

# February Newsletter



## Natalie Nobel has joined the Farm Office Team

Natalie has joined the Farm office team as our TB administrator.

'After 20 years working in large scale IT corporate business administration I decided to take the bull by the horns and look for a new more rewarding job in my local community. Little did I know it would be done quite so literally!

I live in Coleford with my husband, three children, our 'mad-dog Freddie' and the latest new addition to the family; hamster 'Mr Charlie Fizz'.

Joining the Shepton Vets Farm team as the new TB Administrator has been fascinating and challenging. The team are hard working, committed and passionate about their industry. It's a steep learning curve but I'm relishing every moment. I love the buzz of working in such a busy office and that no two days are ever the same. After spending my childhood on my Grampy's farm it's lovely to have a connection back to the farming community after all these years. Thank you to the team for making me so welcome! '



## London Marathon Training:

TB Tester Lynn, is busy training for the London Marathon which will take place on the 23rd April.

" So I decided to do the London Marathon. How hard could it be ? I mean running 26.2 miles around London with lots of people to talk to and wave at would be a lovely day out. But getting a place is easier said than done – I didn't get through in the main ballot, the charity I chose had no places left but finally I was picked for our running clubs one allotted place. The training plan is organised and the training is, so far, going well with the assistance of my dog Dougie– I've just got to try to avoid being stood on or kicked by any cows ! I am running in aid of Back Up which is a charity that supports people with spinal cord injuries – I have 2 friends who have been paralysed and this charity has provided them with significant support - so that gives me the incentive to go out in all weathers even when I'd rather stay in bed !



## Huskvac

Don't forget to place your order for Huskvac with Jo in the pharmacy.

## Farm Invoices

As you may already be aware, we suffered some IT problems in January. If you have any queries with your account please contact Hannah in accounts.

*If you would like to receive our newsletter by email, please advise the office team or drop an email to: [training@sheptonvets.com](mailto:training@sheptonvets.com).*

### Dates for your Diary

Winter Discussion Meetings:

6th February: Tips to reduce Lameness with Sotirios and Steve Paul from Cows Feet

6th March: TBC

29th March: 5 Step Foot Trimming & Lameness Course

**For more details about our training services email: [training@sheptonvets.com](mailto:training@sheptonvets.com)**

### **bTB Herd Level Reports:**

This is an Industry led scheme, which has been recently introduced, to encourage farmers to be proactive about bovine TB (bTB). The Programme is aimed at the surprisingly high (43) percentage of farms, in the High Risk Area, which have never had a bTB herd breakdown or haven't had one in the last 10 years. It's also aimed at those farmers who have had, or continue to have, a bTB herd problem.

The Programme provides a system of assessing herds grading them on a scale of 0-10 according to their risk of incurring a herd bTB problem. Scale 10 is given to herds which have been free of bTB for at least 10 years, are up to date with their testing and adhering to the CHeCS (Cattle Health Certification Standards) bTB standards. Scale 0 is for herds which have gone clear of TB restrictions in the previous 12 months, are up to date with their testing and also are adhering to the CHeCS bTB standards. Scales 9-1 reflect the number of years of herd bTB freedom.

The Programme sets out a number of measures to reduce the risk of a bTB problem in your herd. Some are new, for example, post movement testing and preventing cattle having access to natural water sources. Others have been heard before but are still relevant. It's true to say that you wouldn't tolerate losses and poor production in your herds caused by Lepto, BVD or IBR so why should you continue to let bTB cause problems? If you want to know more about how the CHeCS bTB Herd Accreditation Programme can reduce the risk of a breakdown your herd, contact the practice.

**Ralph Drouin**

### **Teat Endoscopy**

At Shepton Vets we constantly look for new innovative techniques and strive to offer the best possible service to our clients. Sotirios visited Germany to attend a cattle teat endoscopy course. The application of keyhole surgery on teats is an established procedure there, when cows are milking slowly, there is a blockage due to injury or a floating body (pea in the teat).

A small hole is made on the side of the teat and a small endoscope is used to identify the cause of the problem:

- If there is a foreign body, such as pea in the teat, it can then be safely removed under observation.
- If the blockage is low near the teat-end, with the use of specialised teat knives, this can be alleviated and milk flow returned to normal.
- If the blockage is higher up towards the milk quarter the chances of recovery are very poor and appropriate management action need be taken.

The procedure is very safe and can be carried out while the cow is restrained in the crush or the parlour.



### **Schmallenberg virus is back in the UK!**

In the last few weeks there have been a number of cases of Schmallenberg Virus reported across the country including one in a lamb on one of our client's farms.

The disease is spread by midges and it is thought that the mild November resulted in a prolonged period of infection and high midge numbers. Those lambing later in the season are likely to be worse hit.

The main symptoms of infections are birth deformities, mainly of the limbs and neck in both lambs and calves. The virus can also result in milk drop in dairy herds and reabsorptions resulting in fertility problems.

Most commonly animals affected have fused joints but other deformities can be seen. We expect to see cattle cases between now and April.

Unfortunately the Schmallenberg Virus vaccine is no longer licenced in the UK, but if you have any suspected cases please get in touch and we can arrange for testing to be done either by post mortems on deformed lambs or calves or by blood sampling.

**Anna Patch**

