INTRODUCING NEW TEAM MEMBERS
Rosa and Eva

Some of you will have already met Rosa and Eva while they have been shadowing our experienced TB testers here at Shropshire Farm Vets. Rosa and Eva will now be joining Pablo and Pelayo as welcome additions to our TB testing team. After recently passing their certificates, Rosa and Eva are now fully qualified to begin testing. Rosa is originally from Spain and Eva is originally from Germany. Eva and Rosa have both been working in the UK for a while and have settled in to the English way of life very well. They both have a good understanding of the agricultural community and both have a great sense of humour which is an important attribute to have when it comes to TB testing.

We would like to welcome Rosa and Eva into the Shropshire Farm Vets team, and we look forward to working with them both.

Caroline

It is with a great deal of sadness that I have to inform you all that I am leaving the practice.

My 'other-half' Mark took a job in Milton Keynes at the end of last year, and unfortunately now we need to take the step to move nearer to his work.

I will miss working at Shropshire Farm Vets a great deal, and I would like to take this opportunity to say a massive thankyou to all the clients and staff who have made it such an enjoyable place to work over the past 3 and a half years.

Sam E (Old Sam/Sam 2 etc!)

Find us on social Media

www.facebook.com/ShropshireFarmVets www.twitter.com/ShropFarmVets

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SHROPSHIRE FARM VETS
stand out from the herd

SHROPSHIRE FARM NEWS

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UUUGGHHH –
WOMB INFECTIONS
(Metritis and endometritis or whites)

One of the commonest problems we encounter on farm are infections in the womb. The severity of this can vary from toxic life threatening infections in the first two weeks post calving, to the mild "whites" that you see later on that can interfere with the cows chance of getting back in calf.

There are a number of factors that trigger these infections but it is important to remember that practically all cows have bacterial contamination in the womb post calving and how they deal with them is a function of the cow's immune system and how it copes with the transition post calving.

3-5% of cows will hold their cleansing (retained fetal membranes) post-calving. ***If you are getting more than this rate there is probably a reason*** such as subclinical milk fever, overfat cows or oversize calves or a shortage of vit e/selenium – **generally a blood test of half a dozen dry cows will tell you quite quickly**.

These animals are ***30 times*** more likely to have subsequent infections of the womb.

The important thing with these cows is to make sure that they do not develop ***toxic metritis***. The cleansing is a great medium for bacteria to grow on so you quickly get huge numbers of e.coli type bacteria in the womb. *(Just a reminder Tylan has no activity against e.coli)*. If these bacteria manage to cross into the bloodstream you get a very similar syndrome to an e.coli mastitis, with toxins making the cow very dehydrated and ill. To prevent this occurring you need to give these cows with retained cleansing extra care- i.e. good access to a palatable balanced diet and comfortable bed and fluids, a good broad spec antibiotic in the muscle, perhaps a pessary in the womb and anti-inflammatories if required. There is no advantage to pulling the cleansing too early as you can cause damage to the wall of the uterus and give the bacteria a route into the bloodstream. We generally would not recommend trying to pull cleansings before 7 days post calving. As long as you can support these cows, most will eventually cleanse without getting ill but many will go on to have less severe infections of the womb lining or endometritis/whites.

Remember the proportion of cows that go on to develop whites is generally a function of the wellbeing of the cows

Continued overleaf

FUTURE SHOWS

Please come and join us at Oswestry Show and Minsterley Show in August, please come and join us for a drink or two and something to eat.

GRUNTERS, GRAZERS & GOBBLERS

Our smallholder's club is growing and growing! If you would like more information please contact the practice. Joining costs just £20 per quarter and offers a range of benefits.

FLOCK HEALTH PLANS

Our flock health plan has been very popular this spring, and for a limited time only costs £150+VAT. We have four wallplanners left, so please contact the practice for further information.

PRACTICE/DISPENSARY OPENING TIMES:

Monday – Friday 8:15am – 17:30pm

Saturday/Sunday: Closed

SHREWSBURY LIVESTOCK MARKET:

Every Tuesday from 9:30am-12noon.

Meds must be ordered before 4pm the previous day for collection.

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immune system. Ideally the cow's ovaries should start cycling within a week of calving and at around 10-14 days should release a bloody/browny on smelly discharge called the lochia. If this fails to occur, or fails to remove all the bacterial contamination, an infection of the womb lining called endometritis or whites can get established (interestingly **strep's** now takeover form e.coli as the main bacteria). It is important to recognise the importance of dealing with these whites as the chances of not getting these cows in calf is quite high if left untreated. You can grade these infections to help predict the numbers of treatments you are likely to need to get a result, grade 3 are the really thick pus type often with a smell. Only 40% of these will respond to a single treatment and we tend to have to resort to more aggressive treatments such as long acting injectable antibiotics along with prostaglandins to improve our success rates. Grade 2 infections have mostly pus with some clear slime and Grade 1 are mostly clear slime with just a small amount of pus. Many of these will respond to intrauterine antibiotics or prostaglandins or a combination of both.

It is well worthwhile checking all cows for being clean at 3-4 weeks post calving either at a vet routine or as part of your own regular stock management. Cows left untreated are twice as likely to be culled for failure to get in calf as successfully treated animals so there is a very good payoff for timely intervention. Please feel free to discuss appropriate policies for your farm with any of the vets either at the office or the next time we are on farm.

ENVIRONMENTAL MASTITIS

In most places, spring turnout has now taken place, although some herds are still in by night, and it is perhaps a chance to give a timely reminder of the risks of mastitis in the coming months. If not perhaps the spring we would have hoped for so far, sun, wind, rain and some chilly nights – there has been plenty of grass growth, though its quality thus far may be of differing quality. Despite the rains, field conditions are generally good, with tracks and gateways standing up to the pressures now put upon them.

James and I held another of our mastitis meetings last month which I hope those that attended found useful. We also had, and thanks to him once again, John Baines from Fulwoods give us a talk on the effect of the milking machine on mastitis, but that will largely influence contagious mastitis. Much discussion ensued on teat preparation and pre-milking routines. On our farm visit we observed the impact of loose housing on mastitis rates, stocking densities, feed space availability, and water trough access. At Les Trow's farm at Emstrey , we were demonstrated the use of automated teat brushes to clean the teat pre-milking, which has had a significant impact on mastitis rates. To me, this emphasises the need and advantages of a pre-milking regime in ensuring teat cleanliness before the unit is applied, both in terms of teat hygiene and in stimulating milk let-down so the whole milking process is quicker, and producing a slightly higher yield.

The biggest effect of turn-out is that it greatly reduces stocking density compared with housing, and this will reduce the infection pressures. However for various reasons, we do generally see a rise in somatic cell counts over the summer months, plus the risks of Summer Mastitis (August Bag), especially when areas suitable for increased fly populations are available, under trees, hedges etc, and I will not go into fly control measures here.

Strept. uberis problems can increase over the summer months, a normal commensal bacteria that lives on cows coats etc, and loves the warm moist conditions that summer can provide, especially when cows are lying down on damp pasture, with teat orifices not fully closed. It can survive on pasture for up to 28 days in the right conditions, making the management of rotational grazing important. S.uberis also thrives on the wet conditions of muddy tracks and gateways, causing dirty cows, and sooner or later this infection can be transferred to the udder. Cleanliness scoring is important here in identifying problems, dirty feet, legs, tails indicating a potential problem. And from this, the need for a more thorough teat preparation may follow.

Attention to tracks and gateways is therefore important, and there has been a great increase in the laying down of concrete sleepers to improve under foot conditions. In gateways if they are getting excessively muddy, wood chippings can be put down to improve conditions. These changes can also have a significant benefit in lameness control as well, and an improvement in White Line disease especially.

Faecal consistency is also important as the turnout to spring grass produces the green water flowing profusely from cows backsides, with the risks of faecal splashing and teat contamination.

A little high fibre diet when the cows come in for milking can make a significant difference here, in hygiene, in delaying cows lying down after milking so the teat orifice closes properly, and from a nutritional point of view as well.

So the cow tells you a lot, is she clean or dirty, the state of the paths and gateways, and all this should influence the in parlour preparation of teats (a "clean" looking teat can harbour a lot of bacteria on it). I've already mentioned the advantages of a pre-milking routine, and it should shorten the milking process, as well as reduce the chances of mastitis and an increase in somatic cell counts. Fly control previously mentioned.

The financial benefits of reducing mastitis are immense, and just a little tweaking of the system can have a huge impact.

Rod

BOVELA

a new generation of

BVD vaccine

You may have already seen a lot of advertising in the farmers papers about the new BVD vaccine Bovela and you may be wondering if there are any advantages over the vaccine you currently use. Well first off, it is substantially more expensive, around £2/dose more than our current BVD vaccine, so for that, what do you get?

Briefly…

The main difference is that Bovela is a double gene deleted **live** BVD vaccine whereas all the other vaccines are killed. In practical terms this means that the body reacts to them as they would to a live virus and produce ***a longer lasting stronger immunity to a single dose***. Because of this animals only need a single dose to get full immunity, whereas with all the other vaccines (Bovilis BVD/ Bovidec) you need two doses approx. 1 month apart. In addition if you don't get this first double dose right, you may not get any benefit from all the subsequent BVD boosters you use- (think of it as painting over wood that hasn't had any priming – if the first coat isn't right you will never have a good job regardless of how often you gloss over it).

Some surveys in the UK reckon that in around 25% of herds this first priming dose is incorrectly administered – either by timing or the temptation to carry over open bottles across the two doses etc. We come across this situation relatively frequently where either the second dose is missed or given after the animal has been served. We also believe that the immunity provided by Bovela is likely to be very strong, at least as strong, and probably stronger than the current vaccines.

Pro's

- Very strong immunity from a single jab
- Less handling for beef cattle, heifer replacements
- Easier to manage if you are buying in cows all the time- jab them as you bring them on and they are done.
- No need to start again if you run over your annual booster interval.
- Immunity within 3 weeks of first jab

Con's

- Cost, roughly double the price of Bovilis BVD / dose (although if you have a lot of heifers to do or are starting for the first time the cost is the same in total as presently.)
- Not licenced for mixing with IBR – currently quite a few of our clients mix Bovilis IBR and BVD in the same syringe as its licence suggests. Although it is likely that a cows immunity can cope with more than one vaccine at a time no work has been done with Bovela in combination with other vaccines and we would certainly not recommend mixing the vials together.
- No licence for use in bulls as it has not been tested in enough bulls to demonstrate safety and efficacy. (although to be fair this does not mean that any more work has been done in bulls with the other vaccines, just that the newer licencing regimes are more stringent). **This is especially important if you are selling bulls to AI stud as there is a risk that vaccinated bulls may show up positive for BVD virus for a short while post vaccination. Speak to us if you have any concerns before use.**

In summary we are sure that there is a place for Bovela in the fight against BVD and we will be stocking it but please always remember that all these vaccines work best if you get rid of the P.I's.