



Oswestry Show

We will have a stand again this year at the Oswestry Show, on Saturday 3rd August. Come and see us for a drink and a chat, plus try your hand at this year's challenge!

We look forward to seeing you there, and hope it's a drier day than last year!

First Aid For Feet Training Course

We are planning to run the First Aid For Feet training course in September. This is a one day Lantra approved course aimed at those treating the emergency lame cow on farm. First Aid for Feet is part of a programme of hoof trimming and treatment courses from the British Cattle Veterinary Association (BCVA) and Cattle Hoof Care Standards Board (CHCSB). The courses are delivered by a highly qualified vet-trimmer instructor team meaning delegates benefit from a wide range of theoretical and practical expertise and the latest best practice advice on foot care.

There is 80% Farming Connect funding available for eligible farms, but it can take some time for funding to be approved. So if you are interested in attending the course let one of the team know before the end of July.

Welsh Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Eradication scheme

From the 1st of July 2024 all cattle herds in Wales are required to carry out antibody screening for BVD annually. Many of you will already be familiar with the screening test as part of the free testing a couple of years ago. This consists of testing five unvaccinated calves aged 9 to 18 months. There are also alternative ways of testing available if you do not have any animals in this age range. You will have until the 1st of July 2025 to complete this test – the aim is to clear the herd of BVD infection before herd movement restrictions are introduced in July 2025.

After July 2025, if any BVD positive animals are found then movement restrictions will be enforced until either the animal is retested in 21 days and is negative, or if the BVD positive animal is removed to slaughter and there is evidence to support show that BVD has been eradicated from the herd.

We highly recommend that you visit the following website for further details about the eradication scheme, and how various rules might impact your farm. If you are unsure about certain rules, please contact the office on **01978 311444** and speak to one of the team.

<https://www.gov.wales/welsh-bovine-viral-diarrhoea-eradication-scheme-guidance-html>



Ketosis

Ketosis is an important clinical and subclinical disease. There are several metabolic disorders and diseases that commonly occur in the calving and the early lactation period that are linked to ketosis (including milk fever, retained foetal membranes and displaced abomasum). There is a gradual loss of body condition over several days or even weeks. There is also a moderate to marked decline in milk yield (up to 5 litres per day) over five to six days before the onset of obvious clinical signs. It is most commonly seen in high-yielding dairy cows in early lactation. Secondary ketosis due to lack of appetite as a result of another disease can be seen at any stage of lactation. Beef cows may also suffer from ketosis during pregnancy, although this is less commonly seen.

It is important to recognise that many cases of ketosis are subclinical, with the cow's performance and health compromised, but without visible clinical signs. The clinical signs of ketosis include a refusal to eat grain and concentrate feeds and a sudden drop in milk output. There is a sweet smell of acetone in the breath and milk. Some cows may exhibit nervous signs, which include excessive salivation, abnormal chewing movements, licking of walls, gates or metal bars, incoordination with apparent blindness and a degree of aggression. The nervous signs often only last for a few hours.

Cows with ketosis are at greater risk of developing retained foetal membranes, displacement of the abomasum and are more likely to have prolonged calving to conception intervals and lower fertility. Due to an impaired immune system they are also more susceptible to certain types of mastitis.

Treatment relies on prompt diagnosis and mainly consists of energy supplementation either through propylene glycol orally as well as other supportive therapies. If you are concerned about a cow in your herd then please do not hesitate to contact the practice.

One of the guiding principles of prevention is to feed high levels of roughage in the diet to promote good rumen digestion. For dairy cattle fed at least 60% fresh or conserved roughage, this should be of high quality during early lactation to meet the energy and protein requirements. Transition cow management

(the late dry period up to the first 1-2 weeks of lactation) is critical in prevention of a range of metabolic diseases including ketosis, and as such should be highlighted in the herd health plan.

Prevention of ketosis is important, as cows with clinical and sub-clinical disease have a reduced milk yield and are predisposed to several other conditions due to immunosuppression. The key to prevention of ketosis is good transition cow management.

The following points should be considered:

- Cows should not be too fat at calving, as this depresses their feed intakes. A condition score of 2.5-3.0 on a 1-5 scale is optimal, and anything higher is considered too fat and at greater risk of ketosis
- Dietary changes during early lactation should be made gradually
- Efforts should be made to ease the transition from gestation to lactation by offering highly palatable forage at calving and providing suitable accommodation and assistance where necessary
- Forage quality should be checked several times every year. In cobalt deficient areas, measures should be taken to ensure adequate cobalt intake (to help support the rumen)
- Metabolic profiles using blood samples taken from groups of dry cows and cows in early lactation can help us monitor the herd health and detect subclinical ketosis. Dietary changes can then be made if necessary to reduce disease.



Changes To TB Testing Requirements

Recent changes in TB regulations in Wales are now in place. Previously, whilst under TB restrictions it was a requirement to test all bovine animals present on farm – including calves under 42 days of age. Since the 15th of June, this has now been amended and the testing of calves under 42 days of age will not be required (unless APHA deem there to be a high risk of infection in calves on your farm).

