

FUNDING FOR BEEF FARMER TRAINING

We have received funding from AHDB for Beef Suckler Farmers to be trained in artificial insemination. The training would consist of a 4 day course in AI followed by a 1 day refresher course up to a year later.

AHDB will provide 50% of the cost of training to any suckler farmer with 30 or more cows. The initial training must be completed by March 2020.

Anyone interested should contact the practice.



BVD Stamp It Out

The scheme, which was launched last year has been very successful with 70 farms enrolled and at various stages of BVD testing.

We still have funding for a further 50 farms and are aiming to hold the next starter meeting about this in October. Every farm will receive a vet visit to discuss BVD on your farm with a testing budget to establish if BVD is likely to be circulating (known as a check test). If found, money may be available for further testing to remove PI animals.

Please register your interest in this at the practice.



AGRICULTURAL SHOWS

A big 'Thank You' to everyone who braved the weather and came to see us at Dalston and Hesketh shows.

If anyone wants to follow up with our Calf Club and Vaccination team, please contact the practice.



LOCAL and INDEPENDENT 1919 - 2019

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BELLE VUE VETS

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SEPTEMBER 1919-2019



TRANSITION COW MEETING

BELLE VUE VETS invites all of our farmers to an on farm meeting about

TRANSITION COW MANAGEMENT

Kindly provided by ELANCO on **Wednesday 2nd October 2019 at 10:00am**

The speaker will be Nigel Hardie, an independent nutritionist with the Dairy Group.

Places are limited so it will be on a first come, first served basis. Please let us know if you are interested in attending the meeting. Lunch will be provided.



FARM DISCOUNT SCHEME

Bills that are paid before the end of the month attract excellent discounts on a range of drugs and vaccines

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VAGAL INDIGESTION

Most commonly seen in dairy cattle, occasionally in beef cattle and sheep, vagal indigestion is a condition which presents most frequently as a form of bloat. Distension of the abdomen occurs due to failure of motion in the reticulorumen and/or abomasum.

What might you see?

- Decreased milk yield
- Abnormal amount and consistency of faeces
- Abdominal distension/recurrent bloat- the shape is often described as papple (mix of apple on the left and pear on the right) simply due to the way in which fluid accumulates.
- Progressive weight loss
- Dehydration due to fluid sequestration

It is often the case that a lot of individuals suffering from vagal indigestion never make a full recovery and you are left with a diagnosis which does not answer why your animal is struggling to mechanically shift food/fluid through the digestive tract.

So what is the vagus nerve?

The vagus nerve is in fact the longest nerve in the body- various branches of which are located at key points in the digestive tract i.e. oesophagus, stomach and intestines. Key control points in the gut known as sphincters act as valves to allow the passage of feed material from one part of the gut to the next.

The vagus nerve innervates many of these sphincters and when damaged they no longer operate to allow clearance of food/water.

What causes the damage?

This is the interesting part and crucially the reason why you rarely get a cut and dried answer as to the cause. Studies have shown one or a combination of many of the following to be causative;

- Adhesions, abscesses, inflammation or trauma within the chest
- Hardware disease- commonly referred to as a 'wire'
- Peritonitis
- Constriction of blood flow due to twists and torsions of the gut
- Impaction
- Neurological deficits
- Displacements of gut i.e. due to the presence of a calf

Conclusions like these are reached most commonly in laboratory settings whereby testing can be done on blood samples, rumen fluid and explorative surgeries. It is unlikely we will ever go that far with a production animal however this article just gives a little background info the next time you see a bloated cow that is a bit of an odd shape.



MAXIMISING FERTILITY IN EWES - Pre Topping

1. **Body condition score (BCS)** - this is the most crucial factor to consider pre-topping. The target figure for lowland ewes is 3.0-3.5. Thin/ under-conditioned ewes are far more likely to impact pregnancy rates when scanning, however studies have also shown over-conditioned ewes will impact on lamb numbers. Separating groups of animals of the same BCS to target feeding is a good idea.
2. **Nutrition** - this must be viewed both in terms of forage composition/ quality and in terms of the trace elements available to sheep on your farm. Flushing ewes works best with those currently situated at a low BCS with the greatest effects seen early and late in the breeding season. Should trace elements be of concern further diagnostics can be discussed with your vet.
3. **Vaccination** - this must be done 4 weeks pre-topping - both with Toxovax and Cevac Chlamydia to enable the best cover for your breeding ewes and the next crop of lambs.
4. **Lameness**- a subject which must be broached at all times of the year to optimise flock health. The key is to be strict about decisions to keep repeat offenders. Lameness has a direct link to decreased fertility. Investigate and treat cases but cull if the animal does not respond to treatment. Alongside feet, check teeth and udder to assess the viability of the ewe.
5. **Parasites** - the parasite burden on the farm can be assessed by faecal sampling. The only animals which may require worming around topping are the young and the thinner of the flock, and of course the tups (whose resistance to worms is less than that of the ewe). Faecal worm egg counts (FECS) can be done at the practice.
6. **Synchronisation** - each individual will have their own methods when it comes to topping time but should further information be required regarding use of teaser tups, progestogen sponges etc. speak to your vet.

