



Helping the Environment

Here at Daleside we are making every effort to reduce our impact on the planet. We have switched most of our statements from paper to email. Across the practice we are now sending out 84% less paper statements compared to August last year!

During January, Guy has also been carrying out some hedge laying at the staff car park, creating a great habitat for local wildlife.



Calf to calving – what the latest research tells us about longevity

14th March 11.00am – 14.30pm
Chance Hall Farm, Chance Hall Lane, Congleton, Cheshire. CW12 4TL

Join AHDB for the final meeting for the Halton Family as an AHDB Strategic Farm. They will look at the changes that have happened on the farm over the last three years. World renowned Dr Alex Bach will talk about how we view performance of our youngstock management from birth to calving, relating the principles to the activities at Chance Hall Farm. He will explain how the latest science underpins the need to view costs as investments that will provide a return. In this world where costs are spiralling and carbon footprint is a consideration, Dr Bach will demonstrate why we should treat heifer rearing as a key non negotiable.

At the event you will learn about:

- The role of effective youngstock management on farm losses
- Birth and colostrum management – research and practice
- Weaning and target hitting
- Costs that are non negotiable to achieve a return

If you would like to attend the meeting please email stephen.west@ahdb.org.uk or speak to us at the practice.

Iodine Shortage

With lambing just around the corner for most of our sheep clients, its time to get prepared for the rush of lambing. We have been advised by the Sheep Veterinary Society that there is a risk of reduced availability/high cost of strong iodine for navel dressing this spring. This has arisen due to production ceasing at the main source in Chile. Lower iodine concentrations (often quoted as below 7%) are considered to be less effective in drying and disinfecting the navel. Navel dressing is important, however, it must be remembered that most cases of joint ill follow invasion of bacteria via the tonsils or intestinal tract from a heavily contaminated environment. The most important things you can do to avoid joint ill is providing a clean and dry lambing environment. It is also important to ensure an adequate supply of quality colostrum. This can be achieved through management of the body condition and nutrition of pregnant ewes (forage analysis and metabolic profiling in late pregnancy can help to achieve this), as well as ensuring good colostrum intake in newborn lambs.

It is not appropriate to use tetracycline antibiotic sprays for treating the navels of neonatal lambs – they do not dry them very effectively and it is an unnecessary use of antibiotics. Similarly, it is not appropriate to plan to use blanket antibiotic use to control neonatal infections.

We have currently got a small stock of strong iodine at the practice so get in touch if you are running low.



Planning for turnout

It might seem a bit early for a few of you to be thinking about turnout but planning ahead is particularly important when it comes to controlling lungworm in younger stock over the next grazing season. A great way of controlling lungworm infections is using Huskvac. The vaccine is an oral dose given twice, 4 weeks apart with the calves developing immunity 2 weeks after the last dose. With this in mind, to gain the best use of the vaccine the first dose needs to be administered 6 weeks prior to turnout. As the calves get older, with repeated exposure they will develop a good immune response naturally. Using Huskvac can dramatically reduce your reliance on wormers, and with the ever-increasing resistance problems then limiting use is a great way of reducing this risk. For more information whether this would be beneficial on your farm then please contact the office and ask to speak to one of our vets.

It's not just the youngstock we need to be thinking about prior to turnout, many of you will have a Leptospirosis vaccination protocol in place and prior to turnout is the most effective time of year to be giving the annual booster. Leptospirosis can be seen in the herd as a variety of issues.



In infected herds, Leptospirosis causes poor fertility, reduced milk yield and abortions. In naive herds that haven't come across Leptospirosis before it can cause fever, mastitis-like changes in the milk and sudden loss of all milk with flaccid udder. Recovery can take up to 10 days. In herds contracting the infection for the first time, up to 30% of the animals may abort. The abortion usually occurs 6-12 weeks after the initial infection. If the infection occurs in the late gestation, an infected calf may be born. Diagnosis of leptospiral abortion is difficult and based on maternal and fetal serology, as no obvious lesions are associated with the infection. The timing of the annual booster is mainly due to the way leptospirosis is transmitted, after the first phase of infection, the bacteria localise in the uterus and kidneys and so the bacteria can be found in the urine. As the cows go out in spring to graze there is an increased risk of transmission as they can come across infected urine on the grass or via natural water courses. It is important to note that Leptospirosis is a disease in humans too and so vaccination is certainly recommended in a known infected herd to limit the risk to the farm team.