



# Nantwich Veterinary Group

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## Newsletter April 2010

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It is finished! I can now sleep for the first time in months, the dog will finally get some attention, and people walking past Crewe Road End will no longer be avoiding low flying computers - that poor old lady's poodle will never be the same...

In case you hadn't guessed, my crazy project is finished, and **FarmWatch** is up and running for good. I hope that everybody who records fully with NMR or CIS will have seen at least one copy of the final version, as have many of your nutritionists. We have been trying to go through the first reports during routines so that we can answer any questions. Reports are most useful just after the recording, and are being produced on the day we get the results. In future, reports will be looked at in the practice, comments added, then posted to you. However, if you (or your nutritionist/consultant/minerals rep etc) would like a copy by **email** as well, please let us know, as the system is already designed to automatically mail a copy on the day it is updated.

Some of you may have noticed that, on certain farms, some cows appear as **heifer numbers** rather than their line number in CellWatch. After tearing my hair out, it turns out that this is caused by a problem synchronising data from your on-farm records to NMR or CIS records, even though the numbers appear correct in their own monthly reports. If this is a problem on your farm, speak to your milk recorder first, but if you get no joy, give us a ring as we can put you in touch with someone who can help.

Watch out for FarmWatch prices in next month's newsletter.

**LDA** season has definitely begun, as many of you will have been unlucky enough to find out. Unfortunately, there is no quick-fix solution, but prevention relies on getting the transition ration spot-on, filling up the rumens and avoiding changes in the ration, which tends to be the problem at this time of year. FarmWatch and/or blood testing can give us an idea where the cause lies, and will help to monitor the effectiveness of any dietary changes.

Beware of **Subclinical Milk Fever**. For every cow you have to treat, there are around 6 more which are low in calcium but don't show any classical milk fever signs. They may well hold **cleansings**, get **whites** and follow on to become **problem breeders**. The dry ration is essential to reduce subclinical milk fever, and grass is a notoriously unpredictable dry cow feed. Please talk to us and your nutritionist if you feel you are seeing too many milk fevers or held cleansings at turnout.

We have started to see **Grass Staggers** again. There is no store of magnesium in the cow's body. Low magnesium is caused by **low dry matter intakes** that day. This is either through not eating, or eating too much **watery spring growth**, particularly after a wet night. To avoid this killer, consider adding magnesium to your water troughs at grass if your cows are getting little concentrate. Also, be sure to have a small stock of **black magnesium sulphate** bottles in case you are unlucky – get it under the skin for any twitchy or fitting downer cow, with or without a bottle of **calcium** in the vein, while you're waiting for us to arrive. **BEWARE: MAG SULPHATE CAN KILL IF IT GOES IN THE VEIN!**

Many of you have been eagerly awaiting the return of **Ubro (Leo) Yellow**. Unfortunately, the latest news is that it will only return at the end of 2010 at the earliest. Please give us a call if you're struggling to find a replacement.

Finally, we have a limited time offer on KAMARs - £17.40 per box. Get them while they're hot!

All the best this spring. Hopefully it'll be good for you all.

*Stuart*