



FARM NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022

THE END OF A SPECIAL YEAR AND LOOKING AHEAD TO 2023....



2022 has been an enjoyable year for us to celebrate our centenary, we have cycled 100km, raising over £4000 for the Farming Community Network, we had a party with 200 old friends, clients and colleagues, we hosted Shepton Vets first Mini Young Farmers Rally and we travelled with some of you to Yorkshire on our study tour. Not forgetting the publication of our commemorative book – its been a busy, but hopefully memorable year!

As the year draws to a close, we are looking to ensure we are in shape for the next 100 years. This was the basis for our Pilton meeting in November when we were delighted to fill the room with over 60 people attending.

We made use of performance data supplied by NMR across a range of aspects from genomics to production to health. Rob spoke about factors affecting antibiotic use. When you next have a vet on farm ask them to show you where you sit in the benchmarking work we have done that ranks farms according to how much antibiotic they used, we can then work with you to improve on this metric if you wish.

Congratulations to the Doman team at Manor Farm, Ston Easton, who - after your votes - received our Centenary Farmer of the Year Award for high fertility performance. Our congratulations also go to Matt and Steve Cradock at Rodmore Farm who were the lowest antibiotic users, making this farm our first Shepton Top 10, Champion.

Most of all, and from all of us at Shepton Vets, we wish you all a peaceful Christmas, some time off with your families, and a Happy New Year. Should you need a visit over the festive period we will, of course, be available....

/ Paddy



A Christmas Get Together

We'd love you to join us for a few drinks and some mince pies to celebrate the festive season.

Weds 14th December from 7.30pm

Castle Cary Rugby Club BA7 7PF

Please RSVP by Friday 9th December

give us a call on 01749 341 761 or email charlotte.page@sheptonvets.com

DAIRY HERD 'TOP 10' ANTIBIOTIC USE



Thanks to all the farmers that came to our first Winter discussion group at the Pilton Working Mans Club, focused on our first 'Shepton Top 10' topic, Antibiotic Use.

We have compared and anonymised the antibiotic use of all the dairy herds in the practice from the reports in the herd health plans. The RUMA (Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture) target for 2020 was 21mg/kg and Shepton Vets has an average of 16.18mg/kg PCU.

The industry target for 2024 is a 15% reduction

(17.85 mg/kg PCU), so we are ahead of this already. Well done to all the clients that have worked hard to achieve this. Shepton clients have also not used high priority critically important antibiotics used such as the 3rd and 4th generation Cephalosporins and Fluoroquinolones. No antibiotics have been used for footbaths.

We have awarded all our clients under 10 mg/kg PCU a 'Shepton Top 10' certificate of achievement, which will be coming out with your routine vet. We also awarded an Antimicrobial Use Champion based on mg/kg PCU, dry cow tube use, lactating cow tube use and SCC - congratulations to Matt Cradock of Rodmore farm.

'As little as possible as much as necessary' is a common phrase with responsible antibiotic use. There is variation between clients so please speak to your routine vet to see how you sit within the practice and see if they can



help achieve any goals you may have.

The next round of RUMA targets have been announced of which several have already been hit. Targets include a reduction in sales of lactating and dry cow tubes, 7.5 fewer calves treated with antibiotics/100 calves, calf mortality falling 1% a year between 2020 and 2024 and a reduction in mortality rates in adult cows. There is also a target to get 95% of UK dairy herds on the AHDB Medicine Hub by 2024.

Keep up the good work!

/ Rob



RESPIRATORY DISEASE IN CALVES

Pneumonia is often thought of as an issue that affects calves post-weaning, and whilst this is true, it's also a disease that can commonly be found in pre-weaned animals and carried over into weaned groups. It is therefore vital to check for and detect pneumonia early on in the disease course.

Early detection and treatment of individuals, and avoidance of mixing these animals with healthy calves when grouped around weaning, is crucial for improving treatment outcome and helping reduce future incidence.

What can be done in the pre-weaning period?

Prevention:

1. Colostrum Management: Adequate transfer of passive immunity provides the best start for a calf's immune system.
2. Adequate nutrition to help support development of the immune system and provide sufficient energy to combat disease.
3. Housing: Cleanliness, ventilation, dry and sufficient bedding.
4. Vaccination: Vaccination of calves for respiratory disease (ie. Respi-3).
5. Isolate affected animals and avoid changing social groups too much, as this causes stress and results in a dip in immunity.

Control:

1. Detection: Early detection in treating cases of pneumonia is key. Check all calves twice daily, during feeding time is easiest. Create a routine for checking for early signs of disease.
2. Dose: Appropriately dosing individual calves is important, as underdosing will result in treatment being ineffective and overdosing is an added expense. Do you know the weight of your calves? If not, it is best to use a weight band or electronic scale to get an idea of animal size before dosing.
3. Protocol: Having a protocol in place for treatment of respiratory disease in calves contributes to treatment success. Always use a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory in conjunction with antibiotic treatment. Formulate a protocol with your veterinarian.

What can be done in the post-weaning period?

Pneumonia in post-weaned calves is often brought in by animals that have respiratory disease before weaning. Isolate any diseased animals, and avoid additional stressors to calves at weaning time. In addition to this, formulate a routine for careful observation of weaned calves for early detection of disease, and provide appropriate environmental conditions including good ventilation, cleanliness and dry bedding. Mixing of age



groups and overstocking contribute to higher incidence of disease.

Consequences of Pneumonia:

- High use of antimicrobial products: contributes to a herd's antimicrobial usage
- Cost of Treatment: Treatment is always more costly than prevention (remember: an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure)
- High Recurrence Rate: Recurrence rate of pneumonia is high, as individuals are more susceptible (existing lung damage, poor growth/setback)
- Long-Term Effects: Respiratory disease results in lung damage that can predispose individual animals to getting pneumonia again in different stages of life - commonly stressful events such as heifers at first-calving, mixing of social groups during weather change, etc.

/ Emily



SHEPTON TOP 10 UDDER HEALTH & MILK QUALITY MON 16TH JAN @ 7.30PM

Join us for supper and a discussion about our second 'Shepton Top 10' topic, Udder Health & Milk Quality.

Farm Vet Charlie Neale will talk about routines to optimise milk quality and reduce mastitis, using data and real life examples from our Shepton dairy herds to highlight high performance and explore how you can improve metrics on your farm.

There are limited spaces available so please call us on 01749 341 761 to confirm your place and let us know of any dietary requirements.

SHEPTON TOP 10: UDDER HEALTH & MILK QUALITY

Udder health still represents one of the largest impacts to farm profitability from an animal health perspective

Udder health in the UK has significantly improved, with average mastitis rates of 30 cases/100 cows/year and BMSCC of 162,000cell/ml.

This figure compared to the worst 10% of herds represents a saving of £16,000-£55,000/100 cows/year, and when "Average" is compared to "Top 10" performance, we see Top10 performance saving £6000-10,000/100 cows/year – so

an area well worth further improvements.

The Udder Health Top 10 focuses on routines to optimise milk quality and reduce mastitis and recognises high performance by a combination of low BMSCC, low Bactoscan, low proportion of the herd being infected, good dry period outcomes and low udder-specific antibiotic usage. It will be a good discussion group and we look forward to seeing you there in the New Year.

/ Charlie

CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

Usual office hours until 12.30pm Saturday 24th December

Available for emergencies only 25th, 26th & 27th December

Usual office hours 28th, 29th, 30th and 31st December

Available for emergencies only 1st and 2nd January

Usual office hours from Tuesday 3rd January

OUR 24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE OPERATES AT ALL TIMES

TB OR NOT TB: TBAS KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE DAY

The IDEXX and ENFERPLEX blood tests will detect TB infected animals which have not been identified by the skin or gamma blood tests. APHA plan to trial the Enferplex test in herds due a gamma interferon test from January onwards. It is possible to apply for APHA permission to use these tests privately to eradicate infection from a herd although before doing so, one would want to be confident that the local wildlife are free of the disease. I am currently managing two herds which, on paper, have persistent breakdowns but actually have had reactors in groups of animals that have had no contact with each other for many months. I would not advise the use of either test in these two herds.

Many of you will be aware that bovine TB and Johne's Disease show similarities in how they behave and that some cattle vets have proposed using the latter as a model to understand the former. You will also be aware that when testing for Johne's that some animals have results which change from pass to inconclusive to fail over time, indicating that the disease is dynamic in these individuals. Following this example, the past skin readings for animals which have either become slaughterhouse cases or indeed reactors can be checked. In these cases, it is possible to pinpoint when an animal was likely to have been exposed to infection because they had a bovine reaction or a 'bottom bump' for the first time. Occasionally these animals had a cohort which was a reactor several years earlier, indicating the likelihood of exposure to infection at the same time but with different durations before being discovered. Experience has shown that animals in herds which do not have a TB problem have few or no bumps; think housed calves and yearlings whilst cows can have many bovine readings or 'bottom bumps'. Our skin test is a comparative

test because both avian and bovine purified extracts are injected and any increases in the skin thickness are compared but what if the increase in the top lump is masking the bottom reaction? This is the reason why in some countries, only the bovine injection is given so if there is an increase in the skin thickness, the animal is classed as a reactor. Do not panic if you have reached this stage because if top lumps are masking bottom (bovine) reactions, then the number of slaughterhouse cases would be expected to be much higher than at present. As a guide, if there are only a few bottom lumps, you do not have much to worry about, but many bovine reactions could indicate an undetected or developing problem.

The DIVA is a test which will differentiate between TB vaccinated animals and those which were naturally infected. APHA want to start introducing TB vaccination in cattle in 2025. Unfortunately, the TB vaccine will only protect two thirds of animals dosed. Badger vaccination will replace culling, it reduces the amount of TB an infected animal excretes and it protects the uninfected. Badger vaccination requires licensing and is therefore costly. Do not despair if you have reached this far, remember TB is a disease just like other diseases. It can be controlled or, at least the risks can be minimised. It is time take to take down those 'BADGERS WELCOME' signs at the entrances to your farms. Ask for a free TBAS visit, especially if your herd has had reactors or IRs. If you're fortunate enough to have been TB free for more than a year and you do not want to test twice a year, enquire about the CHECS TB scheme to stay on annual testing.

/ Ralph

TEAM CHANGES

We are delighted to have Kate Sadler back with us from early December. Kate has delayed her Midwifery training for now and after a short spell in small animal practice has decided working with farmers is much more appealing! We're sure, like us, many of you will be glad to see Kate again.



We also say goodbye for now and send best wishes to Jade, who heads off on maternity leave, and welcome Lisa Bebbington to the team to cover Jade's calf vaccination rounds.



You'll hear a new voice in the office when you call us too - we welcome Rob Trainor to the team, covering farm office administration.

AN UNUSUAL CASE OF CCN

I recently had a call from a client with 6-7 month old calves showing neurological symptoms and death. The animals had been housed since purchase and were being fed old clamp silage with a small amount of concentrates, but the concentrate feeding was stopped around the time that the first case happened.

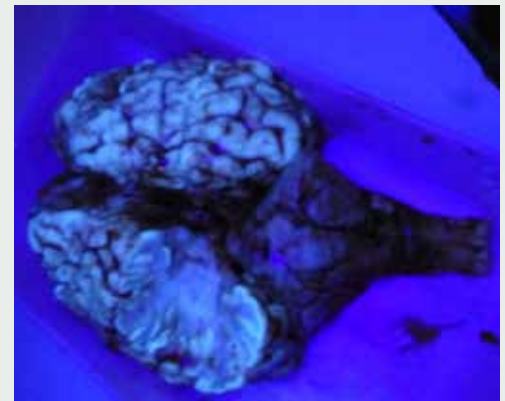
Initially listeriosis was suspected as the silage had large amounts of spoilage, so the group were changed onto fresh baled silage with no spoilage. However further cases occurred, with the affected animals deteriorating dramatically in just a few hours. A post mortem was carried out and CCN (cerebrocortical necrosis) was diagnosed, along with a moderate to heavy worm burden.

CCN is caused by low levels of thiamine (vitamin B) in the blood and tissues. This alters the metabolism in the brain, causing it to swell which results in neurological signs. CCN is normally seen in 6-18 month old cattle fed on high rates of concentrates and lush, low fibre pastures. Animals are dull, with head pressing and blindness. They hold their heads thrown

up and back (opisthotonos) and show twitching movements of the eyes (nystagmus). Without treatment animals quickly become recumbent, paddling with their legs. This is followed rapidly by convulsions and death.

Cattle do not need Thiamine in their diet, as it is produced by the microbes that live in their rumens. Low fibre, high concentrate diets result in a microbe population that breaks thiamine down rather than producing it, resulting in a deficiency and CCN. However rapid changes in diet can also alter the balance of gut microbes and cause CCN. This is why we sometimes see CCN in groups where we might not expect it, like these cattle where diet had been changed at purchase and then with the removal of concentrates and change in silage. It can even be seen in adult cattle where poor pastures (eg in very dry summers) lead to them grazing hedgerows.

Other diseases can also have an effect, in this case the group had thickening of the gut lining due to worm infection. The thickening of the gut will have further reduced the absorption of Thiamine.



Treatment involves rapid and aggressive supplementation with Thiamine in affected animals and dietary management of the whole group, adding straw to the ration at 1.5 kg /100 kg BW/day to support rumen function. The group has also been wormed to ensure gut absorption is maximized.

It will take some time for the increased fibre content to alter rumen microbes and it may take 2-3 weeks for the gut damage to fully heal so we are keeping the group closely monitored for further cases in the meantime.

/ Lottie



VACCINE SEASON / MEDS UPDATE

Vaccine Season 2023

With the 2023 Vaccine season nearly upon us, Huskvac supply appears stable so we wanted to communicate this season's first batch will be available from 23rd January 2023. We also recommend early ordering for your Huskvac dose quantities and dates so we can pre-order your huskvac and keep ahead of the game!

Lepto vaccine price has been subject to increases across the market, Shepton Vets have frozen prices from 2021, so it's worth contacting us if you're looking at Lepto price comparisons this year. After some delay, supply of the 25 dose bottles is on route to the wholesalers and we should be fully stocked by mid December.

Other

Ubrostar Red Herd Pack supply issues have now been rectified and stocks are on route to wholesalers, so should be available in practice by early to mid-December.

Gamaret, the alternative to the now discontinued Tetra Delta is an imported product and inconsistent import supply has led to a brief period of short-dated stock. Our current stock is dated 20/12/23, so please be aware of this when ordering, but we anticipate longer-dated stock in the near future.

UPCOMING TRAINING



PRACTICAL LAMBING

WEDS 25TH JANUARY 2023

Join us for this practical lambing course, including:

- caring for the ewe before lambing
- common lambing problems and associated diseases
- practical lambing skills and stop tips using our lambing simulator



APHA APPROVED DIY AI COURSE

WEDS 22ND - FRI 24TH MARCH 2023

Our 3 day APHA approved DIY AI course includes:

- a combination of classroom theory (with the help of our training cow) and on-farm practicals, covering anatomy, fertility management and AI technique including lots of practice passing AI guns through cervixes on our training cow, cadaver tracts and live barren cows
- leads to a licensed AI Certificate and includes a follow up visit on your farm a month later to check progress

We will also be running courses in Mastering Medicines, Foot Trimming, Practical Calving, Cow First Aid, Mobility Scoring and Youngstock Care - watch this space for details!

Booking is essential - please call the office on 01749 341 761 or email training@sheptonvets.com

We can also organise one to one foot trimming training with Charlie and other practical support sessions for your team - give us a call on to book onto a course or for a chat about how we can help with other training needs.



ROSIE LYLE

MEET THE TEAM

Name: Rosie Lyle

Job Title: Veterinary Surgeon

Where are you from? God's own Country – North Yorkshire.

Where/what did you study? I did a Bachelor of Veterinary Science at the University of Liverpool.

How long have you worked at Shepton Vets? I've been here since April 2021.

What did you do before? I was a Farm Vet in North Yorkshire.

Why did you want to do this job? I wanted to work with a team who were passionate about working with farms to improve health, welfare and productivity. That's what I found at Shepton Vets. I love working with different farms businesses to help them work towards their farm goals.

Favourite animal and why? A Yak - because it's a hairy cow which is incredibly well adapted to live in the Himalayas.

Do you have any pets? Ginny the German Wirehaired Pointer.

Favourite biscuit? Chocolate malted milk

Interesting fact about you? I am a paraglider pilot, so I spend most of my spare time chasing the weather with the hope to fly as far as possible.



Shepton Veterinary Group

Allyn Saxon Drive

Shepton Mallet

Somerset BA4 5QH

Tel: 01749 341 761

Email: farm.animal@sheptonvets.com



Office Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8am - 5.30pm

Sat: 8.30am - 12.30pm

We also provide a 24 hour emergency service