

Newsletter

October 2021



Welcome

Well, the rain is falling and the leaves are blowing in the wind. Autumn is here but we have had a really good summer all in all. Cattle are still out and there is plenty of grass about. Housing time is coming so we need to be prepared. Pneumonia is always about. The good weather has the stock in good order so we need to keep them that way. Fluke should not be a major problem yet as it has been too dry for the fluke to move from the snail to the pasture. This will change as the autumn progresses. Please keep looking at our newsletter and our social media for regular updates as we are monitoring farms for fluke infection. We have seen nothing yet.

Jim McKinstry

Included this month

- Can Vets be Money Saving Experts ? Young Stock Special - Charlotte Chapman
- Texel Throat - Becky Dean
- Faecal Worm Egg testing kits
- Calf Jacket Time!
- News and Diary Dates

Can Vets be Money Saving Experts!?

Youngstock management is a key and fundamental production stage on any farm enterprise, and it should be seen as a huge opportunity for financial gain not only in terms of maximising growth (reaching target weights in target time) but also in disease prevention, illness, and mortality. Table one shows just a few figures available out there when it comes to heifer rearing on UK dairy farms making it obvious that hundreds to thousands of pounds can be saved through making rearing systems more efficient.

Table 1 – Areas for potential gains	One calf	10 calves	50 calves
Age at first calving 26-28 months (compared to 30 months)	£1,200	£12,000	£60,000
Age at first calving 24 months (compared to 30 months)	£1,500	£15,000	£75,000
Estimated lifetime cost of pneumonia in heifer replacement	£772	£7,720	£38,600
Single case of pneumonia	£43.26	£432.60	£2,163
Single case of scour	£25.00	£250.00	£1,250
Single case of mortality excluding disposal	£486.00	£4,860	£24,300

Housing, nutrition, and infection control are all key areas which can significantly influence a calf's health status and level of productivity. **Continued....**



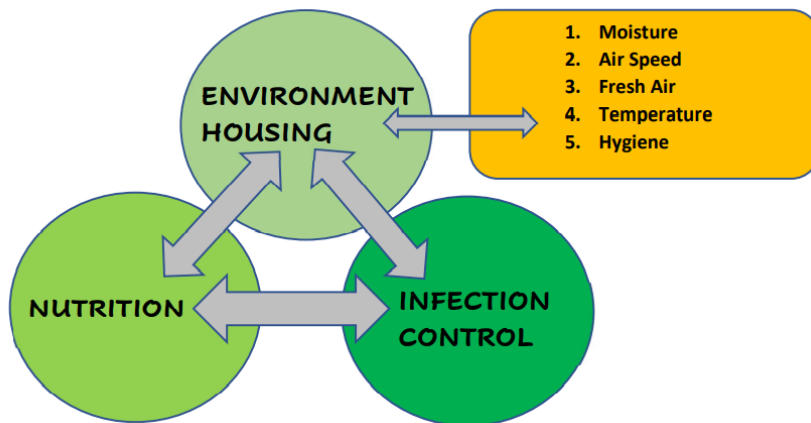
Another post housing option from Norbrook, Solantel Pour on is a new pour on to treat liver fluke in cattle. Containing a single active ingredient which kills immature and mature fluke from 7 weeks.



Continued ..

Jamie Robertson, a renowned figure in livestock housing systems joined us last month to discuss the fundamentals behind calf housing, the pitfalls, and the optimistic solutions. He delighted us with some surprising facts about moisture build up in calf pens (10 litres of liquid produced per calf per day!), thermoneutral zones and cold stress, biofilms hiding bugs and designated 'air spaces' for separate age groups. Jamie divides his housing checks into 5 key components, look at each area of your system and consider-

- **Moisture** - bugs thrive and multiply in damp conditions, are beds dry and the area well drained?
- **Air speed** - are there draughts at animal level causing cold stress? Is there enough air speed above to remove stale air?
- **Fresh air** - is ventilation working? Young calves do not produce enough heat to drive the stack effect often leading to stale bug ridden air hanging around in sheds. Consider mechanical systems to push stale air out.
- **Temperature** - the perfect temperature for a new born calf is 15°, dropping by 0.5° per day after that. Consider heat lamps in calf pens, jackets or extra bedding to avoid cold stress.
- **Hygiene** - bugs like mycoplasma and crypto survive well in biofilm (the brown grease on pens, walls and feeding equipment), ensure frequent cleaning with the correct detergents and disinfectants.



“Make sure your feeding, cleaning and management systems are people friendly, if something is easy the job will get done properly”, Jamie Robertson



With the weather taking a turn and housing upon us, we hope to delve more into Jamie’s housing solutions to help prepare your calves for the colder more unpleasant months ahead. Over the next few months we will be carrying out some calf health review visits where we work through a checklist of your entire system. Casting a pair of fresh eyes over your set up and learning what to look for can be invaluable when it comes to improving calf health. To find out more please contact the practice.

Charlotte Chapman

Texel Throat

Tupping time approaches and as the rams are rounded up for their pre service MOTs the familiar sound of honking texels can be heard again. But why do Texels struggle with their throats?

This question has not been 100% answered, however, studies looking at the difference in shape between Blue Faced Leicester and Texel tup voice boxes showed the Texel voice boxes to be shorter and fatter and that the airway had more of a funnel shape, leading ultimately into a narrower windpipe than the Leicesters. All of these changes in shape potentially mean that the space for airflow to the lungs is smaller in the Texel.



This means that to move the same volume of air into the lungs the Texels have to breathe more rapidly, and thus move the air over the voice box tissues faster. Also, to add insult to injury, Texels have a higher muscle mass than the Leicester, with a higher oxygen demand, meaning that even more air movement is required just to exist! So, the theory stands that, faster breaths, and thus faster airflow can irritate the lining of the voice box and cause ulceration. As the tissue ulcerates and swells, this becomes a vicious circle scenario, with more irritation, more swelling, eventually, the blood supply to the voice box declining, abscesses forming and in severe cases death of the cartilage. So what can we do? This does appear to be breed specific, so ideally breeding away from lines with a history of individuals with this condition where possible.

Being careful to keep your tups in in tip top condition, so making sure they are not in dusty, or unclean environments (ammonia from excrement is very irritant to airways).

And also treating signs early where they do appear, to try to delay the deterioration of airway lining.

Treatments with anti-inflammatory drugs and antibiotics can help if the disease hasn't progressed too far, but if parts of the voice box are dead then fragments of pus can be breathed in and cause disease lower in the lung too.



Becky Dean

Pick up your Worm Egg Count Testing Kit

To make life easier when it comes to worm egg counting, we have these testing kits available to collect from Lancaster, J36, Sedbergh or Tynedale at Greenodd. Included in the price of the test, the pack contains pots, gloves and instructions.

Please return to us for a result within 24 hours (for standard worm eggs), longer for fluke eggs and fluke coproantigen.



Calf Jacket Time!

When environmental temperatures drop below 10°C for more than 3 hours per day, calves use their energy reserves for keeping warm rather than for growth.

With the use of calf jackets you can make significant savings on feed, medication and bedding costs, by better conversion of energy to growth rather than warmth, and reducing the risk of pneumonia and scours from chills and draughts.

We are now stocking standard sized calf jackets, however smaller jackets can be ordered in for jersey calves .



Welcome to Catriona Hoy



Catriona joined our Lancaster branch in August after graduating from the University of Glasgow this year and was keen to get straight into

farm vetting. Originally from a small sheep and beef farm in Ayrshire, Catriona was drawn to the Cumbria/Lancashire area for its fantastic hill walking and mountain biking - and its many farms of course! She is enjoying meeting farmers and exploring the local area, both at work and in her free time with her partner Mark who is enjoying his new job on a local dairy farm despite missing his Ayrshire coos!

Sunshine and Ice cream at the Westmorland Show!!

Thank you to all of you who joined us on the stand at the Westmorland Show last month. What a good couple of days with fantastic weather, no stuck vehicles, some great livestock and lots of opportunity to catch up with clients.



HUGE CONGRATULATIONS

to vet Becky Inman and Adam on the safe arrival of their baby boy in the early hours of September 28th. Becky's maternity leave started abruptly with an early speedy appearance but all doing well!



Dates For Your Diary

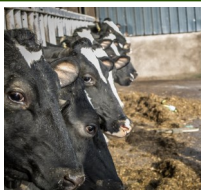


Red Tractor **Understanding Veterinary Medicines** course. Inspectors are now looking for certificates of attendance which becomes an official standard for Beef and Lamb in November 2021. Please book early as these courses are filling up fast and our face to face meetings are running at reduced numbers for Covid Safety.

Tuesday 19th October 2021 –1.30pm—3.30pm at J36 practice meeting room, refreshments inc.

Thursday 25th November 2021—1pm—2.30pm Online - via Zoom.

To book please e mail linda@farmgatevets.com or phone the practice. Cost £30 plus VAT inc. course book and certificate.



Navigating Volatile Feed Prices without Compromising Herd Fertility - W/C November 15th

2021, date, time and venue **TBC**. Aimed at dairy farmers, we will be joined for this meeting by guest speaker **Professor Mark Crowe** from University College Dublin. Further details to follow but please contact us to register your interest by phoning the practice or e mail linda@farmgatevets.com.

Lancaster Office

Tel: **01524 60006**

Open 8:30am-5pm

Monday-Friday

9am—12noon Saturdays

CLOSED Sundays

J36 Kendal Office

Tel: **015395 67899**

Open 8:30am-5pm

Monday-Friday

9am—12noon Saturdays

CLOSED Sundays

Sedbergh Office

Tel: **015396 20335**

Open 8:30--5pm

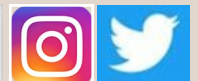
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