



Sunflower competition

Sunshine has been scarce this summer, and this year's sunflowers are reflective of this. After a strong start by all team members, Guy's sunflower went from strength to strength and is victorious in this year's heated competition. Congratulations Guy! Good effort from everyone, although no one is quite sure what Nichol is attempting to grow, there's always next year Nichol!

Calf Thoracic Ultrasound Project

Throughout this year we have been conducting a project alongside Farming Connect. The project consisted of weighing and ultrasound scanning calf lungs to investigate prevalence and severity of Lung Lesions, and whether this correlated with clinical signs and growth rates. Over 250 calves took part in the project from 8 different farms, once again we are thankful to those farms which volunteered to take part.

Join us at 7.30pm on the 13th of November at the Wynnstay Arms - Ruabon,, where we will be sharing our findings and how we intend on using thoracic scanning as a service we can offer to our clients. We would kindly ask that if you are intending on coming then please contact the office to express your interest by Friday 8th November.

The cost of respiratory disease for the cattle industry is astronomical, and quite often costlier than what you think. In a recent UK study, 86% of farmers were found to be treating their calves for pneumonia with a quarter of deaths pre-weaning due to pneumonia, and I'm sure this is reflective of our clients too. For a lot of farms, seasonality is a major risk factor with autumn and winter quite often the worse months for calf health. So, what can you do this autumn to minimise the risk?



You'll all be familiar with the old saying; prevention is better than cure, and in this case, it couldn't be more true. Improving disease resistance within your calves through boosting their immune system is vital to build a healthy herd on strong foundations. The development of the immune system starts with colostrum management and continues developing with the help of vaccination programmes

This is then supported by ensuring the animal's nutrition, environment and management interactions (transport, weaning etc.) are all as good a standard as possible to minimise animal stress which can impact the immune system.

We hope to see as many as possible of you



Environmental mastitis control

Over the last few years, Autumn is when the UK somatic cell count (SCC) average is at its highest, and after the very wet end to September it is forecast to be the same again this year.

Traditionally, housing was the biggest risk factor for environmental mastitis, but with wetter summers and extended grazing techniques practised we are seeing a change in the pattern. As the name suggests, Environmental mastitis is caused by bacteria picked up from the environment and most new cases originate during lactation, rather than the dry period. Data analysis can be a great way to determine the mastitis patterns on your farm and ultimately help to tackle the problem.

Wet, dirty areas at pasture are high risk – these include high traffic areas such as gate ways, where cows lie during the night and where they tend to gather. What can we do to minimise the risk?

- Move water troughs away from gateways
- Check track and gateway placement to avoid wet or poached areas that could lead to cows' udders being splashed
- If a field has more than one gateway, rotate their use
- Consider fencing off areas that become heavily contaminated (this can also reduce the risk of liver fluke)

- High traffic areas can benefit from materials such as wood chip/bark to reduce poaching

Looking at the cows can give the first indication of environmental issues – very simply, if a cow looks clean then her environment is more than likely to be clean. As discussed earlier, the risk of infection from the environment is likely to be lower if the cow and environment are clean.

Cleanliness scores can be a great way of putting an objective measure on this, cows are scored 0, 1 or 2 and is based on the cleanliness of the udder, flank and hindlegs. A high level of dirtiness on the legs and flank will also be associated with increased risk of lameness. Scoring the entire herd is best practice, however, AHDB have released guidance on the minimum number of cows you should score to get an accurate picture of your herd. By using cleanliness scores, it allows you to accurately evaluate whether a change in management has had the desired effect. You might see a correlation between your bulk milk Bactoscan readings and cleanliness scores.

Regular cleanliness scoring is something we could help with, speak to one of the team to discuss the best options for your farm.

Herd size	Minimum sample size
Up to 50	30 (or all cows if < 30 in herd)
50–100	50
101–200	65
201+	73

