



**Nantwich Veterinary Group**  
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**Newsletter January 2010**

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Christmas has been and gone and the turkey eaten; first roasted, then cold, then in stir fries and the stock made ready for soup! Then we feel obliged to have a walk with family and friends to burn the excess off! So whatever you have done I hope you have all had a good time!

Of course all the socialising at this time of year allows for the convivial spread of flu bugs and viruses between us all. Boosting our own immunities of course as we sneeze and cough our way through the day, and spreading it to our friends and colleagues! In a similar way the close proximity of our stock to each other and the changeable weather has allowed the usual respiratory problems to affect cattle of all ages. Viruses will be spread and secondary bacteria try to get in on the act too. Consider using antibiotics as appropriate, to control these secondary bacteria, but also use non-steroidals as they play a massive part in reducing the lung damage caused by inflammation. Used together they improve the return to health far more quickly, as well as reducing the damage effects long term. Then make a note in your diaries to vaccinate the cattle this year to try and prevent the same problem in 2010. Have a word with one of us to advise which vaccines would be best for your situation.

We have had some issues while TB testing with several farms not up to date with ear tags and movement records. It is in your interest to ensure that these records are up to date and accurate. DEFRA are becoming increasingly keen about following up these records so if you can please check that you are up to date with BCMS and your movement books. As some of you have also noted your farm may now be in a different TB testing band and therefore require pre-movement TB testing for your calves if they are going to be older than 42 days at market time. The test paperwork is valid for 60 days from the first (injection) day. Plan ahead!

This last month the general health issues we've seen have been as above but also some degree of navel infection and scours in calves. Hygiene is massively important with this as it is with mastitis cases. Dip the navels at, or as soon as possible after, birth with Strong Iodine BP. This is regarded as the best product to use and can be repeated every twelve hours until the cord is dry and shrivelled. By treating the navel like this, infection shouldn't pass into the body. The cord has a connection to the liver and the kidneys so infection from this route is rapidly spread systemically. It ends up in joints as joint ill, in the brain as meningitis, as well as showing as a thickened navel. Prevention is always better. Scours we've seen have been due to Coccidiosis as well as Cryptosporidia and viruses such as coronavirus and rotavirus. When calves scour it is sensible to have a word with us and perhaps take rectal samples for laboratory analysis. Then the treatment can be specifically targeted. Again hygiene is important.

The New Year is upon us and I wonder how many of our New Year resolutions we will manage to keep! Will we get that area of the farm buildings tidied up and the scrap removed, will we get our cell counts down even further, and will we sort out that slippery surface this year finally? We have seen a lot of cattle this time with injured hips and legs because of poor grip underfoot. Consider if grooving is appropriate or whether something more radical is required. Can that slope be reduced, do the cows have to turn so tightly or even by changing the flow of the cattle in and around the buildings make a difference? When putting up new buildings or altering existing ones have a word with us as we see many similar, but different, set ups and can give advice on which we think is best.

Farm Watch is undergoing some changes currently and will soon reappear in its updated form with the added benefit of Cell Watch. Exciting changes with, we hope, even better, added value, to this useful tool.

Finally, by the time you get this it will be 2010 so may I wish you all on behalf of  
Nantwich Veterinary Group a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year.