

February 2010



DAMORY VETERINARY CLINIC

Dairy Newsletter

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Future Meetings

Eating Habits of cows

We are holding 2 meetings on this subject on 10th Feb in the Greyhound, Winterborne Kingston, and 24th Feb in the Langton Arms, Tarrant Monkton, both at 12.30-2.00 with lunch provided.

Maximising dry matter intake is the key to optimising production, fertility and health. All too often we get carried away with ration details, speciality products etc, when the main problem is that the cows are not eating enough. We will illustrate what to look for and how things can be improved on a practical level. Please contact us ASAP with numbers attending if you are interested.

Update on Johne's and BVD

Meeting on 3rd March at 7 for 7.30 at the Brewery Visitor Centre, Blandford.

Since we last covered these two diseases some new developments have taken place and we would like to share our experiences in controlling them and also give you an idea what to do next and whether accreditation could be for you. Please contact us if you would like to attend.

Dairy Crest and Johne's disease

Dairy Crest Direct members are being offered free Johne's testing via NMR or CIS as well as educational meetings. We strongly support this initiative and recommend that you take this offer if you haven't carried out regular testing before – it gives a good idea of disease level on your farm. Please talk to us if you have any queries.

Liver fluke – test now

Now is the best time for testing for liver fluke. Bulk milk samples can be tested free of charge, sponsored by Norbrook. Dung samples (individual or pooled) can also be tested, especially in suspicious animals. If positive samples are found, treatments can be given (subject to withdrawal periods) and pasture contamination reduced for next year..

Embryo implantation

Just to remind you we are re-introducing the embryo implantation service for repeat breeders. Please speak to Ian or Andrew for more details

Questionnaire

Please look at the enclosed questionnaire which we would like you to return to us. This should enable us to update our records and improve the services we can offer.

Bluetongue Strategy 2010

We are advising all our clients to continue vaccinating all cattle/sheep/goats and camelids for Bluetongue 8 during 2010, although there were no cases of Bluetongue recorded in the UK during 2009, and a DEFRA screen of UK animals during the Autumn revealed no incidence of Bluetongue exposure to any serotype.

Given this information, many are questioning the need to vaccinate, so why are we advising that vaccination should continue.

One of the reasons we did not see Bluetongue 8 last year was due to the fact that the vaccination programme during 2008 and 2009 was such a success (especially in our region), so the stock all had a good immunity. This will have meant that if any infected midges/stock did find their way over the channel the infection could not become established here.

France had 75 cases of Bluetongue 8 reported during 2009, and some of these were on the North coast of France. This indicates active infection is still present in France, hence we are still at risk from:-

Migrating midges. If weather conditions are right this method of transmission still poses a threat to the UK, especially in our area, this is how the UK first got Bluetongue in 2008.

Imported stock. 11000 Bluetongue susceptible animals were imported into the UK from Europe last year. Although these are post-import tested they still pose a risk. Whilst we remain a BTV-8 protection zone movement from other BTV-8 zones is permitted.

The bulk of your stock are already protected by previous vaccination, and will only need a single booster to maintain immunity for another year. Remember previously vaccinated cattle, and all sheep irrespective of previous vaccination history, just need a single dose. Cattle that have not been previously vaccinated will require 2 doses three weeks apart.

Bovilis BTV 8 should be available in all sizes from the end of February. It will be available in 20 and 50 dose bottles as before. We would advise vaccination of most stock during March/April. For those who do not wish to wait, there may be limited supplies of vaccine from other manufacturers, but these are proving intermittent and unreliable. Price should be similar to last year. The scenario we saw last year where DEFRA cut their vaccine price to get rid of short dated vaccine will not happen this year.

Currently in the UK we can still only vaccinate against Bluetongue 8, (although Bluetongue 1 is present in France). To the best of our knowledge this situation is unlikely to change. (There is a BTV-1 vaccine approved for sheep should the need arise, but currently there is no combined vaccine for BTV 1 and 8 authorised for UK use, and it remains illegal to use a BTV-1 vaccine in the UK).

If you have any questions on Bluetongue, please ring the surgery and speak to one of the Vets.