

## Out and About in August

At the beginning of August we attended the Macclesfield Sheep Dog Trials. It was a great to see lots of clients at the event and to watch some of them competing too. Our own equine vet Rachel Helm and her dog Star came 3rd in the Local Singles on Friday. We ran a couple of competitions from our stand and lots of visitors took part. The winner of Guess the Name of the Sheep was Freya, she guessed the name Twix and won a Shaun the Sheep Hopper whilst Louisa guessed the closest with How Many Sweets in the Jar and won all the sweets!



On 8th August we took part in our first Vet Day at Tatton Park Farm. Our farm vets Hollie and Jennie, along with our vet tech Vicky and our equine vet Liz, spent lots of time answering questions from the visitors. Our favourite question of the day was 'How far can a cow smell?' if anyone knows the answer, please let us know!

If you have a community event coming up and would like Wright and Morten to be involved please get in touch.

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## Staff News

We are delighted to welcome Nieves back from maternity leave this month. Nieves will rejoin our TB testing team from Monday September 17th.

## Are Your Foot Trimming Knives Upto the Job?

Bryan our foot trimmer is able to offer a foot knife sharpening service for knives in need of a little TLC. Clean knives can be dropped off at any of our branches or with a vet whilst they are on farm. Bryan will then ring you once they are ready to collect. The service costs £10 for two knives.

## Implementing Selective Dry Cow Therapy

As the flies (hopefully) begin to die down it's a good time to evaluate your usage of selective dry cow therapy. Even if you've already been successfully implementing it on your farm it's important never to become complacent and to ensure that your selection criteria remain consistent. Our top tips are:

- Work with your vet to ensure that you are using the best strategy for your farm
- Keep good records, mastitis and cell count records are key.
- Ensure that your bulk cell count remains consistently below 200,000cells/ml.
- Get used to using teat sealants in addition to dry cow tubes before you begin using them as a stand alone preventive measure.
- When it comes to drying cows off, take your time! Teat preparation is key to success, the teat must be completely clean and dry. Using surgical spirit and cotton wool can make this easier to achieve than relying on commercial wipes.
- Prepare and treat each teat individually starting with the one furthest away from you.
- Assess the integrity of each teat end. If the teat end is roughened or compromised then it is likely to host a larger bacterial population. These cows may benefit from antibiotic dry cow therapy even if their lactation cell count has remained low.

## Product News



Both Toxovax and Cevac Chlamydia are still available to order through the office. There is currently a three week waiting time for delivery of these vaccines so please place your order as soon as possible. The latest that ewes can be vaccinated is four weeks prior to tupping, however we often see manufacturing issues with these vaccines later in the season so please don't leave it until the last minute.



## Upcoming Courses

Bridget will be running Mastering Medicines Workshops on September 25th and also on October 2nd, 9th and 23rd. Attendance at this course will allow you to meet Red Tractor requirements for the safe handling and administration of medicines. **The course runs from 10:30am to 2:30pm and costs £55 (excl. VAT) per person. For more information or to book a place please contact the office on 01477 571000 and ask for Vicky.**

Bridget is also able to come to your farm to run bespoke training courses for the whole team. This helps to ensure that everyone who is involved in the administration of veterinary medicines is using them correctly and responsibly. If you are interested in this then please contact Bridget on 07733 121533.

## Think Pneumonia

Please see overleaf for a great article on control of pneumonia in calves and youngstock. Vaccination can be a key part of your control strategy, however for it to work at it's best animals must be injected well in advance of any challenge. For youngstock being housed this winter this means that the first dose should be given at least six weeks prior to housing.

## How Much Does Calf Pneumonia Cost You?



Recent data from pre-weaned calves suggests 21% of all disease and 22.5% of all deaths in this age group are due to pneumonia and of post-weaning deaths, 46.5% are due to pneumonia.

Calf pneumonia has major impacts on the economic performance of farms due to direct costs of morbidity, mortality and treatment. It also has long term effects on the performance of animals.

A single case of pneumonia carries a mean cost of £43.26 per sick dairy calf and a mean cost of £29.58 per calf for the rest of the group.

The long-term effects of calf pneumonia in dairy replacements suggest an incidence of pneumonia in the pre-weaning period can lead to a two-week delay in time to first service. This delay has been estimated to cost the producer £1.65 per day.

An effect on milk production also exists that can show a 2.2% reduction in first lactation milk yield, which, if we consider a heifer may produce 6,000L in her first lactation, equates to 132L of lost milk at a cost of 27.16p per litre.

By taking this longer-term effect of pneumonia into account, we can correct the actual cost for each case of pneumonia to £102.21.

In UK beef units, these costs are £82.10 per affected calf and £74.10 per calf in the in-contact group.

It is important to note these estimated costs do not consider the extra labour costs calf disease may incur on the producer.

## What can we do to prevent it?

### Environment

- Ensure clean and dry bedding for pre-weaned calves.
- Look at improving drainage angle of floor if water/milk/urine does not drain effectively.
- Ensure good ventilation above calf height to keep air fresh and stop recirculation of disease.
- Keep calves warm and not in a draught - The lower critical temperature (temperature below which a calf needs extra energy to keep warm) for calves < 3 weeks of age is 10–15°C.



### Colostrum

- Quickly – as soon as possible after birth and ideally within 2 hours.
- Quantity – feed 3 litres within 6 hours of birth and another 3 litres within 12 hours.
- Quality – Milk cows as soon as possible after calving and test colostrum quality with a colostrometer. Good quality colostrum contains > 50mg/ml of immunoglobulins.
- Tube or bottle feed colostrum to ensure sufficient quantity is consumed.
- Calves under 7 days old can be blood tested to check if they are receiving sufficient colostrum.

### Feeding

- Consistent milk feeding.

- Offer creep/calf pellets from birth – a calf's rumen can start to work as early as day 5.
- Concentrates - provide the rumen microbes with the nutrients they need to grow and multiply. After three weeks of eating starter concentrate, the rumen will have enough microbes to ferment the feed to supply the calf with energy.
- Ad lib forage – for rumen development.
- Ad lib water – important for rumen microbes to develop.

### Treatment and Vaccination

- Identify and treat sick calves quickly – one of the first signs of illness can be a high temperature (>39.5C) – USE A THERMOMETER.
- Isolate sick calves to reduce spread of disease.
- If more than 20% of a group are showing signs, please contact the office to speak to a farm vet.
- Young calves (9 days old) can be vaccinated against some of the common respiratory pathogens.

**Please talk to your vet or call the office if you have any concerns about calf health or would like a visit to discuss calf housing and/or feeding.**



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