



SHROPSHIRE FARM NEWS

Wildlife Control and TB

As you may be aware parts of Shropshire have been included in the latest set of licences issued for the control of badgers in relation to bovine TB. As we have said before, despite ever more vigorous testing, our current measures are having very little if any impact on the incidence of TB in this area and this is the first opportunity that our farmers have been given to control the numbers of badgers on their farms.



If you are in a cull area and have signed up to a cull please ensure that you complete your training and comply with all the terms of the licence. To be effective culling needs to be done in a short period of time and needs to remove a significant proportion of the badgers in that time. **If it cannot be shown that the cull has been effectively carried out Natural England have the power to withdraw the licence.**

Don't forget that you cannot cull outside the window nor can you cull if you are either not in the area covered by the licence, or you haven't signed up to, or been trained by, the local company granted the licence. Contrary to what you might see on social media, I know it often goes against farmers natural instincts to deliberately harm wildlife **but the economic cost and emotional burden of TB weighs heavily on the whole of our cattle industry, so if you can, get involved and make it work!**

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If you are in a cull area or in an area adjacent to a cull area (either because you are in Wales, not in an area covered by the licence or have not signed up to the cull) - you may be concerned that there may be a disturbance to the badger population and an increase in badger movements. Although the evidence for this is very limited when a cull is effective, it is undoubtedly a good idea to invest sometime in making your herd as biosecure from wildlife as possible. **Especially important is making farmyards, food stores, maize clamps, feed areas, mineral licks and feed and water troughs badger proof as far as possible.** In addition now might be a good time to engage with your vet or the TB advisory service to see what else you can do to protect yourself and your livestock from bovine TB.

No culling would be required if we could get Shropshire TB free!

Have a look on our facebook page to see how one of our farmers has made his farm badger proof.

Tim



Shropshire Farm Vets

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The Hangover of Summer Heat Stress

Over the last few months high temperatures and humidity have led to an increase in heat stress in dairy cows. An increase in temperature above 20°C reduces appetite and resultant dry matter intakes. This can result in significant changes in yield and milk solids due to alterations in rumen flora and ruminations. The knock on effect is a period of negative energy and complications associated with this such as ketosis, reduced observed heats and poorer fertility.

However there is often another significant cost to heat stress that presents 2 months after peak heat. These are the changes in claw horn leading to an increase in sole bruising and ulcers. An increase in air temperature has been shown to be linked to a general increase in lameness associated with the white line and reduced sole thickness.

In an attempt cool down, lying times typically decrease and the result is an increase in standing times and often on concrete. The increased standing times coupled with loss of body condition from reduced dry matter intakes and negative energy, leads to further pressure on the sole regions of the claws from loss to the digital fat pad and increase movement of the pedal bone. All this will present further down the line as cows begin to show signs of lameness.

As the environmental temperatures fall it is essential to take the opportunity to reduce the severity of any changes caused in the previous months. This will avoid recurrence of lameness issues in individuals and likelihood of these animals being culled as a result.

- Maximise lying times and cow comfort
- Ensure cubicle stocking rates are not over 100%
- Aim to keep total time away from housing below 3 hours (e.g. milking times)
- Routine corrective hoof trimming, typically twice a year
- Regular locomotion scoring to identify and treat lameness early

Sean



TB Update

The government has finally settled that Shropshire (and Staffordshire) will move to six monthly testing as of September 2020. This is a change that has bounced around for a while now and which we have all expected and been waiting for. Apparently 'The Minister' gave his approval in the last fortnight, so this is now happening.

We understand this to mean that if you have an annual test booked in for eg September 2020, and you pass, under 12m retesting you would naturally expect to have the next test due in September 2021. This will now be in March 2021. This pattern will continue, testing window dependent, so if you are due in November 2020, if clear, your next test will now be in May 2021.

Farms currently under restrictions will continue on 60 day tests until they go clear. As normal they would get a six month test but this will now be followed by six month testing and not the normal twelve month interval.

There are certain provisions that if you haven't had a reactor for six years you may be eligible to stay on twelve month testing, but I would approach APHA directly for this exemption.

Alistair

Meds Corner

All users of Bovilis Ringvac will be interested to know that we were informed last week that this product is expected to be unavailable for an indeterminate period from January 2021. Reality will mean that by the time you read this, there may be no Ringvac left anyway. We have purchased what we can. The issue is that the product that is available has an expiry date of December 2020.

At the moment there is no alternate vaccine though we are looking to the EU to 1, see if there is an alternate there and 2, see if we can get a licence to import some. The answer to both these questions right now is unclear.

There is no change in the information we have for tube availability and it seems that this situation will not be sorted

until next year at the earliest. Considering we were initially being told last January, this is a sorry and frustrating state of affairs. We continue to juggle on a daily basis what we can but please be aware that we have now used up all the Gamaret tubes (Tetra Delta alternate) and cannot currently get any more imported. It seems that supplies of everything other than Boehringer products are now in massively short supply.

A longer term strategy is obviously to use less tubes with various changes/improvements in routines and selection etc, but that doesn't help most people today.

Alistair

A word on FEC samples

With the vets still working remotely as a result of the ongoing COVID situation, all faecal egg count samples submitted to us are currently being sent to our normal laboratory for testing, rather than being done in house.

As such, we can only currently accept samples which are submitted in sealed pots to send with the courier each evening.

Fortunately, we have free faecal egg count sampling packs which are available from reception- these contain 10 sealable plastic pots which are perfect for submitting samples in. Going forward, it would be much appreciated if you could make use of these free kits for submitting samples, as we are currently unable to accept faecal samples packaged in gloves or freezer bags.

John



Post Graduate Qualifications

Over the last 12 months Nathan, John and Sean have completed post graduate qualifications in Advanced Veterinary Practice. These qualifications are at masters level and are in their areas of interest, with Nathan and Sean completing certificates with a bias towards cattle practice and John with a bias towards sheep practice.

They join James with post graduate qualifications, who has had a Diploma in bovine reproduction for several years, and ensure that the practice is at the forefront of farm veterinary practice.

Sean

TB UPDATE FOR AUGUST

Last month the practice TB tested 6979 animals over 41 tests.
There were 25 reactors and 20 inconclusive reactors.

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTERS

From the middle of 2020, we will only be producing electronic newsletters for delivery by email, or download from the website. In order to keep receiving the newsletters, please make sure that we have your email address/addresses that are appropriate. We will be giving monthly reminders so at the moment there is plenty of time to organise this.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

| | | | |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| ALISTAIR MACPHERSON | 07909 517184 | MIHAIL STOICA | 07948 475669 |
| TIM O'SULLIVAN | 07909 517479 | ROSA FERNANDEZ | 07719 270835 |
| JAMES MARSDEN | 07876 443950 | CRISTINA SAN AGUSTIN | 07734 420878 |
| ROEL DRIESEN | 07813 833385 | ALEX CORNEA | 07765 157263 |
| ROD WOOD | 07809 227426 | CLAUDIA COJOCARU | 07501 099216 |
| NATHAN LOEWENSTEIN | 07815 543546 | ALEX BEZMAN | 07943 889285 |
| JOHN HEMINGWAY | 07496 305412 | CALIN BOGDAN | 07425 314090 |
| SEAN HUGHES | 07973 567367 | CHLOE DAVIES | 07506 251926 |

Please keep a note of the mobile numbers for the vets should you ever need them

Find us on social media



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

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