



May Bank holidays opening times

The office will be closed on the following Mondays due to bank holidays:

06/05/2024

27/05/2024

As always, our emergency phonenumber will be available during these dates, contact the usual office number on **01978 311444** in the event of an emergency call

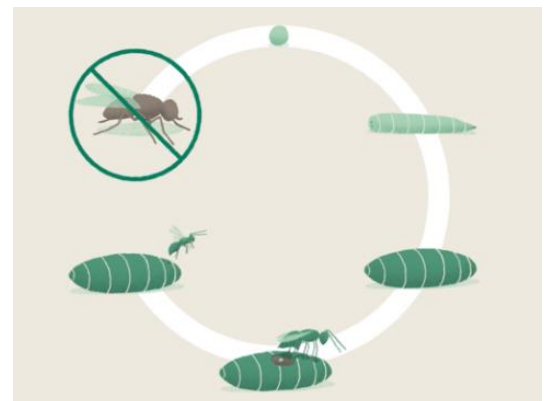
Congratulations Lara!

We have some exciting news! Congratulations to vet Lara and her husband Alistair on the birth of their baby girl, we are looking forward to meeting little Aoife.

Fighting nuisance flies this summer

Every summer we are faced with the challenge of dealing with flies, which cause serious nuisance to both livestock and farmers! As well as causing an increase in stress levels, they are well known vectors of diseases resulting in production losses due to decreased milk yields and reduced growth rates. Throughout the summer months, a single fly can lay up to 1000 eggs within 10 days. This rapid life cycle means that an infestation of nuisance flies can happen extremely quickly, therefore, it is important to gain control early in the season. Numbers within the fly population are represented by a pyramid where the youngest life stages are the most abundant, meaning that even when a small number of adult flies are visible, a much larger number of larvae and eggs are already developing on the farm. The use of Biowaps is specifically designed to target these early

stages resulting in less flies on the farm. The Biowasp naturally controls flies by targeting fly pupae in and around farm buildings with straw bedding or where dry manure is present. They target the housefly (*Musca domestica*), the lesser house fly (*Fannia canicularis*) and the stable fly (*Stomoxys calcitrans*). These 3 species represent about 95% of the nuisance flies present on the farm.



They work by drilling a small hole inside the pupae of a nuisance fly, where they lay their eggs. These eggs will develop into a mini wasp larvae, which will feed on the contents of the fly pupa. A new mini wasp will grow inside the fly pupa about 3 weeks after parasitisation. Once a fly pupa has been parasitised, only mini wasps can hatch from it, breaking the life cycle of the fly whilst increasing the population of the beneficial organisms. After assessing the farm yard to identify high risk areas for fly eggs we can set out a plan, and even come out to release the Biowasp larvae at the relevant times through the season. Please contact the office for more information on how Biowasp could be beneficial on your farm.

Pour-on and spot-on also play a vital role in controlling the fly population. Chemical fly control targets the adult population of flies – killing as many as possible before they can lay large numbers of eggs. It is important to have a protocol in place and treat livestock as early in the season as possible to gain the best results. After last year's warm and wet Autumn, Schmallenberg Virus has once again become an issue in the UK alongside the current threat of Bluetongue virus (contained the south-east of England). Both viruses are spread by midges. There is no licensed control product for midges in the UK, however, current spot-on/pour-on on the UK market have been shown to kill midges in lab conditions. As the threat of these two viruses become greater, fly control has never been so important!

Spring calving checklist

Spring calving pre-mating checks are essential to ensure the health and readiness of cattle before the breeding season begins. These checks are conducted to optimise breeding outcomes, enhance herd productivity, and minimise the risk of health issues during calving. Here's a checklist that may be useful for spring calving pre-mating checks:

- General Health Assessment:
 - Check body condition score (BCS) of each cow. Ensure they are at an appropriate weight for breeding.
 - Evaluate overall body condition, including coat condition and muscle tone.
 - Ensuring vaccination status of herd is up to date – it is important to consider the timing of vaccines such as BVD, Leptospirosis and IBR – cattle should be vaccinated at least 4 weeks prior to the start of mating.
- Reproductive Health Evaluation:
 - Heat detection should be carried out 3-4 weeks prior to the start of mating. Any cows not seen bulling should be presented for an ultrasound evaluation of the ovaries and treated accordingly to ensure she is cycling at the start of mating.
 - Pelvic scoring – an important consideration for heifers, especially for suckler herds. This involves measuring the pelvis of heifers and using this information to make informed breeding decisions.
 - Lets not forget about fertility testing the bulls too.
- Record Keeping:
 - Review breeding records to identify any trends or issues from previous years.
 - Keep detailed records of pre-mating checks, including any treatments administered and observations made.
- Environmental Factors:
 - Assess environmental conditions, such as pasture quality and availability of clean water, to support optimal herd health and reproduction.
 - Fly control – nuisance flies can have a detrimental effect on fertility, as mentioned above treatment early in the season is the most effective way of controlling fly populations.

For further information please contact us on **01978 311444** and speak to one of the team.

