



The Synergy team would like to wish all our clients a very...  
**Peaceful Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!**

### Synergy Christmas Opening Times:

Christmas Day (Fri 25<sup>th</sup>) - Emergencies only  
Boxing Day (Sat 26<sup>th</sup>) - Emergencies only

Bank Holiday (Monday 28<sup>th</sup> Jan)— Emergencies only  
Early office closing 24<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> December



In case of emergency please ring 01935 83682.  
Our 24 hour Emergency service will continue to operate at all times.

### December 2020

- T-L-C for Downer Cows
- Planning Ahead for TB Testing
- Synergy Tweets
- Dispensary Promotions & News
- Respiratory Vaccinations; a Summary...
- Regional News
- Synergy Training Courses

## T-L-C for Downer Cows

Downer cows are hopefully a not to common occurrence on most cattle farms. However, although you may not have 'down cows' very often, it is essential to have a down cow pen ready for such an event. The faster you can get the cows into a comfy bed and provide proper tender loving care the better the chances of recovery. Getting cows off concrete should be a priority.



So, lets break down downer cow care into three key steps: **T-L-C**

### T – Turning

Cows will need rolling onto the opposite side/leg every 1-2 hours to stop them getting muscle damage which may prevent them from getting back up again.

### L - Lifting

Cows should be lifted a couple of times a day to encourage blood flow into the limbs. Lifting is a great time to check how the lower limbs are bearing weight and also to move animal onto a fresh area of straw. Moving onto a fresh area every

time is important to reduce chances of mastitis in lactating animals. It is important to note that lifting with a hoist should only be done for short periods of time and animals should never be left 'hanging' from their pelvis. The hoist should ALWAYS be removed from the cow after lifting.

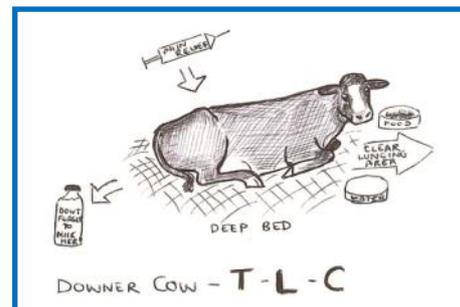
### C – Comfort

Comfort is perhaps the simplest step but often the one that's overlooked most. So, what is the "Correct bedside manner for your down cows"?

- ◆ **Food** – Fresh food, replaced everyday and within reach! If in a pen with other animals, you may need to 'fence' the cow off so that friends that are able to walk do not pinch all her food.
- ◆ **Water** – Again fresh and in a clean bucket within reach. Don't put it directly in front of the cow as this will be in her lunging space if she tries to get up.
- ◆ **Bedding** – Deep straw beds that are clean and fresh are great. Another good alternative if the weather is favorable is out in a field.
- ◆ **Udder** – If your cow is milking, don't forget to milk her as you would in the parlour. Teat preparation, hygiene and post dips are all important for your down cows.
- ◆ **Pain Relief** – An injection of pain relief (Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory

(NSAIDs)) is usually indicated and is essential for animals that have been injured e.g. slipped over.

- ◆ **Prognosis** – what is the chance she will get up again?



Have you established the cause of the cow being down? If the animal is sick and in need of support then she should get up in time providing she receives good TLC to prevent secondary muscle damage. If the cow is injured, then time is important however we advise you to seek veterinary attention for downer cows sooner rather than later so the reason for them going down can be dealt with quickly and efficiently. One of our vets can take a quick blood sample and run a test in our in-house lab that can guide prognosis and aid with decision making.

Remember, not all cows will get back up again. But by improving our T-L-C downer cow care, we will maximize the chances of recovery.

Beth Reilly  
Veterinary Surgeon



## Planning Ahead for TB Testing

Whilst getting stuck in to a few large TB tests recently, and particularly whilst trying to adhere to the government's guidelines on social distancing, I have become more and more aware of how handling and planning can affect our ability to get this job done.

Why don't all farms have brand new handling facilities and crushes? Well let's be honest here. TB testing hundreds of animals - this is a challenge. Okay, we can have a bit of banter and there are worse

things to be doing if the weather's all right, and the reading day might be a good opportunity to get some other jobs done like worming or ear tags, but basically we are talking about long tiring days with occasional moments of extreme stress. I think that's why we are sometimes reluctant to invest time

and money in preparing for it: we have no enthusiasm for this task, and we're always hoping that the next test might be the last for a while anyway. Having said this though, there is no doubt that an **efficient**



This is a set up for handling far-off dry cows, which are out grazing away from the main dairy buildings. They are fed in the corral prior to testing day so there is no trouble getting them in, the long race with several gates allows for easy handling of groups or individuals, and of course there are plenty of people involved to ensure a smooth flow. Blue sky is a bonus!

**flow of cows** makes the whole thing safer and quicker, and might even reduce how much we dread it coming up.

I recently sat down and worked out how many cattle I've TB tested since

I started with the practice eight years ago, and it's about 40,000 – which is a lot of time watching cows being moved.

	Plan	Equipment	People
3 out of 3	Safe, quick, efficient		
2 out of 3	Adequate		
1 out of 3		Slow, unsafe	
0 out of 3	Dangerous		

I don't want to promote any one particular handling system or crush – there are lots of good ideas and products out there and every farm is different – **but I do believe that there are a few golden rules that apply to every situation:**

1. **Planning** – have a plan of events before beginning the test
2. **Crushes and gates** - these do not (generally) improve with age!
3. **People** – the more pairs of hands you have on deck, the smoother it will be

If you can tick off all three of these then we'll fly through, but more commonly there are one or two weak spots. If you can manage two out of three then generally the outcome will be sensible and safe – for example if the facilities are a bit dated but there are plenty of helpers and a good plan in place. The real problems occur when two of these are missing - maybe there is a great plan but insufficient equipment and staff. If we really haven't got any of these points ticked, then we have to start considering whether the task in hand is really more important than our own safety (it isn't).

If you are concerned that your farm is at the less organised end of the scale, then use your next TB test as an opportunity to make things safer and quicker.

Remember to give us a shout if you'd like some advice.

**Peter Siviter**  
Veterinary Surgeon



### #synergytweets!

Follow us on Social Media:

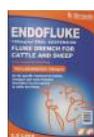
[@SynergyFarmVets](#) [@SynergyFarmHealth](#)



## Seasonal Dispensary Offers



**TAURADOR**  
1L £68  
2.5L £105  
5L £185



**ENDOFLUKE**  
2.5L £54  
5L £80



**BRAVOXIN**  
500ML £17  
100ML £28

All prices EX VAT. For a full list of promotions please call Dispensary on 01935 83682

## Medicines Update

We thank you for your patience and understanding regarding the number of medicines supply issue that seem to be occurring with painful frequency recently.

There have been different reasons for the nationwide interruptions to supplies of various medicines and in particular the intramammary antibiotics which have caused many changes in prescribed products.

We been successful in sourcing like for like replacements as much as and as quickly as possible through our XLVets network with the aim of minimising any inconvenience and disruption to health protocols as much as was humanly possible!

Thank you again for your cooperation and patience with this and hope that despite the impending Brexit that things will continue to improve. We will keep you updated on all changes and availability of your medicines.

## Respiratory Vaccinations; a Summary...

Recently I have had a couple of discussions regarding the various respiratory vaccinations, and with all the different formulations of 3s, 4s and intranasals, it can be a bit of a minefield.

In the last few years, we altered from using Rispoval 4 to Bovalto Respi 4. Previously the Rispoval option protected against 4 respiratory vaccines – Bovine Respiratory Syncytial Virus (BRSV), Parainfluenza 3 (PI3), Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR), and Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD). However, we have known for a long time that in terms of respiratory in-

protection will be of benefit, we still have the intranasal option which allows use from 10 days of age but only confers immunity for 2 of the gateway viruses – PI3 and RSV.

What you will notice though is that **Bovalto Respi 4 does not contain protection against IBR**. For those that changed from Rispoval 4 to Bovalto Respi 4 this is a consideration we must be aware of.

IBR can cause dramatic problems on some farms, but others may not even realise they have it until they start looking for it.

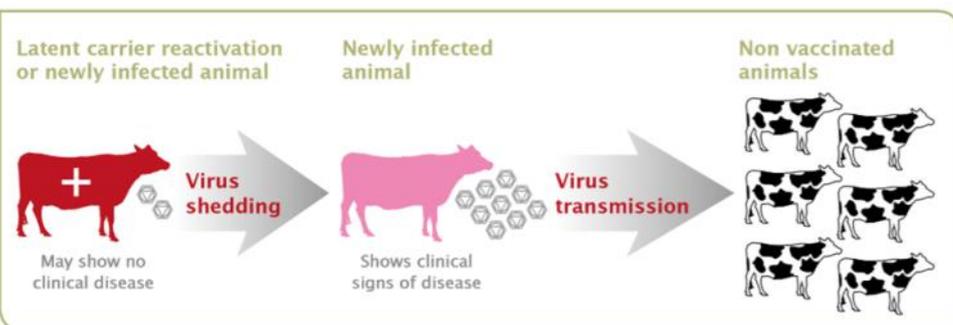
and raised temperatures (Over 39.5°C). It also has marked fertility effects in adults, being a common identified cause of suboptimal fertility and abortion.

IBR is highly contagious and easily transmitted by aerosol, spreading the virus rapidly within a herd. Calves and adult cattle can be infected. Once infected they carry the virus for life (latent carriers). Virus spreads throughout the herd in a number of ways, but the main spreaders are newly infected animals.

Breaking the cycle of infection is critical to stopping the disease from spreading. Herd vaccination with a live vaccine is the most widely used approach to help protect animals and control the spread of IBR with the aims of inducing herd immunity and reducing clinical signs. We are fortunate that in the face of infection, or animals at immediate risk if IBR, that an intranasal IBR vaccine will provide immunity within 4 days, whilst an intramuscular injection will take 14 days to create immunity. Both can be used from 2 weeks of age. We are also fortunate with IBR Marker vaccines allowing us to be able to differentiate between animals that have been vaccinated, and those exposed to circulating virus.

I won't surprise you with this comment, but as always, it is best to discuss this with your vet most familiar with your farm, and the Youngstock Service are always available for added expertise.

**Alasdair Moffett**  
Veterinary Surgeon



fections, these viruses act as a gateway for the secondary and often more severe bacterial component of pneumonia. **Hence, when a combined viral and bacterial respiratory vaccination became available, we have opted to use Bovalto Respi 4.** This consists of BRSV, PI3, BVD but also a bacterial component associated with the classic shipping fever we see in recently stressed animals. This can be utilised from 2 weeks of age with 2 doses needed 3 weeks apart. If it is decided that earlier

In fact where IBR has been on a farm for a few years undetected, poor levels of performance may be accepted as “normal” whilst having a marked impact on the farm’s profitability. Data shows that 75% of UK beef and dairy herds have been exposed to IBR at some point, with animals possessing antibodies when sampled.

We see clinical signs in all ages of animal with – watery or runny eyes developing into conjunctivitis, runny noses, coughing

## News from our Rounds

### North Graeme M<sup>c</sup>Pherson

Autumn block calvers are now full swing into serving cows and heifers. Cows are settling into their winter accommodation. It strikes me just how much planning is involved in farming! Farmers are constantly having to ask questions like, ‘How much silage do I need?’, ‘How much can I feed per day?’, ‘Can I forward buy commodities to buy at the best price?’ Farmers, unlike me, are well used to planning ahead!

Fertility is an area where forward planning is essential. When we inseminate a cow, we are hoping to fertilise an egg that started its final stages of development around 80 days PREVIOUSLY. This means that the nutritional, hormonal and immune status of animals today will impact fertility for the next 80 days to come, since eggs are produced well in advance. So questions like ‘How can I supply a stable diet for 6-8 weeks before serving, and during service?’, ‘How do I keep my heifers growing and on a stable diet in the lead up to and during serving?’ become very important. These can be difficult questions to address – particularly as we might be trying to utilise resources such as autumn grazing or poor quality silage. It is worth having heifer feeds analysed and formulating a ration involving complementary feeds to keep them growing and healthy.



### West Tom Cook

I recently attended a course to deliver Milksure training to farmers. The training aims to reduce medicine residues in milk and bulk tank failures. It can be used as medicine training and is approved by Red Tractor. I certainly learned a few things and there are tips on best practice and minimum legal requirements. Give us a call or speak to your vet for more information.

We are lucky to live and work in a green, open and relatively low population area of the country and getting outside is helping me cope with lockdown 2.0. I am grateful that our work on farms is relatively unchanged and that cows were conveniently designed to be about two metres long - GENIUS!



# News from our Rounds

## Central Claire Rudd

The arrival of winter is always a good time to get those paperwork jobs done. Does your herd / flock health plan need updating? A health plan review is not just a tick box exercise to fulfil farm assurance requirements, it's an excellent chance to look at the herd or flock performance over the year and review farm protocols.

We will collate your medicine usage (including an antibiotic report) and vet spend for the year as well as providing a foot trimming summary where applicable. Any lab results and all mastitis and fertility data is also collated and is reviewed as part of the meeting which can also take place virtually if necessary. All in all it's always a useful and productive visit.

**Merry Christmas and best wishes from all of us on the Central team as we come to the end of a challenging year. Here's to a brighter 2021 (with hopefully no more home-schooling at this end)!**



## East Martijn 't Hoen

Winter is coming...I have scraped my windscreen a few times already and the Christmas songs on the radio are also a tell-tale sign! Lately I have been busy doing some fertility checks on bulls. Although some bulls have coped well there have also been some that have struggled. Being overly fat or too skinny might have various underlying causes, ranging from trace element issues to worming and fluke problems. Poor teeth or simply a lack of food while being chased by 60 bulling heifers across fields also does not help! Often these bulls will not go completely infertile overnight but a drop of 30% in fertility will mean a very extended calving interval, or more empty females at the end. Adequate nutrition, parasite management, preventative foot trimming and semen evaluation can all help to safeguard the biggest component of fertility in your herd.



## Meet the Team

### Becky Samways

Becky joined the Synergy Reception team in June 2019 after previously working at another veterinary practice. Based at Evershot, Becky is the North region receptionist, and as well as supporting the rest of the reception team, is also one of Synergy's Mental Health First Aiders. Synergy has created its own wellbeing team, from members of our own staff, who are constantly working to ensure everyone within the company is supported. As you can imagine this has been especially important during this challenging year.

Becky lives with her partner in a lovely quiet village in Somerset and outside of work runs a small baking business and enjoys walking with her dog and joining her partner out on the farm.



**There is currently a nationwide manufacturing problem with Betamox LA. We will be supplying TRYMOX LA as an alternative, this has the same dose rate and withhold periods.**



## New Teaching Room for Foot Trimming Training



We would like to introduce you to our new Foot trimming teaching room at our Lower Coombe site. We have been teaching practical

foot trimming to farmers and vet students for many years. We use cadaver feet from a local abattoir to help understand foot anatomy and gain valuable trimming experience before moving on to live cows.

Due to COVID 19 the building work has taken a little longer than anticipated, but it is worth the wait. The new facility is larger and better lit with non-slip flooring, making it easy to wash down, as well as making it safer to walk on when wet. It has proper drainage and equipped with a locker to keep all our teaching equipment dry, clean and safe. There is a white board as well as several poster boards on the walls, that will make it easier to understand and teach foot anatomy.

Currently group foot trimming courses are not possible but we will restart as soon as we are able. In the meantime we are happy to offer bespoke COVID-19 secure training on farm – please get in touch to discuss your requirements.

**Daryl Foot  
Vet Tech**



## Synergy Training Courses

**DUE TO CURRENT COVID-19 MEASURES OUR FACE TO FACE COURSES HAVE BEEN CANCELLED.**

**If you are interested in joining our online courses or would like to know more, please get in touch:**

**01935 83682 / [courses@synergyfarmhealth.com](mailto:courses@synergyfarmhealth.com)**

We will give you details on how to join us.

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.

**Safe Use of Veterinary Medicine (General) - Online**  
17<sup>th</sup> December 2020 10am– 1pm

**Introduction to Lambing - Online**  
11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 1pm– 4pm