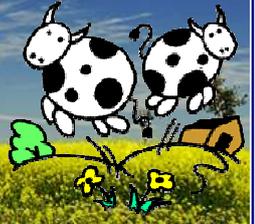


# NEWSLETTER MAY 2012



Dear Client,

## Farming & Forestry Improvement Scheme (FFIS)

Many of you have already taken advantage of the small scale grants available from DEFRA under the FFIS Scheme (£5000 - £25,000) and its predecessor (the Livestock North West Program). These grants of up to 40% can help to pay for things such as cluster flushing and heat detection systems, automatic shedding gates and mobile handling systems.



A herd health plan written by one of our vets and an agricultural advisor from the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) is required. Farms which have already claimed grants under the Livestock NW Program can claim again under the new FFIS Scheme – a health plan update is required.

The next window for grant applications opens in May for around 4 - 6 weeks.

If you need a new health plan or a health plan update please speak to Alistair or David as soon as possible.

## **NEW-BORN CALVES HAVE NO NATURAL IMMUNITY**

### **(1) MAXIMISE COLOSTRUM INTAKE**

An adequate intake of colostrum is essential to provide the calf with good immunity for the first weeks of life.

The ability of the calf gut to absorb the antibodies in colostrum decreases steadily and after 24 hours few antibodies can be absorbed. **Feed 6 pints (3litres) of good quality colostrum within the first 6 hours of life.** Colostrum quality varies between cows. High yielding cows often have poorer colostrum. If in doubt use a colostrometer to measure its quality.

Due to the risk of spreading Johnes disease NEVER pool colostrum from several cows. Feed only the dams milk to her own calf (unless she is a known Johnes positive cow).

Colostrum can be frozen and thawed when required. Always choose an older cow (known Johnes negative).

The antibodies within the colostrum against rotavirus, coronavirus and some strains of E. coli can be boosted by using the Rotavec Corona vaccine in your dry/calving cows 4 to 12 weeks before calving. To get the benefit from this vaccine the calf must be fed an adequate amount of colostrum (6 pints) within 6 hours of birth.

### **(2) MINIMISE EXPOSURE TO DISEASE**

Reducing exposure of the calf to the many disease pathogens in the environment is essential.

**The calving pens as well as the calf housing must be kept as clean as possible.** Keep bedding clean and dry and keep the stocking rate as low as possible. Mucking out the calving pens as often as possible will significantly reduce the pathogen load calves are exposed at birth.

All equipment for feeding calves (buckets, teats, etc) should also be kept clean.



## DIY AI Training Course

We will be running a cattle DIY AI training course the week beginning Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June.

The course covers all aspects of AI including heat detection, semen handling and the insemination technique.

Funding towards the cost of the course is available for anyone aged between 16 and 26 years.

Please speak to Alistair for further details.

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