to help you adapt to these changes.

In particular, we are very excited about MastDecide. This is a quick, on-farm mastitis culture kit, that can tell you within twelve hours whether a new mastitis case requires antibiotic therapy. As we continue to roll this product out over 2019, we hope this will help farmers in their target to reduce antibiotic use, and also result in less milk being discarded from cows under withhold.

Andy Tyrer

Events & Training Calendar

Mid-Somerset Agricultural Society Ploughing Match

17th February

BVD Stamp it Out

22nd February

BVD Stamp it Out

8th March

Cow First Aid

13th March

DIY AI Course—Somerset

1st – 4th April

Mastering Medicines

3rd April

Email: training@sheptonvets.com for more information or to book a space.



Team Shepton: Carol Vincent

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When I am not at the end of the farm vets office telephone line, my free-time still continues to revolve around animals. I have owned a former racehorse for the last eight years; talk about needy and time consuming!

I keep him at a livery yard which although is only a 10 minute drive away from my home, was a stamina-sapping two-hour round-trip this weekend through snow drifts just to provide his Lordship with his twice daily room service. I fully-understand the commitment that keeping animals entails and am a totally neurotic owner, the first to fear the worst in any mildly risky situation, so I really do appreciate the need for a prompt response when clients call with a sick animal.

When I am not administering 5* care for my spoiled horse, I am walking my two equally spoiled dogs. So I am pretty-much permanently in jodphurs and wellies at weekend, and I honestly wouldn't have it any other way!

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