August 2009

So much for the barbeque summer which we were promised, instead we are back to the sou'westa season of the last 2 years. With this wet and changeable weather we are starting to see diseases which are associated with stress and humidity.

Staggers. Place magnesium buckets out on the fields.

Pneumonia in the calves. Make sure all the calves are vaccinated. They are receiving enough milk and feed. Try to limit the temperature changes. Ensure good ventilation.

Coughing cows. Most likely due to lungworm. Make sure your cattle have been wormed.

Fluke. We have not seen any of this yet but it will not be long.

Blowfly strike Make sure your cattle and sheep have been treated with a suitable prevention.

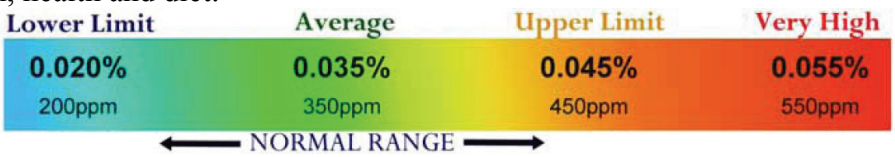
Rising SCC. Make sure the udders are clean prior to milking. Use a good post milking teat dip that seals the orifice. Try to encourage the cattle to stand for 30 minutes after milking before lying down. Clean the clusters with per acetic acid.

Parvo outbreak: There have been a couple of parvo outbreaks in the area. This is a life threatening disease to all ages of dogs. They are very sick with vomiting and bloody diarrhoea. There is a very effective vaccine against parvo so if your dog is not protected then bring them to us asap. Remember that foxes can also spread the disease.

Blue tongue vaccine: After the debacle of the vaccine and price change in the middle of the season, it has now reverted to its original price. It will hopefully stay there for the rest of the year but we shall keep you informed.

Milk Ureas

Milk urea can indicate to us how well the ration is meeting the cows requirements. The concentrations of milk urea can vary depending on breed, lactation number, condition score, water intake, individual cows, season, health and diet.



ACTIONS TO ADJUST MILK UREA LEVELS

Symptoms	Effect on Fertility	Problems and Prevention Methods
Low milk urea and low milk yields	Cows bulling but not holding	Feed additional rumen degradable protein using products such as rapeseed meal or even the limited addition of some feed grade urea to the diet. Both are good sources of ERDP.
Milk urea is high and cows lose condition in early lactation	Bulling activity and fertility are reduced	Check the overall crude protein content of the ration. If crude protein levels are adequate, then correct the energy deficit by feeding additional energy sources such as cereals or sugar beet pulp. Buffer feeding will increase total dry matter and energy intake in wet weather
Milk urea is high and cows are not losing condition	Reduced conception rate	Wasteful in terms of protein overfeeding and the extra energy to process the excess. Reduce the amount of degradable protein and/or crude protein and/or increase the fermentable energy being fed. Feed products low in protein and high in FME, include maize silage, cereals and molasses.
High blood urea in spring and cows do not lose condition	Unlikely to have any adverse effects on fertility	At turnout, urea levels can reach 0.055% (550mg/l) due to excess protein from the grass diet. Buffer feeding can reduce the effect and bridge the 'energy gap' through balanced rumen available starches and sugars. Added benefits may be seen by using Omega 3 oils.
Low blood urea during Spring	Possible effect on fertility	Has been seen this season. Monitor urea levels carefully if you have 3 consecutive samples below 0.02%. Feed either feed grade urea or change your protein supply e.g. rape meal. Keep checks on fertility by pregnancy testing cows at an earlier stage.

Dairy cell check:

Top S.C.C	83	Average calving index	415
Top 1/3 rd average	112	Ave milk / cow /yr	7.6
Bottom 1/3rd average	360	UK ave milk/cow/yr	6.9