

News from our Rounds

East

Beth Reilly

With Autumn setting in, it's time to get proactive on tackling infectious causes of sheep Lameness with the **Lameness Reduction Plan**. There are 5 Key steps:



The first area to focus on is to **REDUCE THE DISEASE CHALLENGE**, this is done by the following steps:

- 1. Avoid** – reduce the spread of infection on your farm. E.g. moving the mobile handling unit to fresh pasture each time. Put gravel over gate ways to reduce poaching.
- 2. Treat** – early detection and treatment with antibiotics is essential. Mark the leg with stock marker.
- 3. Quarantine** – 28 day isolation for newly purchased animals to ensure you don't bring infectious lameness in to the flock.

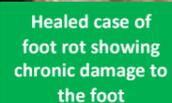


The next step of the control plan is to **BUILD RESILIENCE**:

- 4. Cull** – remove chronic repeat offenders. This will improve the resilience in your flock and reducing disease challenge helping your sheep 'avoid' the challenge.

The final step of the control plan is to **ESTABLISH IMMUNITY**:

- 5. Vaccinate** – **Footvax** is commonly used and is helpful in flocks to reduce the incidence and severity of lameness caused by foot rot.



If you would like to know more please contact the practice and ask to speak to one of our **Lameness Reduction Advisors**.

Synergy Training Courses return!!

If you are interested in joining our courses or would like to know more, please get in touch:
01935 83682 / courses@synergyfarmhealth.com

We will give you details on how to join us online. For those who require staff training or do not want to join us online, we are happy to offer bespoke training on farm. Please get in touch for further details.

ROMS Accredited Mobility Scoring Course
20th October 9am- 3pm - Online

Safe Use of Veterinary Medicine (General) - Online
26th October 10am- 1pm

DIY AI 3 Day Course
30th November 9am- 4pm Lower Coombe
1st & 2nd December 9am- 4pm On Farm

West

Alasdair Moffett

With everything else turned upside down in the world it is easy to forget about what is happening at present with the Agricultural Bill. The Bill had been designed to promote food security in the UK, as well as addressing environmental aims. Food security does not receive sufficient attention, and a policy of simply importing what we can't produce doesn't bode well for the future.



We therefore welcomed recent news that a crucial clause imposing a requirement for agricultural and food imports in the UK to meet domestic standards was voted through in the House of Lords as part of the passage of the Agriculture Bill.

The **British Veterinary Association (BVA)**, which represents over 18,000 vets across the UK, (including all of Synergy's team of vets) has previously urged the Government not to allow animal welfare standards to be compromised in pursuit of future trade deals.

James Russell, BVA President, said: "This result is a huge win for animal welfare and a decisive vote of confidence in the UK's farming industry, which works incredibly hard to keep our globally renowned welfare standards high. We have long argued that the UK cannot commit to raising the bar domestically while allowing in goods that don't meet the high standards that British consumers rightly want and expect."

#synergytweets!

Follow us on Social Media:

@SynergyFarmVets @SynergyFarmHealth



Dear Clients...

After 35 years as a practising veterinary surgeon I have decided, with some sadness and trepidation (but also some excitement!) to 'hang up my boots' and cease all clinical work from the end of this month (October).

I am sure some of you may have thought this had already happened as, being part-time for the last 12 months and with the added problems brought about by COVID, I have not been on the farms as much as was planned and I would have liked!

Over the last few years I have been working closely with some of you making breeding plans and using genomics and I intend to continue supporting and developing this service through the



practice; so you haven't quite got rid of me yet! I feel confident that I am 'leaving' the practice in a very healthy state; I am proud of what we have achieved, a large independent farm focused veterinary practice ownership across all the

team, not just the vets. We have a fantastic group of what (I think after working around the UK), are some of the most knowledgeable and enthusiastic vets around as well as a unique Tech team all backed up superbly in the office and laboratory. Passing on the baton to this bunch is sort of compulsory!

A huge thank you to all of you who have supported me in the early days and fed my enthusiasm along the way – it has truly been a privilege to have worked with you. For the many of you who I haven't met personally thank you for supporting the business and perhaps we will have an opportunity to still meet over a breeding discussion. Alternatively, you may just see an old bald guy in a Synergy shirt cycling past your farm!



Mark Burnell FRCVS

October 2020

- Dear Clients...
- Dispensary Promotions & News
- Calf Pneumonia - Should I Vaccinate?
- Why has Lameness become a priority?
- Trimming in calf heifers to reduce bruising
- Regional News

Eprecis - a precise injectable wormer with zero milk withdrawal



A more suitable and adaptable wormer for selective treatments of worms in dairy cattle is now available!

Eprecis, an injectable formulation of eprinomectin allows:

- an accurate dose via the subcutaneous route
- each animal to receive the correct dose, minimising the risk of resistance developing
- no product loss due to licking
- less product spread in the environment

For further details please contact Dispensary on 01935 83682.

Seasonal Dispensary Offers

All prices EX VAT. For a full list of promotional items please contact Dispensary on 01935 83682.



FOOTVAX
20 doses £28.50
50 doses £59
250 doses £230



FASINEX
0.8L £78
2.2L £160
5L £295



EPRIZERO
1L £75
2.5L £120
5L £185.85



EPRECIS **NEW!**
100ML £75
250ML £120

UPDATE ON MILKING COW ANTIBIOTIC TUBE SHORTAGE

The nationwide shortage of lactating cow tubes continues but we are happy to announce we have now secured some alternative products. We can now confirm that we have a stock of **Gamaret (Tetra Delta equivalent), Albiotic, Ubrolexin and Mastiplan** available. We are expecting to see **Combiclav LC (Synulox LC)** returning towards the end of the year.

With the ongoing disruption to mastitis tube availability we encourage you to discuss the options with your vet who will be able to answer any questions and prescribe the correct tube for your herd situation.

We hope we are seeing the end of the recent very limited availability and greatly appreciate your patience and understanding during this difficult time.

Calf Pneumonia - Should I Vaccinate?

The current trend towards reduced antibiotic usage and a focus on preventative strategies for cattle health means that vaccination is often a key topic for discussion between farmers and their vet. A recent survey looking at farmer motivation for vaccination of their cattle found that 'perceiving there was a problem' and 'trust in their vet' were the two most crucial factors behind their decision-

Is there a perceived pneumonia problem?

Is there actually an issue? Is disease at a level that is higher and more costly than expected? Will we see a noticeable benefit by vaccinating?

For pneumonia a reasonable target is less than 5% treated amongst home-bred dairy heifer calves or recently housed suckler calves. Medicine purchases and mortalities would also help build a picture of the diseases level and cost.

Is there evidence of specific pathogens involved?

Can we find specific underlying 'bugs' that are a cause? There is a large range of viruses and bacteria that can cause pneumonia, sometimes working in combination. Blood testing, swabs, and post-mortems can be used to determine the presence of pathogens of concern.

Infectious causes of pneumonia in young cattle that can be vaccinated for:

Bacterial

Pasteurella
Histophilus
Salmonella

Viral

BVD IBR
BRSV PI-3

Is there a vaccine available?

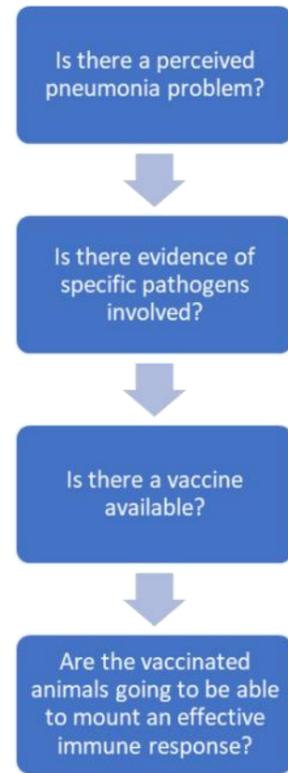
Once we have diagnosed the cause, we can determine if there are any effective commercial vaccines available. Fortunately, almost all major causes of infectious pneumonia in young cattle have an available vaccine. It's important that the correct vaccine is used to match bugs on farm. Just 'administering a pneumonia vaccine' may not be effective or beneficial if it is not specifically immunising against the known causes circulating on farm.

Are the vaccinated animals going to be able to mount an effective immune response?

Perhaps one of the most important areas for review, but unfortunately an area which is not always discussed, is whether the animals are otherwise healthy enough to mount an effective immune response to the vaccine. This requires looking at the whole picture. Are high stocking densities, poor housing design, and unsatisfactory hygiene allowing a 'build-up of bugs'? Is inadequate nutrition leading to energy or mineral deficits? Is there concurrent disease that is making the group more susceptible? Improved husbandry is an effective preventative for all forms of pneumonia and always needs to be reviewed as well.

Another scenario where it is advisable to vaccinate is due to a high risk of a new emerging disease entering the herd. This might be because of risky buying-in strategies or unsafe boundaries with neighbouring farms that pose a threat.

When all the above questions have been settled, a plan can then be made. It is important to realise that the decision to start a vaccination programme is not made lightly and needs to be agreed upon by both farmer and vet for it to be a success!



Adapted from Bezeley et al. 2018 A decision tree for effective vaccination.

DID YOU KNOW? Our Vet Techs offer a **Professional Vaccination Service**, helping to manage & administer your vaccines at a very low cost. Call 01935 83682 to find out more.

News from our Rounds

North Paula Hunt

Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) – buzz words for the future of farming! Basically Adaptation and Mitigation in the face of rapid climate change, whilst still increasing Production to feed our growing population. Not much to ask then! However I have no doubt that British farmers will step up and deliver solutions, just as they have always done when needed in the past.

As I drive around our beautiful region it seems like there is an abundance of trees. They could have greater animal health benefits if planted now with CSA in mind – eg amongst and around your calf hutches which will soon be exposed to ever increasing summer temperatures and will need shade to protect welfare. Fast-growing willow will shed leaves which are of no harm if eaten. Download the Agroforestry Handbook for free at www.soilassociation.org for other ideas and more information.



Central Andre Northey

The lack of rain during the last few months has led to increased pressure on grazing systems, both beef and dairy. In situations where buffer feed is seldom used or only at a low level, a very close eye must be kept on animals' body condition since a decrease in condition score goes easily unnoticed. Serious negative effects on the animals' health and welfare may ensue.

Herd Health Plans are a necessity in modern livestock farming, both for disease prevention, identifying problem areas, and setting targets. Farm assurance schemes of all kinds require formal Herd Health Plans. Over the last six months more or less all on-farm audits have been postponed but are now beginning to be carried out again. Please allow sufficient time for you and your vet to go through your Herd Health Plan together to have it ready well before the inspection date. It will take out the stress for everybody involved!



Ben Barber Veterinary Surgeon



Why has Lameness become a priority?

Lameness has been recently identified as the biggest welfare concern in the farm sector. Why is that? If you were to ask yourself which conditions that cows experience are the most painful, most of you would put lameness high on that list. Also ask yourselves what condition is obviously painful to the public - lameness jumps to the top. Public perception is of utmost concern to milk buyers. You can see therefore why lameness control has become a priority. Standards have become more stringent year on year with requirements varying between contracts. Farmers are now losing their contracts where standards are not being met.



What is the minimum? Currently Red Tractor standards include:

- A foot care and lameness management plan
- Lameness records for clinical cases and non-routine trimming and treatments

- Review lameness records annually
- Lameness records identified, treated, and managed in accordance with the health plan.

Some additional requirements are identified within certain contracts. Do not get caught out.

Check your contract to be sure. These might include:

- Quarterly mobility scoring
- ROMS accredited scoring (an independent scorer)
- <25% lameness of scores 2&3
- No more than 2 or 3 mobility score 3 cows
- Every score 3 cow must have a specific management plan
- A straw yard should be made available for any score 3 cows
- Any score 3 cows having two consecutive recordings at score 3 must be removed from farm ie culled

I am in full support of these additional standards, based on the knowledge I have acquired over my time working on cattle lameness.

Identifying lameness early and treating ASAP is the single most important tool in your arsenal. The speed of identification and treatment will improve the chance of

recovery, and more importantly, reduce the chance of recurrence. I am confident that every second's delay results in additional changes within the foot, which increase the chances of the cow going lame again.

Technology has come a long way with automated lameness detection systems, but the gold standard continues to be observation at 2 weekly intervals by an objective locomotion scorer.



Synergy Farm Health have decided to offer one free whole herd mobility score per year to all of our foot trimming clients. To arrange your free mobility score, please call our Vet Tech Coordinator Rhi Purbrick on 01935 83682.

The results of the scores will be used to start a conversation between yourselves and your vet. They will not be submitted to any third party. By identifying any issues we hope to work together to resolve them, to improve both cow welfare and public perception.

Gareth Foden Veterinary Surgeon



Trimming in calf heifers to reduce bruising

Christmas came early for this foot trimmer when I took charge of my new trimming crush. I am the last Vet Tech to have a remotely controlled crush and it only took a few days before I was completely converted to its ease of use. So much time is saved reloading animals using the remote and most importantly it is much safer for the trimmer and less stressful for the cow. My back is grateful for the lift kit which saves me constantly bending and also means we need not lift the animals leg too high.



Over the last few months on two of my routine farms we have seen a great deal of severe solar haemorrhage or bruising on heifers coming in for their first trim. Although most of the heifers weren't showing any lameness I was very surprised at how bad the bruising was, and in most cases a block was fitted to rest the claw in the hope of preventing any ulceration. I am sure most of the heifers with bruising would have gone lame in a short space of time.

Presently we are not sure what reasons may have caused this problem. We are looking back through trimming records for the same period last year to see if this is a seasonal recurrence, a good example of how detailed trimming records can be a useful tool.

One of the farms is going to start trimming in calf heifers with a view to preventing the bruising forming.

Karl Burgi, a world renowned Swiss born Cattle foot trimmer now based in Wisconsin in the USA, has advocated the benefits of trimming in calf heifers for several years. His data and evidence would appear to back up his beliefs that trimming young animals can reduce lameness after calving.

Karl was due to speak at Synergy's Cattle Lameness Academy's conference in March of this year. Sadly the conference was another victim of the COVID-19 lockdown. He was also due to meet the team of vet techs on farm for some CPD. We can all benefit from listening and discussing different ideas, opinions and points of view. After all, we all want the best for our cows.

Matt Board Vet Tech

