



# Nantwich Veterinary Group

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## Newsletter July 2010

Make hay while the sun shines, the weather looks set to continue to be hot and dry with no sign of the much needed showers to date, at least it should make the show season a good one. Nantwich show is under a month away (Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> July) and as usual all are welcome at our stand. There will be the usual beef baps, drinks and chance to catch up with vets and staff. Also for any of you still unfamiliar with or know someone wishing to know more about our new CowWatch service the show seems an ideal relaxed opportunity to pick through any queries you may have. Looking forward to seeing you there!

The flies have most definitely landed, so keep a close eye on your heifers for summer mastitis, this last week I have had multiple calls regarding treatment of such animals. "August bag" is only obvious once untreatable, so keep an eye out for those early tell tale signs; individuals standing apart from the herd or walking rather stiffly should prompt careful examination of the udder for any heat, swelling, pain and usually a thickening of the teat sinus in any affected quarters (heifers calving down with blind quarters are often the result of a low grade summer mastitis). Unfortunately, by the time summer mastitis has been noticed the quarter has usually been lost and treatment must be aimed at reducing the illness to the individual. Those affected quickly run a high temperature due to bacteria and toxins seeding into the bloodstream sometimes leading to abortions, stunted calves or chronic arthritic lameness.

Summer mastitis is effectively an abscess in the udder and as such drainage is vital (antibiotics alone will not be effective! But injectable penicillins/tylan are advised to combat any septicaemia) and regular stripping is essential until the quarter dries up. This may take a couple of weeks so if not feasible amputation of the teat end and natural drainage may be more effective.

### Sheep

Time to start going through this springs performance and start to plan improvements for next year, was it better or worse than last year? Where did last years losses come from? What are you going to do to prevent it happening next spring? Now is the time to discuss these issues with us (abortion vaccinations if appropriate need to be 4-6 weeks prior to tupping & ram and ewe checks are recommended 8-10 weeks prior to tupping)

Ram MOT's - **remember your four T's** - *Teeth, Toes, Testicles and Tone.*

Ewes - The feet and udder should be routinely checked at drying off - do not leave these checks until tupping. Once animals are dry, the udder enters a resting stage and it is more difficult to identify udder damage. A clean environment is also essential. Grazing ewes on bare pasture can be an effective means of drying off, but ensure sheep are not over-stocked. Tight stocking can create problems with environmental contamination and infection. Dry cow tubes can be very effective for controlling mastitis in sheep. However, they are not licensed for this use and must only be used after speaking to your vet.

Here's to a good summer for us all!

Dave