

News from our Rounds

Central Sam Cottam

Autumn has crept up on us as the day length rapidly decreases; although it must be said that for veterinarians in waterproofs the cooler days are welcome. Our plans to go abroad and see family have been ambushed by what one famous twitter user coined "the brilliant germ" amongst other synonyms (3 guesses who). It would appear we are not alone if the 8 or so cruise ships in Weymouth bay are anything to go by!

Out on farm our Spring block calving herds have had final Pregnancy checks with, overall, good results given the challenges with grass growth this season. With housing just around the corner, now is a good time to rectify issues with sheds (such as ventilation) which may have been forgotten about over the summer. **It is also a good time to refine parasite control and vaccination protocols in conjunction with your usual vet.**



East Tom Shardlow



This year has been the worst I've known for the sheer number of flies, causing eye problems in cattle amongst other issues. A combination of a mild winter (which didn't kill off overwintering larvae) followed by a warm and wet summer lead to an unusually high number of insects. This was a particular challenge to some of our clients rearing calves- with fly control around milk preparation and feeding areas a never-ending problem. It is easy to forget but discussing a fly control plan with us before spring could save a lot of hassle by preventing disease next year. **It is important to remember that there are other tools in our armoury when it comes to this apart from spot-on products- including environmental larvicides and adult fly killing products to spray on surfaces. The earlier in the season we start with these, the more effective they will be.**



November 2020

- Feeding your cows - looking beyond the ration
- Body Condition Scoring- A Vital Tool
- Dispensary Promotions & News
- A note from Milly White, Approved Tuberculin Tester
- Regional News
- Lockdown Update

Feeding your cows - looking beyond the ration

Getting nutrition right is fundamental to both cow health and farm productivity. Forage analysis and ration formulation certainly are critical elements of your nutritional management strategy, however it is in fact most commonly **intake which is the limiting factor** in all of this. Predicting intakes is a difficult thing to get right, so let's for a moment move away from predicting intakes to simply *maximising* them.

Allowing this lying time is really important as cows prefer to ruminate lying down which is essential for them to fully and efficiently digest their feed. Between eating and lying down, that's up to 20 hours of the day already allocated, before you have even considered milking time, drinking time, loafing time, and handling



I was watching a documentary on the World's strongest man the other night. The heaviest bench press achieved was over 500kg (that's 7 of me!). To achieve this incredible amount of strength I had imagined he would need to eat something crazy like 5 chickens for breakfast! This was not the case at all. He achieved his incredible energy and protein intake by simply **eating consistent meals every few hours throughout the day**. This required careful planning to ensure he had enough time to actually physically eat in and around all the other activities he had planned during the day! He even had to schedule in rest time!

time (foot trimming, vaccinations, routine fertility, TB testing etc). You can soon see how their feeding and resting time becomes compromised by other things...it's worth reviewing your daily cow tasks to consider how you might get cows back to their beds and food as quickly as possible. Looking beyond just timing, it is pointless ensuring suitable eating and resting time if neither are suitably available or sufficiently inviting! **Below are a just a few thoughts about how you might maximise intakes in your housed lactating cows:**



This is exactly what needs to happen in your cows. **They are athletes on a very tight 24hr schedule**. A typical housed high yielding dairy cow will want to **spend between 4 to 6 hours a day eating spread across the day!** The remaining 18-20hrs will be mainly spent resting (12-14hrs).

⇒ **Water must always be fresh, and available with at least 10 cm per cow of water trough space and water trough filling speed of >20 litres per minute (this is how fast a cow can drink!)**

⇒ **Minimise group disruption. New cows entering a group can upset intakes for 48 hours**

⇒ **Maximise cow flow. Cows need escape routes! Dead ends and pinch points stop low ranking cows reaching the beds/water/feed. They would rather go hungry than get beaten up by the bully in the group!**

⇒ **Ensure at least 5% more cubicles than cows and ensure the cubicles are comfortable! Consider bedding material as well as cubicle dimensions. The best way of assessing your beds is watching the cows at multiple times throughout the day - consider CCI (cow comfort index), lesion scores, and bed preference.**

⇒ **Feed must always be freely available and fresh! Regular pushing up is essential as is daily removal of leftover feed.**

⇒ **There must be adequate feed space so all the cows in the group can eat at once (60cm minimum but aim for over 70cm)**

⇒ **Manage summer challenges - flies and heat stress can have big impacts on DMI. Regular fly control and good ventilation are essential. For further information or to find out about our latest medicine offers, please speak with your vet.**

Pete O'Malley
Veterinary Surgeon



Back into Lockdown

Following on from the previous lockdown we put many protocols in place which can continue under the latest lockdown arrangements. Our priority remains to look after the health and welfare of our staff, clients and animals under our care. We will still be providing a delivery service for your medicines and any veterinary treatment that can be carried out safely under COVID guidelines. Our reception staff will continue to contact you prior to attendance on farm to ensure there are no COVID related issues we need to discuss and our staff are aware of the need for social distancing, mask wearing and biosecurity as required.

A big thank you to all our clients for your support and patience during this difficult and challenging time; we know you understand that our aim is to provide the best veterinary service whilst abiding by the rules that are in place.

If you have any concerns or wish to discuss any matter please do not hesitate to call us at the practice. Stay safe all of you!

Operations Team



Synergy Training Courses

DUE TO CURRENT LOCKDOWN MEASURES OUR FACE TO FACE COURSES IN NOVEMBER HAVE BEEN CANCELLED.

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.

Faecal Worm Egg Counting Course - 2 Days
25th November 2pm- 4pm
26th November 2pm- 4pm **LOW CANCELLED**

DIY AI 3 Day Course
30th November 9am- 4pm **LOW CANCELLED**
1st & 2nd December 9am- 4pm **LOW CANCELLED**

Safe Use of Veterinary Medicine (Sheep) - Online
10th December 10am- 1pm



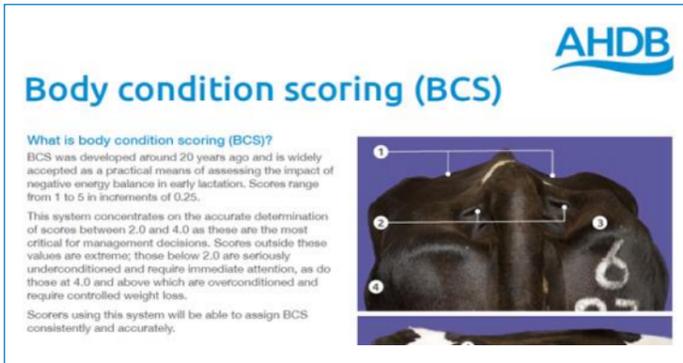
Body Condition Scoring – A Vital Tool

What is body condition scoring?

This is a way of determining an animals' degree of 'fatness' and helps us to see if the balance between their environment (diet, housing, social status) and their production is correct. By assessing the degree of fat cover over the hips, tail head and back we can assign a score to an animal on a 1-5 scale with 0.25 increments. The ideal body condition score (BCS) for a dairy cow is 2.5-3.0. A cow that is too thin (less than 2.0) or too fat (more than 4.0), especially around calving or in early lactation, will have poor yield, poor fertility and is at high risk of periparturient diseases such as ketosis and displaced abomasum (LDA).

of what's normal for that animal. Certain cows and breeds are going to naturally carry more or less condition than others. The most important thing about condition scoring is to monitor the **change** in score as this suggests something is not right. As intakes can't match demand in early lactation most cows will lose condition at this time, but this **should not be more than 0.5 of a score**. In contrast to this, animals in late lactation, especially those with extended lactations and low yields, are at risk of gaining condition.

To change an animals BCS takes time, hence the 100-day pre-dry off assessment. Cows should be entering the dry period in the correct condition to calve in, the standard 60-day dry period is not a time for change.



AHDB Dairy produce an excellent BCS flow chart which ensures accuracy and consistency, however it can still be a subjective process

When should I do it?

Regularly! AHDB recommend that you score animals at the following times in their production cycle, with these target scores:

- **At calving: 2.5 - 3.0**
- **60 days post-calving: 2.0-2.5**
- **100 days pre-dry off: 2.5 - 3.0**
- **At drying off: 2.5 - 3.0**

It needs to be done regularly as supposed to a one-off so that you can get a picture

so it is helpful if the same person is responsible for scoring the herd, you may decide that this is your vet.

Act Now!

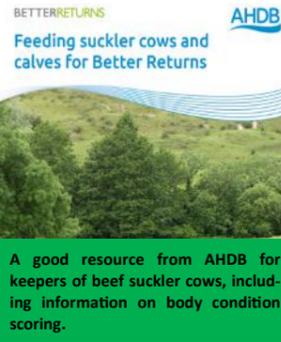
Now is a great time to start body condition scoring the herd. Some herds may just be housing animals and others may be opening up silage clamps. Monitoring BCS will inform you if the diets are supporting the cows. **For those of you who**

have had cows at grass, a cause of lower BCS might be a high parasite burden in particular liver fluke. If treatment is needed just be mindful of milk withdrawals. Please discuss with your vet. For the latest Dispensary Offers please see below.

What about beef cows?

The same principles apply; BCS should be monitored regularly, and change should be minimised. BCS can have a big impact on beef cow fertility so it is really important to avoid overly thin or fat cows for good profitability. Cows can be allowed to gain condition at grass when feed is cheap and lose condition when housed, but again, not more than 0.5 of a score. Thin cows and heifers should be managed more closely i.e. housed earlier and/or separately to the rest of the herd.

Talk to your vet for more details on implementing body condition scoring in your herd and visit the AHDB website for lots of interesting and useful information.



Esme Moffett
Veterinary Surgeon



A note from Milly White, Approved Tuberculin Tester

I am an Approved Tuberculin Tester, also known as an ATT. I am one of three ATTs at Synergy, Myself, Emily Alford and Rhiannon Purbrick. ATTs are approved in England but not in Wales or Scotland. There are only sixteen ATTs in the country.

ATT training started as a pilot scheme for the government in December 2018 and gained national approval in March 2020. Synergy was a selected pilot practice to test the concept of ATTs. The ATT training is similar to the training that is required for vets (known as Official Veterinarian or OV) to undertake TB testing. Like OVs, ATTs must successfully complete an online training course before commencing their practical training. The ATT practical training must all be completed under the direct supervision of an OV who must be on farm at all times whilst the ATT is testing. An ATT must test at least 500 animals on 10 different holdings and see a specified number of skin reactions

to the test before they become eligible for a practical assessment - this is even more than OVs are required to see! It is only once the ATT has passed the practical assessment that they can start testing without their supervisor present.

From the 2nd November 2020, ATTs are approved to carry out pre movement testing in addition to government testing. However we are not approved to TB test for exports.

I have met many of you in the past year and a half and I look forward to meeting more of you!



#synergytweets!

Follow us on Social Media:

[@SynergyFarmVets](#) [@SynergyFarmHealth](#)



Meet the Team

Dani Elliot

Dani is our Financial Controller and has been with Synergy since June, joining us from the rural team of a local accountancy firm. Dani oversees the accounts team alongside managing the finances here at Synergy. In her spare time, Dani enjoys spending time with her husband and 3 year old daughter, horse riding, playing the saxophone and cycling.



News from our Rounds

North Tom Warboys

The cold weather and rain we've experienced lately is a reminder that Autumn is very much upon us. During several recent herd health discussions, worming cattle at the end of the grazing season has been discussed. Our lab at Evershot has certainly seen a recent rise in lungworm diagnoses.

Strategic worming at this time of year helps prevent a build-up of lungworm larvae on pasture for next year, the main culprits for multiplying larvae being spring-born calves. It will also ensure current lungworm infection in stock are dealt with. However, worming is only necessary if there are clinical signs or the pasture has a history of problems.

It is important that some form of low dose exposure is allowed, in order to stimulate future immunity. This is achieved by avoiding over-worming, not worming older animals or by vaccinating vulnerable stock (including older animals if they have not been exposed previously).

Synergy stock several wormers appropriate for lungworm control, including a new injectable zero milk withdrawal eprinomectin, Eprecis (only available from vets), as well as Eprizero pour-on.



West Imogen Rogers

Being the newest vet on the West team, I thought I would take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Imogen and I joined the team in July, after finishing the RVC/Synergy internship. It's only been 4 months, but I have already grown to really love this area. It is a new concept for me to live so close to the sea, and I have certainly been making the most of it. Coastal walks, pub trips and cold swims at Eype have certainly filled many a weekend! Away from the Dorset life, I spend my time making abstract art... which I appreciate is certainly not a common hobby amongst farmers, but one that keeps me out of mischief!

If you see me at our Axminster base (or even filling up at the petrol station), please come and say hello. There are lots of you out there, and I need as much help as I can get to remember all your faces!



Seasonal Dispensary Offers

Eprecis, an injectable formulation of eprinomectin, is an adaptable wormer for selective treatments of worms in dairy cattle, allowing:

- 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



EPRECIS
100ML £75
250ML £120



ENDOFLUKE
2.5L £54
5L £80



ENOVEX
2.5L £28

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.

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