



# nantwich | veterinary group

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## Farm Animal Newsletter - October 2009

We might have thought autumn was upon us a month ago, but we've enjoyed a couple of weeks of warm, dry weather in September- and I'm sure you all made the most of it.

Further to last newsletter's reminders about housing and some of the disease risks that are ahead:

- **IBR** (infectious bovine rhinotracheitis) causes respiratory disease, but can contribute to abortions and other fertility problems. The virus spreads easily during housing, so it's worth protecting your cows by vaccinating 2 weeks before bringing them inside. Vaccinating with **Bovilis IBR Marker-live** enables you to distinguish between infected and vaccinated animals, so eradication of the disease is still possible in affected herds.

Enclosed with this newsletter is an **IBR data sheet** so you can better get to grips with the disease. This and other disease data sheets will eventually be put on our website, so keep an eye on [www.nantwichvetgroup.co.uk](http://www.nantwichvetgroup.co.uk)

- **Calf pneumonia** is more of a problem in the winter months. Vaccination should only be carried out after specific diagnosis has been made from samples. Vaccinating may seem like you are spending extra money, but in reality your profits will increase due to reduced antibiotic and anti-inflammatory use and improved weight gains (with less feed use). If your calves are affected, we can take blood samples in a few older calves to see what bugs they have been exposed to and then advise on the correct vaccine accordingly.

However, good management is the best protection. Check the ventilation of your calf sheds before the cold months- smoke bombs are a great indicator of this. Plan your housing to avoid mixing age-groups as this is a major risk factor for accumulating disease. Bedding should be kept dry and clean and remember that colostrum ("six pints in six hours") in your newborns is absolutely necessary. Contact us for further advice on getting calf pneumonia under control!

- **Liver fluke** treatment, until now, involved the time-consuming job of either an oral drench or sub-cutaneous injection. Now a *pour-on* fluke/worm combination treatment has been developed to make this job much easier for all concerned- **Closamectin Pour-On** by Norbrook. A pooled muck sample or bulk milk sample can be taken to see if your herd is infected and treatment is worthwhile.
- **Lameness** increases in prevalence during the housing period. **Digital dermatitis** is a particular problem in some herds, so if you've got out of a foot-bathing routine over the summer it will be worth getting the baths filled again for once or twice weekly treatment.

We continue to see the odd case of '**blood sweating**' (bleeding calf syndrome), with unexplained haemorrhaging in calves a couple of weeks old. The cause is not fully known at this point, though a bone marrow deficiency is involved. The VLA want to investigate all cases, so please let us know of any suspect calves.

NVG is involved in a **PRID trial**, the aim being to assess whether the insertion of PRIDs from day 5 to day 17 post-service can improve pregnancy rates in repeat breeders (failing to conceive to three consecutive services). Your routine vet may discuss involvement in this trial with you further.

Many Cheshire farmers have been in touch with us about the **North West Rural Development Program**, and particularly the associated grants that are coming with it. For all you Shropshire and Staffordshire farmers that are feeling left out, fear not! Once we are fully informed as to what is available, a meeting will be organized for your areas to inform you of how you can get involved and benefit from it.

Some of you may have heard about the DEFRA-funded **Badger Vaccine Deployment Project** to assess the viability of an oral badger vaccine in controlling bovine TB. Part of Staffordshire is one of the six areas where this vaccine is to be tried, likely starting in summer 2010. Participation by farmers is voluntary, and the actual vaccination is carried out by local contractors, so there is no time or money expected from yourselves. More information can be found at [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)

We say **goodbye** to James O'Shaugnessey at the end of this month. We have appreciated James' added expertise in the practice this last year, and are sorry to see him leave. Wish him all the best next time he visits!

### Date reminders:

The new **Equine Hospital at Hurleston** is having an **Open Day on October 3<sup>rd</sup>** from 11am - 3pm. As well as having a full range of farm drugs available for collection, the new facilities also create potential for us carrying out certain farm procedures, so it's worth a visit. We hope to see you there. In respect to drug pick-ups from Hurleston, please call first (01270 628888) to place an order so it can be ready waiting for you.

**Weston Discussion Group** meets on 12<sup>th</sup> October at 7:30pm, with a presentation by Cheerbrook Farm Shop, winners of Farm Shop of the Year.

**EBLEX** are hosting a couple of sessions at **Reaseheath College Farm** on **October 7<sup>th</sup>** from 10:45am – 3pm on *Better Returns from Dairy Cull Cows* and *Prevention and Control of Respiratory Disease*. To book your free place ring Hellen or Sandra on 0870 6091840 or email [brprevent@eblex.org.uk](mailto:brprevent@eblex.org.uk)

Peter