



Daleside
Veterinary Group

FARM NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2022



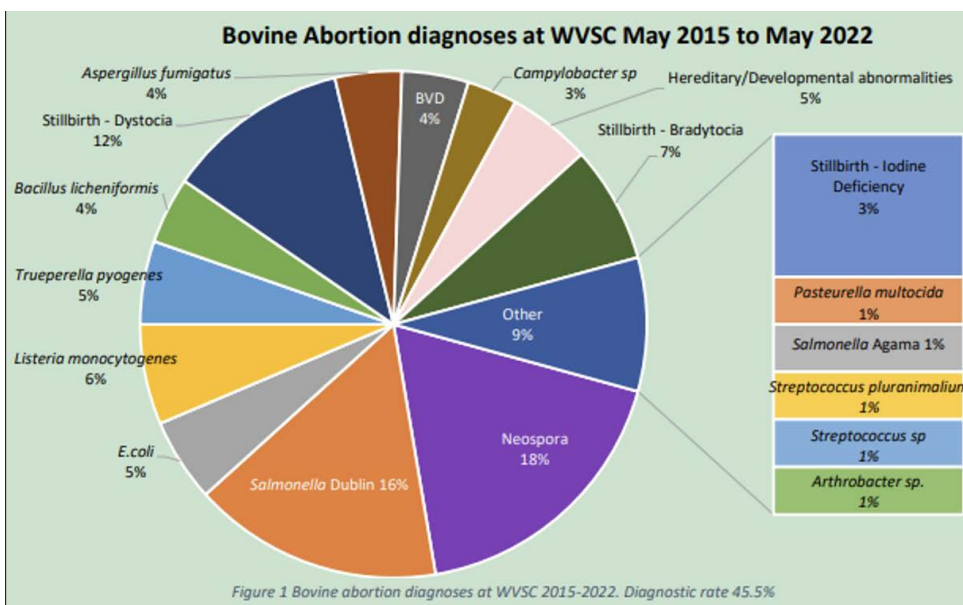
Oswestry show

On the 6th of August we will be at the Oswestry show. Remember to pop over and say hello!

Bovine Abortion

Over the last seven years, Wales Veterinary Science Centre have been documenting the abortion cases submitted for investigation.

These results are shown in the pie chart below, as you can see the majority of cases fit into three diagnoses: Neospora, Salmonella Dublin and Dystocia. We would suggest investigating when abortion rates reach 3% or if there is a cluster of abortions in a short space of time. To obtain the best chance of successful diagnosis we require Placenta and foetus (ideally the fresher the better).



Going Green

At the practice we are looking for ways to reduce our environmental impact and play our part to protect the environment.

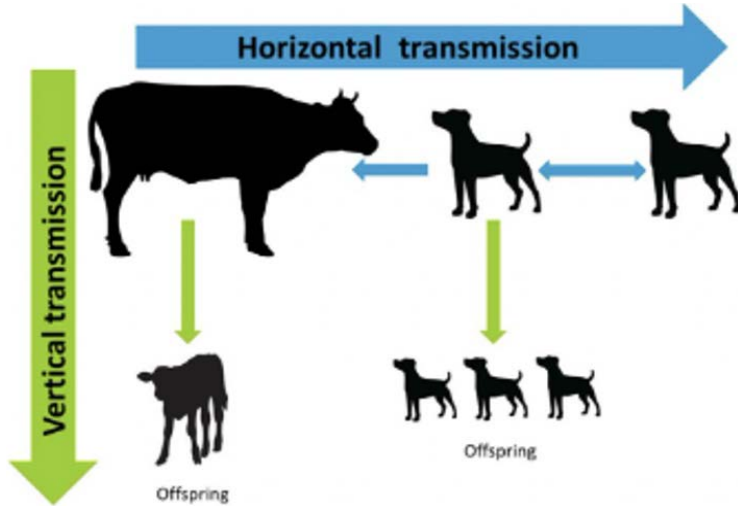
We have already reduced the amount of packaging waste by working with our wholesaler, and are now returning boxes and packaging to them to reuse.

One area we are currently focusing on is reducing our paper usage. To this end we can email your monthly statement and newsletter rather than posting paper versions. If you would like to opt-into this service then please let us know.



Neospora

Neosporosis is caused by the protozoan *Neospora caninum* and accounts for 18% of the diagnoses. *Neospora* abortions are usually sporadic, but abortion storms are possible. Cattle become infected when they ingest oocysts from the faeces of infected dogs.



Dogs become infected by ingesting *Neospora* tissue oocysts in placenta, aborted fetuses, or meat. Abortion or births of congenitally or persistently infected calves occurs when oocysts cross the placenta from the cow into the foetus. Calves from infected cows have a high probability of harbouring *Neospora*. Infection can be brought onto a farm when a persistently infected cow is purchased. There is no known wildlife reservoir in the UK. Diagnosis is by

PCR on frozen brain from an aborted fetus followed by histology on heart or brain. A positive antibody result on a cow blood sample doesn't confirm *Neospora* as the cause of abortion as circulating antibodies can be present when other causes of abortion are identified. Routine testing is needed to identify persistently infected cows in a herd. Replacement breeding heifers shouldn't be bred from these cows to enable the level of *Neospora* to be reduced in a herd. For more information on reducing the level of *Neospora* in your herd speak to one of the farm animal team.

Pre-breeding Ram checks

Your ram is half the solution to getting a high percentage of ewes in lamb quickly to give a tight lambing period and help get lambs away early.

He may also have cost a lot of money in the hope of either improving the genetics of the flock or producing better lambs for sale. However, too often his ability to mate ewes and get them in lamb is taken for granted, often until it is too late and ewes are returning.

There are very few completely sterile rams, however up to 30% of rams may be subfertile,

meaning they get fewer ewes in lamb and take longer to do so. Furthermore, a sub-fertile ram can badly affect your lambing percentage with knock on effects on lambs sold per ewe and in turn profits.

Pre-breeding checks need to be done way before thinking about turning the rams out with the ewes. Sperm production takes weeks and so any illness can knock a ram's fertility for weeks on end. Get those checks done early to give you enough time to rectify any problem, or to source a suitable replacement.

A ram check consists of a clinical exam, scrotal evaluation and taking a semen sample to assess the mobility and shape of the sperm. Don't leave it to chance, get those Rams tested!

