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Gillingham and Shaftesbury Show: Wednesday 15th August

We will again be attending the Gillingham & Shaftesbury show and have lots of exciting things planned for this year's stand including prizes to be won! We would also like to invite our clients and their families to join us for lunch on the day between 12am and 2pm as a show of our appreciation for all your support. We look forward to seeing you all there!



Working with Local Farm Businesses

Those of you who have come into the farm reception recently may have noticed our new display 'Supporting our Local Farmers' which Chloe and Lucy in the office have been putting together.

Next time you pop in please take a look at some of the fantastic local businesses that are run by our farmers.

If your business is missing please bring us in a flyer and we'll add it to the board!



Neospora Control

Neospora is the most common cause of abortion in cattle and is present on nearly every farm, classically causing abortion in late pregnancy. Infected cattle are five times more likely to abort than uninfected cattle. Cattle are infected with neospora in one of two ways:

1. **Ingestion of infected dog faeces.** This is rare if cattle are extensively grazed, however outbreaks can occur if dog faeces contaminate a mixed ration or a water trough. Dogs become infected with neospora through eating placentas / aborted material and from eating infected wildlife. They initially pass high levels of neospora in their faeces following infection, but after 2-3 weeks they become immune and usually stop passing neospora. However it is wise to assume any dog faeces to be a potential neospora risk.
2. **Infection across the uterus from cow to calf.** Once infected, a cow remains infected with neospora for the rest of her life. During each pregnancy the infection re-activates – it will either lead to an abortion or it will infect the unborn calf leading to a permanent infection in the calf too. This is how neospora persists in a herd, by passing from generation to generation. Neospora does not spread from cow to cow.

There is currently no practical treatment or vaccine available, so the following control measures are designed to minimise the level of neospora in a herd, and reduce the number of annual abortions.

Control dog faeces: There is no need to get rid of your dogs, and we cannot prevent people walking dogs on footpaths, however there are some measures that may help:

- Always pick up and properly dispose of dog faeces.
- If you have footpaths on your farm, consider putting up poo bins and signs asking people to pick up after their dogs.
- Secure all feed stores, silage clamps and drinking water points from possible contamination.



Prevent dogs becoming infected with neospora: keep them out of calving areas.

- Properly dispose of any placentas, stillborn calves / aborted fetuses etc so they cannot be scavenged by dogs.
- Where possible discourage your dogs from hunting and scavenging wildlife and avoid feeding raw meat diets.



Identify Neospora positive cows and do not retain their offspring for breeding:

- As a bare minimum, any cow that aborts should be tested for neospora (and other diseases). Note that all abortions should be reported to APHA for Brucellosis surveillance purposes.
- Herd screening can be done by testing blood or individual milk samples. Late gestation is the best time to test as the parasite is most active so there is a rise in antibody. Milk samples can be collected at monthly milk recordings prior to drying off and tested by NML.
- Neospora positive cows do not need to be culled as they do not pose a direct risk to herd mates, however their offspring are likely to be infected and should not be retained for breeding. **It is recommended to breed known positive dairy cows to beef sires.**

Heat Stress

The current weather is likely to be putting dairy cattle outside of their 'thermal comfort zone' and into moderate to severe heat stress (see chart below). Cows need to maintain a constant body temperature. A dairy cow in milk will perform best when air temperatures are between 5 –25°C. High humidity will also contribute to heat stress, through reducing the cows' ability to lose heat. The signs of heat stress include lethargy, panting, increased breathing rate and drooling.

Above 25°C there can be some detrimental effects on production:

- feed intakes decreased by up to 30% dry matter intake
- milk yields reduced by as much as 20%
- reduced fertility with increased embryonic loss
- increased risk of mastitis due to more time lying down and reduced resistance to infection
- excess drooling saliva can predispose to rumen acidosis.

Temperature Humidity Index (THI)									
Relative Humidity %									
C	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
22	66	66	67	68	69	69	70	71	72
24	68	69	70	70	71	72	73	74	75
26	70	71	72	73	74	75	77	78	79
28	72	73	74	76	77	78	80	81	82
30	74	75	77	78	80	81	83	84	86
32	76	77	79	81	83	84	86	88	90
34	78	80	82	84	85	87	89	91	93
36	80	82	84	86	88	90	93	95	97
38	82	84	86	89	91	93	96	98	100
40	84	86	89	91	94	96	99	101	104

No heat stress (Green)

Moderate heat stress (Yellow)

Severe heat stress (Orange)

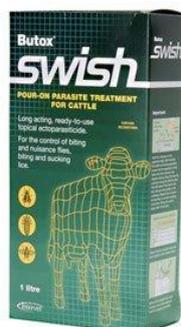
Dead cows (Red)

The effects of heat stress on your cows can be minimised by the following actions:

- ensure all **water troughs** are clean and functioning – water consumption will be high.
- ensure buildings have adequate **ventilation**, and provide plenty of **shade** close to water.
- consider feeding more at night when temperatures are lower.
- consider the use of **fans** in the collecting yard. (A study in the USA suggested that when ambient temperatures reached 27°C, the addition of fans in the collecting yard reduced the cow body temperatures by 1.7°C. This increased milk yields by 0.79kg/day over cows with no fans). Speak to us if you are considering fans – we can recommend engineers who have achieved good results on some of our farms at competitive prices.

Fly Control

The flies are out in force and irritating cattle, leading to reduced grazing efficiency, depressed weight gains and even a decline in milk production. (It is estimated that there is a 10-20% decline in milk production when dairy cows are heavily infested with biting flies.) Also, important diseases are transmitted by flies: summer mastitis, New Forest eye and blowfly strike.



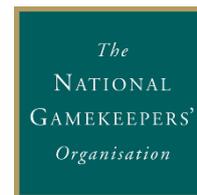
Order your fly control treatment from us and be sure to treat stock regularly. A variety of pour-on products are available including Flypor, Butox Swish and Zoetis Spot-On. Doses and directions for use vary with each product so remember to read the label carefully. Electron ear tags are also useful for keeping flies away from the face, helpful for reducing New Forest Eye.

Prescribing Antibiotics in Game Feed

We would like to make our gamebird rearing clients aware of the stricter procedures that we must now follow relating to in-feed antibiotic use. As I'm sure you are aware, there is worldwide concern about resistance to antibiotics and we must show that we are doing what we can to reduce antibiotic use as much as possible, otherwise legal restrictions will almost certainly be imposed. This means that we must keep to the following best practice guidelines, as advised by the industry:

- Antibiotics will only be prescribed in response to a specific need, never as a matter of habit.
- Bird keepers must discuss the need for antibiotics with the vet first, before ordering from a feed company.
- The vet must see the flock very recently or immediately before prescribing in order to make a diagnosis by clinical assessment.
- The focus must be on good bird husbandry and management, which will reduce the need for antibiotic treatment – many shoots successfully rear birds without using any antibiotics.

We appreciate that this is a significant change to how things may have been conducted in the past, but we must follow these best practice guidelines now if we want these precious medicines to be available to use in the future. Thank you for your co-operation.



Future date for your diary...

Alpaca Health & Husbandry Seminar

7pm Thursday 4th October - £30 per person (includes hot dinner buffet)

Venue = Longthorns Farm, Wareham, BH20 6HH - next to Monkey World

We are delighted to have arranged for Claire Whitehead to give an informal evening seminar covering the key areas of Alpaca health and husbandry. Claire is the UK's only vet recognised as an RCVS Specialist in Camelid Health & Production, she has also been president of the British Veterinary Camelid Society since 2011. It therefore promises to be a very informative evening which should not be missed by anybody with an interest in alpacas.

Please RSVP to office@damoryvets.co.uk or call the surgery on 01258 452626 to book your place.