



**SHROPSHIRE FARM VETS**  
stand out from the herd

**SHROPSHIRE  
FARM  
NEWS**

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## KEEPING A LID ON COSTS

Following the milk price reduction, we are mindful that your own cost control will be high on the agenda and are happy to discuss how to use veterinary services in the most cost-efficient manner.

Whenever the milk price is under pressure, we inevitably see the odd cow later than we ought to. But remember, that the earlier an animal is seen, the greater the chance of a successful outcome.

It is more important than ever during these times, to maintain regular fertility visits to make sure cows get in calf on time, and to avoid feeding a dry cow for months only to discover that she is barren. Aim to cut costs by having healthy fertile stock! Routine visits are free of a visit fee (if a min of 6 are pre-booked). There are several ways to keep the cost of routine visits low, whilst retaining the benefits. For example; there may be checks on cows at routines that we can train farm staff to do, such as visual inspection of cows before drafting out for routines. This may help to avoid paying for the vet to examine cows that are not fit enough to cycle yet, or have already been identified as barren. Ensuring, as ever, that cows are ready and waiting for the visit (and they can be fed whilst waiting), multiple cows can be handled quickly. Also having a bucket of hot water available to speed up disinfection at the end of this visit, will all save you time and money.

Please always feel free to phone for a chat or advice. We see a lot of farms on our visits, and as most on-farm challenges will have happened to someone else before, we are well placed to help you overcome them.

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

As you will have noticed we are changing our trading name of Macpherson O'Sullivan Ltd to 'Shropshire Farm Vets'.

We service farms the length and breadth of the county and as we have grown with your support we felt that we wanted to reflect the importance of Shropshire Farmers to us as a business. We remain the same practice, committed to providing clinical excellence and value and continue to strive to improve on the services we offer.

## WATCH OUT FOR POISON GAS!

That grass with high levels of Nitrogen can produce a highly toxic orange vapour (called Nitrogen dioxide gas) when ensiled. If you see this coming off your clamp keep people and animals well away.

## NEWS JUST IN

For the latest information on how liver fluke in cattle can interfere with the results of the TB test, please visit our website, or ask one of our vets.

## GET A LITTLE EXTRA!

We offer an 'early settlement discount' of 12.5% on medicines ordered from the pharmacy and paid for at the time of collection.

## EMERGENCY FIRST AID AT WORK

Friday 20th July 2012, 9.30am-4.30pm at Arscott Golf Club, SY5 0XP. Please contact the practice for further information and to book.

## THERE MAYBE BUBBLES AHEAD

Given the recent rain, now is a prime time for cases of frothy bloat, particularly if there is a lot of clover in the ley. So far this season we have already seen a number of fatal cases.

Frothy bloat is one of the most common causes of death in adult cattle at grass. It is typically seen during the spring or in autumn where periods of cold wet weather followed by warm sunshine lead to extremely rapid grass growth. Be aware that it can however occur at any time.

Frothy bloat is caused by a build-up of foam on top of the rumen liquor that prevents gas from being belched off. The foam is formed from the breakdown products of rapidly growing forage. This makes leguminous pasture, particularly clover, a high risk.

Factors which may increase the risk for the development of bloat include;

- Grass based feeding systems.
- New grass leys.
- A reduction in concentrate ration fed eg 1.5kgDM concentrate will be replaced by grass/clover – perhaps 10-12kg fresh weight.
- Early rotation onto leguminous pasture.

If cows are receiving water medicated with a bloat prevention agent then anything which reduces a cow's water intake i.e. rain will mean they do not get the required dose of bloat treatment.



### Treatment

Bloat is an emergency. In the first instance it is always worth passing a stomach tube. In the case of gassy bloat this will allow the build-up of gas to escape. In some cases it may be necessary to place a trochar and cannula (red devil) through the side of the cow and into the rumen to release the gas.

For frothy bloat, antifoaming drenches (BIRP) should be given. These are easy to give and have a much smaller dose than old-fashioned remedies.

For outbreaks of frothy bloat all cattle on that pasture should be removed and put onto a high fibre diet (hay or straw) and any cows showing signs of bloat should be treated with an anti-foaming agent.

### Prevention

- Avoid using high risk pasture at high risk times, especially pasture high in clover.
- Stagger turnout with buffer feeding. Keep up fibre intakes (straw). The emphasis must be at/around milking times so that the cows have a fuller rumen before they go onto the field.
- Hold cows back after milking before they go onto a new break. This will mean all cows will go out together and the top layer of grass is distributed amongst all cows. There is a risk that some cows will have to wait after milking 2-3 hours and that they will be hungry and gorge grass; however, to offset this, they have opportunity of straw and medicated water throughout those 2-3 hours.
- New paddocks should be introduced to the cows in the morning after milking and then moved forwards in the middle of the day, on the basis that there is a full assessment of the cows before moving the fence.
- Administer anti-foaming agents. This can be via a medicated water delivery system. There has to be plenty of water troughs available to increase the opportunity to drink the medicated water. To encourage the cows to drink, salt blocks can be arranged around the parlour.

## REPORT ON BROCKHURST FARM OPEN DAY

There was a great turnout at Rod Macbeans open day on May 10th, and we were glad to see that the cows appeared to enjoy the day as much as the people!

It was remarkable how content the cows were, even with 40-50 people in the shed at all times. The robots and feed areas were busy, and while many farmers had queries as to the finances and investment involved, everyone agreed that the cows showed every sign of enjoying a high welfare system in a fantastic working environment. We would like to thank Rod and his family for hosting such a worthwhile day.

We have a number of other clients considering robot milkers and it appears to be a system that we will see more of in the future.



## MEET NATHAN

As some of you may have noticed there is a new face at the practice. My name is Nathan Loewenstein, and I joined the practice as a locum vet towards the end of March, after hearing about the practice from an old college mate of mine (James). Happily I will be becoming a permanent member of the team from the beginning of June.

To put your mind at rest first, despite the unusual surname, I'm not German but a Londoner by birth. I graduated from Bristol vet school in 2006. With a keen interest in farm animal vetting I spent my first four years in mixed animal practice in rural Carmarthenshire and Wiltshire. In October last year my girlfriend Lucy and I, returned from a fourteen-month adventure working our way around the world. During this trip I spent time working in the dairy heartland of the Waikato in the North Island of New Zealand and around Melbourne in Australia.

Now back in the UK I have seen the light, and am very excited about the new challenges and rewards associated with working in an expanding, farm only practice in the heart of Shropshire. My girlfriend's family are originally from this part of the world and we are really pleased to be settling here.

From a work standpoint, my main areas of interest are cattle fertility and surgery, and I am looking forward to helping you get the most out of your stock, whilst maintaining individual animal productivity for many years to come.

Outside of work I am a keen judo and (social) rugby player, and am hoping for some more injury free seasons before I have to hang up my boots. I enjoy running and hiking and since I am soon to be looking for a new canine side-kick I'm sure I'll get plenty of experience of both!

## UPDATES ON TB

From the 1st July 2012 there will be some changes regarding pre-movement testing of animals going to shows and Sole Occupancy Authorities (SOAs).

1. Cattle in "high TB risk herds" (herds with a routine TB testing interval of 1-2 years, so, everyone) will require pre-movement testing for movements to shows **if** cattle will **be at the show for more than 24 hours** and/or **housed** i.e. kept inside at the showground at any stage. Before now, pre-movement testing was not required when animals were moved to shows as long as they either returned to the farm of origin or went to slaughter straight after the show. There are still no pre-movement testing requirements for movements to shows where cattle are not held for more than 24 hours and are not housed. Movements to and from different shows are allowed within the 60-day post-test window as long as the cattle are finally returned to the farm of origin before the 60 days have passed.

2. From 1st July onwards, no new SOAs will be authorised by DEFRA. Existing ones will carry on as normal, but if you want to get a new SOA set up, contact the practice asap. This is likely to be your last chance!

3. Owners of SOAs that include holdings in high (1 and 2 yearly tested herds) **and** low (3 and 4 yearly tested) TB risk areas will be required to pre-movement test animals moved from the high risk holdings within their SOA. If you **only have holdings in high risk areas** (as will apply to most if not all of you) then this will have **no impact on you**.



On Wednesday, 20th June at 7pm at Shrewsbury Livestock Market, we will be hosting (along with NADIS, NFU and DEFRA) a meeting on **Practical Measures to Prevent and Manage Bovine TB in your Herd**. The meeting will cover biosecurity, testing, vaccination, trade options and badgers, and will have speakers from the NFU, DEFRA and the practice. You will receive an invitation, but the meeting is open to all. We're really keen get a wide section of the farming community onboard, owners, stockmen and workers. If you've ever had a question you wanted answered about the state of play regarding TB this is the time to ask it!

## FLIES - INVADERS FROM THE SKIES!

We are fast approaching summer, and if it's anything like last years, it could be a dry one! If so, the flies will be out in force, and pose a risk to both cattle and sheep.

### Cattle - Mastitis, Sore Eyes and Production Losses

**Summer mastitis** a.k.a "August bag" in non-lactating cows and heifers (which can also affect young heifers, steers and bulls) can be a major economic blow, and flies are one of the main causes of its spread. Similarly **New Forest Eye** is spread by flies taking the infectious agent from animal to animal, leading to swollen, painful eyes and temporary blindness. This can lead to production losses due to weight loss, growth checks or milk drop

As a separate issue, the presence of nuisance flies can lead to a disruption in normal feeding behaviour, as stock try to avoid this menace. This can result in **reduced growth rates** in lambs and calves, and a significant milk drop in dairy herds. Research in the USA has shown that fly avoidance in milking cows can lead to a 10-15% **milk-drop**. Some of this is due to a reduced time feeding, but heat stress due to this avoidance can also contribute to these losses.

For effective control of these flies (as well as lice) in cattle, there are a number of products available. **We would recommend Butox Swish pour-on**, due to its prolonged length of cover. Contact the practice for more information.

| Product               | Length of cover | Milk Withhold | Meat Withhold |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Butox Swish           | 8-10 weeks      | 0 hours       | 20 days       |
| Coopers Spot on       | Up to 4 weeks   | 0 hours       | 17 days       |
| Dysect Cattle Pour-on | 4-5 weeks       | 0 hours       | 28 days       |



**Sheep - Blowfly Strike.** Flies lay eggs in areas of soiled fleece, particularly around dirty back-ends. Upon hatching, the maggots then enter the skin, causing foul-smelling, rotting infections. This can lead to **massive economic and welfare challenges**. To try and prevent this, examine flocks regularly, dag all stock from April onwards, dock all lambs tails, control parasites and other causes of loose faeces and treat any susceptible animals with a suitable dip, spot-on or pour-on. **We recommend using Clik pour-on**, because of its longer duration of cover. Contact the practice for more information.

| Product         | Length of cover                | Meat Withhold |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Clik            | 16 weeks                       | 40 days       |
| Coopers Spot on | Treats established strike only | 8 days        |
| Crovect         | 6-8 weeks                      | 35 days       |

When using Clik, apply half the dose along the spine, with the rest in an arc around the crutch and tail. It is best applied before an anticipated blowfly challenge, and will protect for 16 weeks. Do not shear sheep for 3 months following treatment.

One final point, with the expected increase in fly numbers over the coming months, we strongly recommend **getting any castrates or de-horns done as soon as possible**. Get 'em done before there's too much sun!



## IN AID OF THE ALEX WILSON APPEAL AND CANCER RESEARCH UK

Many of you will have known Alex Wilson and his family who farm at Alberbury. Alex died in tragic circumstances while at university in Scotland aged only 19.

This July a group of Alex Wilson's close family and friends are taking on the challenge of cycling the length of Britain, from John O'Groats to Lands End. One of the cyclists taking part, Elliot Brooks, lost his father to cancer at the age of just 43. The trip covers 900 gruelling miles that the team hope to complete in just 7 days and with two goals; to raise money for the Alex Wilson Appeal and Cancer Research UK.

All money raised will be divided between these charities, the first of which will support a scholarship for an outstanding Shropshire sportsperson to attend Shrewsbury school and also to Cancer Research UK which carries out such good work.

We are happy to support this event and I am sure there will be some of you who would also like to do so. Sponsorship forms can be found in reception, for those who wish to contribute or for more details contact:

Henry Wilson (Thomas & Wilson, Lower Wood Farm)  
 hcwilson87@gmail.com / 07737584049 or Elliot Brooks  
 ellb05@hotmail.co.uk / 07880554505 or you can donate directly on <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/JogleforAlexto>

### POLITE REMINDER

Prescription only medicines (POM-V) require authorisation by a vet. Please phone, fax or email your medicine orders into pharmacy in advance for your order to be processed as quickly as possible and ready for collection. The reception staff are qualified to advise, prescribe and supply all POM-VPS and NFA-VPS category medicines.

Remember our office at Shrewsbury Livestock Market is open on a Tuesday 9.30am-12pm. Medicine orders can be collected during these hours. Please contact the practice by 5pm on Monday for your order to be processed.