

Cell Count Machine

Happily, we have our cell count machine back, and available for testing samples. If you need some milk samples testing, please bring them to the office, marked with animal id, and we will run them for you.

Unfortunately, we cannot lend this machine out.



MEDS CORNER

Vaccination

There are many articles in the press about what diseases to vaccinate for, how to vaccinate, and when, but never really any that ask the question, why do you vaccinate your animals?

- If you do vaccinate, why? Is it direct disease control, investment in health, habit?
- If you don't vaccinate, or are considering dropping vaccination, then again, ask yourself why? Is it because you don't have that particular disease, have never looked for it, have never suffered from that particular disease, cost?

Disease control and investment in health are two of the most valid reasons why you would vaccinate, and certainly the two most economic reasons. If a disease is present, however low level, it always pays to vaccinate. Anything other is false economy as other factors, production, fertility, culling etc are always a more expensive option. Per animal, vaccination against a disease is the cheapest medicine you can buy.

So, question why you do things and make a positive and conscious decision as to why you choose to vaccinate, or not.



GENOMICS

Genomic testing is changing the way dairy producers make management, selection and breeding decisions on the farm. Using genomics, a heifer's genetic potential is revealed early in life, genetic progress can be accelerated with confidence and herd profitability is enhanced by capitalizing on improved performance across a number of traits.

In the USA, 40,000 dairy heifers are genomically tested each month. This allows farmers to select for traits which improve health and profitability of their herd. These traits are directly measurable and by selecting which heifers to breed replacements from can be demonstrated to make an annual return in the tens of thousands of dollars per hundred animals in the herd.

Genomic testing reveals more about the actual genetic potential of the animal than simply measuring an average of the parents' estimated genetic makeup. For a number of traits, testing delivers 60% to 70% reliability as opposed to 20% to 30% for parent average. For example, for the trait Fertility, testing can provide the same or higher level of reliability as data from 115 milking daughters, more than a lifetime of information with one test.

Mindful that an element of health, welfare and productivity is directly related to the breeding decisions made on farm we are delighted that over the coming months we will be able to offer clients access to a Veterinary Genomics package that aligns breeding decisions with Herd Health goals. We look forward to bringing you more news about this exciting offering and anticipate providing full details and an evening talk early to mid-summer.

Any questions in the meantime can be addressed to James.

I make no apology for repeating, please keep a note of the mobile numbers for the vets should you ever need them.

ALISTAIR MACPHERSON.....	07909 517184
TIM O'SULLIVAN	07909 517479
ROEL DRIESEN.....	07813 833385
JAMES MARSDEN.....	07876 443950
ROD WOOD.....	07809 227426
NATHAN LOEWENSTEIN.....	07815 543546
EMILY DENTON.....	07762 069182
JOHN HEMINGWAY.....	07496 305412
PABLO NUNEZ.....	07455 882210
PELAYO PEJARES	07522 637322
ROSA FERNANDEZ.....	07719 270835
EVA LEIBIG.....	07874 054328

PRACTICE/DISPENSARY TIMES

We are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; office hours:

Monday – Friday 8:15 – 5.30

TB Update for February

We carried out 53 tests, with a total number of animals tested coming to 8,055.

Of these animals, 4 were inconclusives and there were 17 reactors.

Find us on social Media



www.facebook.com/ShropshireFarmVets



www.twitter.com/ShropFarmVets



Blocking... an instant fix?

Recently, during a routine foot trim on one of our regular farms I was presented with a cow with a locomotion score of L3. She was visibly lame on the right back leg and couldn't keep up with the others. On closer inspection there was a White Line Abscess that once cleared looked a lot better. I put her on a block on the other claw. At the next routine the client informed me that the girl had gone from a L3 to a L0 i.e. She showed no lameness anymore at all. Obviously she had some catching up to do but it shows what a block can do.

To Block or not to block...

The reason we block is to remove pressure and pain from the affected claw and to speed up recovery. Cases that benefit from a block are:

- White Line Disease (with or without abscess)
- Sole Ulcers. These can be complicated cases with sometimes a stone in it. At other times they affect the pedal joint or the pedal bone underlying it. If a cow has a small sole ulcer and she has plenty of heel on the healthy claw then the lame claw heel can be trimmed down around the ulcer transferring weight to the healthy claw (block if the height difference does not exceed 10mm)
- Any lesion towards the toe (bottom 1/3 of foot) will always require a block since no height difference can be obtained from trimming alone. Toe necrosis is an example of this.
- If in any doubt **block it**.

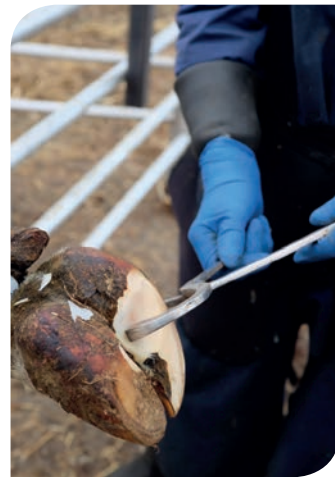
Blocking... how hard can it be?

Well, with the correct equipment and following a few basic rules it can be quick and easy. However we all have had cases where you apply a block and seen it fall off as soon as she walks out of the crush. In general the hardest part of blocking a cow is keeping her up right and still for long enough. So therefore the quicker the glue sets the better. The temperature plays a major role in this. The glue we use and sell at Shropshire Hoof Care will set in 30 seconds and the foot can go down in 2 minutes.

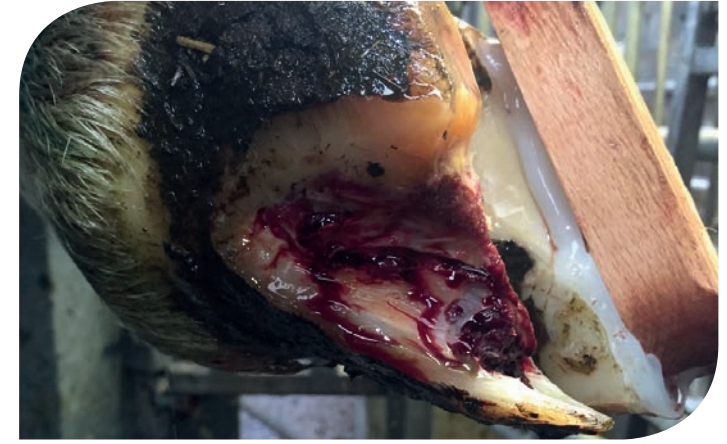
It's all in the preparation

- Firstly it is important to have the correct equipment:
- Sharp knives (Left and right handed ones).
- Hoof snips/cutters
- Hoof tester
- Block, glue, glue gun, bandages, antibiotic spray
- Means of cleaning the foot

It is often obvious which claw is causing the problem. If not, use a hoof tester to see whether you can find a painful spot in the claw. Trim around the lesion to reduce pressure and open any abscess to drain. Once you have taken care of the claw with the lesion it's time to ready the other claw for the block.



1. Check the healthy claw to make sure it hasn't got a lesion too. If you are unsure use hoof testers. If this claw also has a lesion we need to address this first and revisit the problem a few days to a week later.
2. Clean the sole of the foot to be blocked and clean 10mm of the wall. Cleaning can be done with a rag or you can use knife or a grinder to rough up the sole a bit. Never use a grinder on the outside wall of the foot!



3. Make sure the foot is dry and the block is dry. Use a rag, heat gun or blow torch to speed up the process.
4. Apply a layer of glue (5mm thick) from the heel to the toe. If the glue is too cold it will take a lot longer to set. If it is too warm it sets too quick. Room temperature ie 20°C is the ideal. There are heating sleeves available that keep the glue at the correct temperature. Cold weather can be a real hindrance when blocking.
5. Apply the block making sure that it is perpendicular to the leg and in line with the toe. Smear any excess glue to hoof wall or block. Hold in place until the glue sets enough to hold the block. When using a wooden block you can set it back by about a cm to stop the toe from snagging. If you don't set back the block you can cut a chamfer at the toe to achieve the same goal. When the block is too small the tendons at the back take a lot of strain and the toe will tilt up. If this happens you should remove the block and put a larger/ longer block on.
6. Shaping the block once in place can improve the balance of the foot. We can put on a chamfer as mentioned above or if the toe angle is too shallow we can take a bit of the block in the toe area so we achieve a better toe angle (we strive for a 50° angle) and shift the weight carrying towards the toe triangle region. In extreme cases we have had to apply 2 blocks achieve this.

7. Blocks are not meant to stay on forever! Only in severe cases like toe necrosis or very bad Sole Ulcers does the block stay on for more than 2-3 weeks. Cows that have been put on a block should be checked after a week and should make a dramatic improvement. If they improve temporarily it is likely there is a problem in the blocked foot and the block desperately needs coming off. In all other cases the block needs to be removed after 2-3 weeks to give the foot a chance to balance itself again.
8. Always check the claw on other leg. When an animal has a serious problem on one leg she will mind this leg and doing so puts more weight on the healthy leg.

THE GOLDEN TRIAD in addressing a lame cow:

1. Corrective foot trim. All 5 steps!
2. Blocking the foot
3. Painkiller i.e. Ketofen or Metacam

By using all 3 you get the best cow comfort, the fastest improvement, a better feed conversion and a quicker return to its potential yield.

Simeon

Because of the importance of correct blocking we, SHC & SFV, are putting on a one afternoon **blocking course** on the **14th April 2016**, starting at **2 pm**.

This is a 2-3 hour **workshop** where we demonstrate different methods of blocking and get everyone to block 3-4 feet.

The cost is **£50** and at the end you can **keep the glue gun** so you are set up for your homework.

We can accommodate a maximum of 12 candidates for this course.