



Nantwich Veterinary Group

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Newsletter March 2010

As we enter March our minds will be focused on Spring and turnout, after a difficult winter it will be great to see!



After further finalisation, the **FarmWatch** and **CellWatch** service is now available.

FarmWatch allows the health, energy and fertility status of your cows to be accurately categorised, providing an excellent monitoring and prediction tool, and should act as an early warning system for nutritional problems in your herd so that they can be fixed before the real damage occurs. Based on the results and advice from us and your nutrition adviser we aim to improve the overall health status of your herd and thus productivity.

CellWatch - Using new ideas and analysing individual cow cell count information, we are able to categorise cows in a different way to your milk recording service. This will allow detailed monitoring and treatments protocols for individual and groups of cows to be established and highlight areas where positive changes can be made.

During March we will be introducing the combined service free of charge. We strongly believe these services will benefit all involved. Unfortunately we will not be able to provide this service if regular milk recording through CIS or NMR is not carried out. If you do use CIS or NMR and you have not completed a 3rd party authorisation form, please let us know. Please discuss long-term options with us.

LDA's - We are seeing the seasonal increase in the number of LDA's, with turnout approaching we want to keep cows well. The causes, as you know, are wide ranging and can be multi-factorial. An area to keep focused on are the dry cow and fresh calved groups and maintaining adequate dry matter intakes in these animals. We are able to help assess these groups by a combination of means. Open discussion of management practices, diet composition and current cow performance along with examination of the cow groups themselves can highlight shortfalls. We can use **FarmWatch** to help us monitor these cows performance around the critical time of calving. Metabolic profiles along with diet analysis are also very useful and should be considered routinely.

'**Rumen fill**' is a key factor, the practice of 'pumping cow's rumens' with the **Agger's Cattle Pump Life** immediately after calving will help stimulate and maintain a healthy appetite. We can supply and demonstrate to you how to use the equipment safely as well as create treatment protocols. Various complimentary feeding stuffs are also available to mix with the water. They won't solve the problem on their own, but will have a positive effect and are very reasonably priced.

Bluetongue – We have now started stocking Bovilis® BTV8 vaccine again. The roll-out of an effective vaccination programme, when Bovilis® BTV8 was made available in 2008, stopped the disease in its tracks. No clinical cases of the disease were seen in 2008 and 2009. BTV-1 and BTV-8 viruses have been circulating in Northern France in 2009. The risk of the virus over-wintering in the midge population and posing a threat to UK livestock in 2010 is very real.

Full protection is only achieved three weeks after completion of a primary course (two injections three weeks apart for cattle and one injection for sheep) or two weeks after an annual booster dose, bear this in mind when trying to establish immunity before the midge free period ends. Midges can travel surprisingly far in a relatively short period of time and they aren't going to wait before taking a blood meal off any animal that is not yet protected through vaccination! Remember stock to be exported or moved into Scotland will need to be vaccinated by a Vet at least 60 days before movement.

With all Bovilis® BTV8 purchases you will receive a complimentary vaccine gun pack with a sterimatic injection system.

BTV & Sheep – Vaccination of pregnant ewes for the 2nd time 4 weeks before lambing has shown to protect the lambs born until at least 14 weeks of age. These lambs will receive enough maternally derived antibodies in colostrum. Research suggests these colostral antibodies may interfere with vaccination in lambs for at least 14 weeks after birth. Lambing is in full swing; as a result we are encountering abortions. If you feel losses are occurring we can arrange investigations. Ideally we need both the aborted foetus and placenta.

As turnout approaches it is worth planning a thorough **worming programme** for first season grazing stock. Animals which have received Huskvac will still need treating to cover gut round worms. Many products are available with the intervals between doses varying accordingly. Discuss with a Vet what product and regime will most suit your needs.

Staffordshire & Shropshire clients – if you are still looking to seek funding through LANTRA we are currently securing more plan availability, please contact the office to register your interest.

All the best,

Huw Lloyd