Case Study: Ram Vasectomy

Vasectomy is a surgical procedure for male sterilisation. The procedure can be done on farm, it is relatively quick. The chosen Rams are sedated and local anaesthetic infiltrated into the scrotum, to allow the removal of a section of the male vas deferens. This prevents sperm from entering into the urethra and thereby prevents fertilisation.

Vasectomised rams have many different benefits throughout the farming year. These include synchronisation of lambing, advancing lambing dates and improving lambing percentage. These all make use of the "Ram Effect". The ability of the Vasectomised Ram to still produce phenomenon that effect the oestrus cycle of the ewe.

These rams can also be used to identify cycling hogs prior to mating and barren ewes after tupping.

Bibby Thomas

Local Events

25th – 28th July DIY AI course—Somerset
20th August—Mid-Somerset Show
20th September—Smallholder meeting on Camelids

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We have had a great season with regard to silage and maize. I am sure you are now getting your 1st cut analysis back.

The recent 'Hot snap' has once again brought to our attention Cow Environment both inside and out. A few years ago the letters THI meaning Temperature Humidity Index were rarely mentioned. That is not the case now with seemingly every meeting I attend, including at the GOLD CUP OPEN DAY, a mention of it made.

So why the importance? We have seen cows yield crash whether grazing or housed as the THI goes above the target of 72 for a high yielding cow. It is really the affect of fertility that is the main long term consequence of such extremes.

So we see poor bulling and lower number of services and as a consequence a decline in the number of cows calving in nine months time.

The Egg takes the duration of 3 cycles to develop so it is not just heat stress that we need to consider but any loss of condition of the dry cows coming up to calving especially now as the quality of the grass reduces. A loss of condition means that the cows energy demands are not being met and that means that the quality of the egg (and the likelihood of pregnancy) may be reduced.

So why else is planning taking place? – it is in starting Calf Pneumonia Prevention with the use of vaccinations and looking at all accommodation to improve air quality and lighting levels as the 'blessings' of the Summer months are removed from us.

Michael Head

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

**Smallholder Workshop**

On Thursday 29th June, Bibby and Kate held our latest Shepton Smallholder Club workshop on sheep nutrition.

The group visited a local smallholding, where they discussed all aspects of nutrition for different stages of the sheep production cycle.

This was followed by a hands on session restraining, tipping and body condition scoring.

Thanks to Polly for inviting us over.

The next Smallholder workshop will be held on Wednesday 20th September, on Camelid husbandry.

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**June Skittles Evening**

Our first skittles evening took place on the 7th June. It was a very enjoyable evening, as the Shepton vets team were shown how to play by local farmers from the Mendips. The evening raised £100 for Send A Cow and the practice is well on the way to raising sufficient money for its first cow. The winning team was captained by Anthony Bown and the winning individual was Fred from Ston Easton. Many thanks to all who participated and contributed.

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**APHA TB Test paperwork requirements**

APHA have issued some new information for TB testing:

Cattle birth and movement records MUST be up to date and accurate because if there are any unexplained discrepancies at a test, APHA will consider it to be a part test. Any discrepancies must then be resolved by the end of the test window. If this is not completed the farmer’s BPS payment will be penalised and TB2 restrictions served if not already in place. The best advice is for clients who have a TB breakdown need to complete and return the Cleansing and Disinfection Notice to APHA once reactors have been removed from the farm, before restrictions will be lifted.

One of the Approved Disinfectants is FAM 30 at a dilution of 1 part FAM30 to 20 parts water. The area to be cleansed and disinfected is that part of the farm where the reactor(s) have been isolated since being disclosed on day 2 of the test. If reactors are isolated at grass, no C&D is required but the form has to be completed to this effect and still returned.

For further details speak to your routine vet or TB tester.

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**Young Farmers Evening**

Bibby, Spike and small animal vet Greg welcomed the Warminster young farmers group for a practice visit. The group were put to the test practising their suturing skills, using the endoscope kit and scanning each other. A lot of fun was had by all involved.

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**Team Shepton:**

**Bibby Thomas**

I joined the practice straight after graduating in 2015, and hasn’t time flown by! Loads has happened in my short time with the practice.

In work I run the Smallholders Club along side Kate. I’m also in the process of learning how to correct LDAs Laparoscopically. Anna and Charlie are being very patient teachers!

Outside of work, I have become a real grown up and bought a house.

For those of you who I haven’t yet told. In July I’m going to become a Mum…… That is to a fur baby of course! “Piggy” the miniature Poodle will soon be assisting me on my calls. I’m sure you will all be looking forward to meeting her!