

## September 2011.

At the time of writing this, as you drive through the countryside you may be excused for thinking we are actually living on the plains of Africa instead of the lush countryside of the UK. We are all desperately hoping for rain (but not on the 3<sup>rd</sup> sept). These **dry conditions are starting to cause problems for our cattle**. The kennels have never been so busy with **sudden deaths** in good, well growing calves. Over the last 2 days I have done post mortems on these animals and in both situations have **diagnosed strike as being the cause of death**. The cattle are grazing closer to the soil and must be taking in more clostridial spores. This is very easy to prevent by using the strike vaccine, a 2 dose primary course costs less than **£1.50 and will cover your youngstock** over the risk period.

- **Strike is the biggest killer in young stock but the most under-utilized cattle vaccine!!!**

Years seem to have a good way of evening themselves out. When it does start to rain we could well get a huge flush of grass and very stormy conditions. These are **ideal conditions for staggers**, so be prepared.

- There are 3 separate ways to avoid your cattle from dying from this.

1. **Magnesium buckets**, (my only worry is that the badgers also like these!).
2. **Magnesium boluses**. (as with all boluses, be careful how you administer these.)
3. **100g / animal of magnesium chloride flakes** in the water.

Please contact us or Mid Wales Minerals to discuss this further.

- **If you suspect a cow has staggers then call us straight away. As you are waiting for us to arrive inject a bottle of calcium 40% under the skin. This may well save her life!**

We had an excellent trip **down to South Wales**. The 1800 dairy farm was a very good advert for factory farming as all the cattle were happy cows. The **calving index was at around 390** and he only had 6 cattle out of the tank for mastitis.

- **What was the secret to his success??**

1. **Culling**. He had a **30% cull rate**, any cattle that kept getting mastitis or who weren't in calf after 150 days were sent down the road.
  2. He had **vet visits** to any cattle **not seen bulling by 45 days** post calving.
  3. **Routine**. The **cattle's routine didn't vary from day to day**. They had the same food and lived in the same environment for 365 days a year. **The only time he had problems was when he let a group of dry cows go out to graze!!**
  4. **Water**. The cattle were always **within 70 yards of a water tank**.
  5. **Lieing time**. The cattle were never away from their beds for longer than 1 hour.
  6. **Vaccination**. All cattle were **fully vaccinated** with BVD, rotavec and IBR. The IBR was done every 5 months.
- Gelli Aur had 2 herds a spring and Autumn grazing herd. This was a low input low output system, with cattle never crossing from one herd to another. Again the key here was; a) **High culling rate**, b) **type of cow**, c) **vaccination status**, d) **routine checking of bulls**, e) having a lot of **cattle at the same stage of lactation** (making management easy).

### **Buying in sheep:**

Many of you will be buying sheep in over the next couple of months. With such good sheep prices but high feed costs we need to **minimize losses** both through death and poor doers. We need to keep to disease out of your farms as **disease costs you money**. There are a few basic steps that you should be carrying out:

1. **Wormer resistance** – All incoming stock should be drenched with zolvix and injected (see scab). They should then be yarded for 24 hours.
2. **Scab** – They should be injected with **cydectin LA**, this lasts for 60 days against scab.
3. **Foot rot** – Foot dip through **golden hoof or formalin** once a week for 4 weeks.
4. **CODD** – Isolate from rest of flock for a minimum of 30 days and monitor.
5. **Enzootic / toxoplasma abortion** – Vaccinate females.
6. **Sudden death** – start the 7 in 1 vaccination course.

### **Mid Wales Minerals.**

We currently have garlic buckets in stock which are very good at reducing the ring worm incidence in your calves. Try them and see.

### **Dairy cell check:**

Ave S.C.C	212	Average milk yield	7.7
Top 1/3 rd average	150	Ave calving interval	408
Bottom 1/3 <sup>rd</sup> average	275	Ave protein	3.4%