

**Newsletter January 2017**



Happy New Year! I hope everyone has recovered from the festive period, it is always good when the world returns to normal. The Christmas period has caused a 'jam' in our diary with TB testing but I hope things will return to normal over the next few weeks. As always we do appreciate your organisation in booking testing, as logistically it can be a headache getting everyone fitted into your allocated slot especially when it is left till the last week to book.

We have had a mini pneumonia explosion in calves over the past few weeks in no small part due to the weather. Temperature fluctuations and hanging fog are ideal for stressing calves and allowing viral/bacterial survival and spread. Whilst there are some situations that are difficult to overcome there is an awful lot that can be done in terms of husbandry and vaccination. In a world where antibiotic use is coming under scrutiny it is not acceptable to rely on these drugs for control.

We continue to see cases of BVD, often in herds that have been vaccinating for a number of years. Vaccination is an important tool in control and prevention, but alone does not give control. It is important that all PI's (carriers) are identified and removed from the herd. Often BVD is associated with many other grumbling diseases on the farm. Removal of the PI's will often see an overall improvement in health and disease reduction.

Please ask any of the team if you would like to know more about BVD and pneumonia control.

Lambing season is getting underway, I am sure we will see the usual array of problems. Twin lamb disease is undoubtedly one of the most frustrating problems to treat. Most ewes do not respond unless treatment is very prompt, and generally once down for more than a day will result in giving birth to dead lambs. We have had many discussions over the years within the practice as to the best course of action with these ewes and the general consensus is that inducing the ewes to lamb sooner rather than later is the preferred option. This treatment with steroids also has the desired effect of raising the blood sugar level of the ewe. We are more likely to have a viable live ewe with the possibility of live lambs if induced early. Additional treatment with our home mixture drench with water and injectable CMD should also be used. The major benefit of scanning ewes is to identify the ewes carrying multiples and to group these for extra concentrate feed in the run up to lambing along with any thin ewes. If you are experiencing problems then please feel free to speak to us.

For the spring calving sucklers, it is time to start thinking about scour vaccination of your cows for Rota and corona viruses. This is an extremely effective vaccine that is well tried and tested and can considerably reduce the incidence and severity of a scour outbreak.