

November 2014:

What are we seeing at the moment?

Beef: With this mild weather many of you have still got your cattle out and so far things are quiet.

- Make sure that you have your calves vaccinated prior to housing as the stress can trigger pneumonia.
- Clipping the backs of the youngsters is cheap but helps keep the animals dry.

There is still a lot of grass but with not that much goodness, please make sure that the adults have a good and constant source of magnesium.

On housing the cattle take 10 poos samples and bring them to us. We can then pool them to see if there is any evidence of fluke!! If we do it on the first part of the TB test we can get results back for day 2 and treat accordingly. With an increasing number of cases of triclabendazole resistance we do need to reduce our reliance on it and we are finding low counts this year.

Sheep: Again the mild weather (and my last newsletter) has reduced the amount of sudden deaths we are seeing compared to the end of last month!! Many of you have put your ewes to the tup so minimal disturbing of them at this time is important. Post tugging make sure that they are holding their condition at around 2.5 – 3.5 depending on the breed. There is still an ongoing battle with feet, with it flaring up at housing. We have a few tried and tested methods to reduce this so please give us a shout. An individual case of lameness can cost you up to £8.00 a sheep.

- With these current bad prices your unseen costs need to be minimized.

Dairy: Many of you have housed the cattle due to falling milk yields and poor fertility. For those who have still got the cattle out, please bring in your high yielders / fresh calved cows, as you will start to see an increase in LDA's, whites and mastitis as well as a poor yield and lowered fertility.

In listening to an American vet talking about the key to the transition cow I was hit by 6 very important messages:

1. **Feed space** is exceptionally important: 76 cm per Holstein in the transition and post calving pens.
 - It doesn't matter about the width of the individual headlock, but the overall length needs to be 76cm / cow.
2. Reduce the **number of changes to a cow group**!! Every time a cow is added to a group it takes at least 2 days for the group to settle down and re socialize, during this time the cow eats less, lies down less and ruminates less.
 - It is putting constant stress on all animals and so it knocks your bank balances due to less milk!
3. **Size of cubicles:** Pre-calving the width for a Holstein and Jersey should be 127 and 115 cm respectively.
 - The length should be a minimum of 178 and 160 cm. Any smaller and the cows are uncomfortable.
4. **Size of straw yard.** Each cow should have 11m² per animal or else it is over stocked.
5. **The surface of the cubicle;** A loose, deeply bedded surface has proved to be the optimum ie sand.
6. **Cows should not be taken away from feed for more than 2 hours.**
 - They should not be kept waiting for AI, pd etc for too long.

Fluke is very much on everyone's mind. I have enclosed a chart to show which products treat fluke and at what stage.

- Practically if you use at housing for best effect you need to wait depending on the stage that the product kills. IE endofluke kills down to 2 week old flukes so wait 2 weeks after housing before treating.

Product	Meat withd	Milk withd
Combinex	56 days	N/A
Fasinex 240	52 days	48days
Endofluke	56 days	N/A
Tribex	56 days	N/A
Closamectin p/o	49 days	N/A
Trodax	60 days	N/A
Ivomec super	66 days	N/A
Zanil	28 days	72 hours
Endospec 10%	14 days	60 hours

How do you know if you have fluke?

Antibodies: We can test in milk or blood.

- These last for about 2 months post infection.

Abattoirs: They give you feed back about carcass condemnation. Use it!

Poo: Bring us some and we will look down the microscope to see if any eggs.

PM. If you have a sheep die suddenly we can cut it up.

How can I reduce fluke problems?

1. **Treat** accordingly using the right product.
2. Don't under dose.
3. **Investigate** to see if you have a problem.
4. Try and fence off very wet areas (easy to say!)
5. Try to put in water troughs as opposed to using streams!!
6. **Talk** to the vets!!!!

Drug	Age of fluke in weeks													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Endospec 2 & 10% Zanil / Douvestome Ivomec super	50-70%									80-99%				
Trodax Closamectin	50-90%						91-99%							
Fasinex / endofluke	90-99%		99-100%											