



HIGHGATE VETERINARY CLINIC— Farmer Newsletter

November 2009

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Tel. 01539 721344
www.highgate-vets.co.uk

Clinic opening times

Monday—Friday

8.30am—7.30pm

Saturday

9.00am—12.30am

Sunday

emergencies only

NWDA Livestock Programme

Just a reminder that Mark will finish his training this month for supplying health planning for the NWDA livestock programme which can lead to grants of up to £12,000.

Further details on the programme are available via our website www.highgate-vets.co.uk

If interested please contact SAC on 0845 6040 535 to register on the programme and RDPE on 01768 861306 to obtain a grant application pack.

Calf Pneumonia

We are now in the high risk period for pneumonia. It is never too late to start vaccinating to protect calves. The choice of vaccine is more limited this year as Bovipast is now unavailable. Rispoval 4 vaccinates calves against BVD, RSV, PI3 and IBR.

There are other vaccines but they cover fewer diseases. Rispoval 4 requires two shots four weeks apart before giving full protection. Once the full course is given, protection lasts at least six months. Rispoval Intranasal only requires one shot up the nose to give protection against RSV and PI3, but that only lasts about 10 weeks.

The F word

Unlike Gordon Ramsey's F word, ours can be mentioned in polite society. Ours is F for Fluke. Yes, we know we've written about it for the past three months, but the problem just hasn't gone away.

In the last week of October a client reported that five sheep in a group of seventy had suddenly dropped dead over a period of four days.

The ewes were in good bodily condition and had been fluked at the beginning of September. Post mortem on one revealed that the ewe had bled internally from a severely fluke damaged liver.

Already this month we've post-mortemed fattening lambs with severe fluke

Sheep will require repeated treatment this winter to avoid production losses and deaths.

Note – Tups are as venerable as ewes, please don't forget to treat them!

IBR

Farms continue to test positive for IBR

The latest results from our BeefCheck and DairyCheck diagnostic schemes, continue to show that 72% of herds test positive for the IBR virus¹.

This illustrates just how widespread this disease is amongst dairy and beef cattle.

In addition to the cost of treatment, time and extra labour required to deal with an outbreak, there are many hidden costs to IBR:

1. Annual milk yield from an infected cow reduced by 173 litres per year
2. Beef cattle take 4 weeks longer to reach slaughter weight
3. Up to 10% of pregnant cows can abort during an outbreak of IBR

(statistics from Intervet)

IBR vaccination



Vaccination with Bovilis IBR Marker live can help to control the effects of IBR, improving the health and wellbe-

ing of your herd. It could also help you to save a money by reducing the effects of the disease on production.

Contact us and ask about testing your herd for the IBR virus and the positive benefits of vaccination. If you already vaccinate for IBR please contact us when you are ready to order your vaccine. New orders for Bovilis IBR Marker Live will receive a complimentary vaccination gun worth over £10.00.

Dairy visit

As part of his NWDA Livestock Programme training, Mark had a look around the new dairy unit at Liverpool University which was partly funded by Tesco.

Oestrus detection

Staff at the new unit are trialling different methods of oestrus detection comparing regular observation with Heat Time, pedometers, Kamar and Estrus Alert. In addition, the Heat Time system contains a microphone which allows for the measurement of rumination.

Unsurprisingly rumination drops when the cow is in oestrus or is ill. Different diets cause different rates of rumination but it's unknown at the moment whether it's good to have fast or slow rumination.

The dairy

The building itself is good but not perfect. It's designed to give cows comfort with counter—lever cubicles and mattresses. Passageways are wide to reduce lameness and allow free movement of cows around the building. Cows are allowed extra loafing space by having access to an open yard. Dry matter intake is maximised by ensuring the feeding area is well lit, there's plenty of feed space and the feed is regularly pushed up to the barrier. The roofing sheets have gaps between them to allow air to exit the building but ventilation is still not right. The ridge is vented but in hind sight should have been a capped chimney ridge.

Dry cow and fresh cow management is very particular. Both groups are straw yarded with a gate between them. There's plenty of space at the barrier to ensure maximum feed intake. Shortly after calving, the cow moves through a dividing gate to join the fresh cows for at least a week before moving into the cubicles. It's not quite the cow palace you'd expect but the staff see it as still a work in progress.