

CALF HEALTH CLUB

A big thank you to everyone that attended our Calf Health meeting at the Stocksman on Tuesday 9th October.

The pie and peas went down a treat and Iain's talk was very well received.

If you want more information about Calf Club or any other Calf health matters, please contact Iain, Lynda or Leigh at the practice. 016973 42174



CAMPYLOBACTER IN CATTLE

Campylobacter is a bacteria that lives in the penis of bulls and is passed to cows at service. This then results in a large number of cows returning to service. Cows will often hold eventually but may abort and retain cleansing at 4-7 months of pregnancy. The cows don't look sick whilst infected with the bacteria.

Herds often experience the problem after the introduction of a new infected bull (or females). First a large number of returns, then abortions. Untreated bulls are usually permanently infected. Cows and heifers develop immunity over 3 to 6 months. In an open herd, problems will then occur in replacements, and new bulls will become infected.

A diagnosis of campylobacter can be made by your vet from the products of abortion from cows or by a sheath wash in bulls. Sheath washes can also be done as part of the 'bull test' service that we offer to check for the disease in bought in bulls.

If you have experienced a higher than expected number of cows return to service or you would like to discuss the disease further please call us.

LOCAL and INDEPENDENT since 1919

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BELLE VUE VETS NOVEMBER 2018



FREE MASTITIS CULTURE IN NOVEMBER

We have recently started doing routine milk cultures for mastitis pathogens in the lab at Belle Vue Vets. This means a quicker turn around on mastitis samples without the usual wait for the post. We could have results as early as 18 hours after submission for E. Coli and 24 hours for Staphs and Streps.

In the month of November we are running complimentary mastitis culture for up to 5 samples per farm. We would recommend you take up this offer and get an idea of what bugs are causing problems on your farm!!!

Samples must be from untreated cases of mastitis or repeatedly high SCC cows. Collect a clean sample into a milk tube with farm name, cow number, date of collection and quarter affected noted clearly on the bottle.

If you need advice on how to collect a milk sample then please ask one of the vets.



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TEASER BULLS

Each year we perform a number of vasectomies on rams to create teaser tups. These teasers are used to advance the breeding season and to create a tighter lambing pattern. Ever thought of creating a teaser bull?



Teaser bulls will also help tighten your calving pattern and can be used as a good aid in heat detection if you are looking to use AI to expand your genetics within the herd.

The procedure is carried out in young bulls 7-9 months of age. It is performed standing under light sedation and local anaesthesia. These bulls will then be fit to be used with heifers from 15 months of age and with cows from 24 months.

Obviously these animals will still look and act like a bull so care has to be taken around them as you would with a normal breeding bull. Also, to get the most out of them the same care and attention has to be paid to their health and feet as you would a breeding bull.

If you are interested and would like to discuss the ins and outs of the procedure then please contact the surgery and speak to Iain or Andy.

AI REFRESHER COURSE

We will be running another refresher training course for those doing their own AI in the near future - date still to be set.

This is a great chance to brush up on your insemination skills and to check that your technique is accurate. Please call for more details.



FARM DISCOUNT SCHEME

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

BULL TESTING - FIT TO WORK

1 in 4 bulls are sub-fertile meaning they will not be able to produce to the pregnancy rates expected. It is therefore vital to identify these bulls to limit production losses .

Why test bulls?

1. Get as many cows in calf as possible - Identify sub-fertile bulls and remove them from the herd or give them a lower number of cows/heifers to serve
2. As part of a pre-purchase exam to allow you to ensure the bull is working adequately and is fit for sale/buying

What is 'Bull testing' ?

Bull testing is made up of **3** components:



A) Physical Exam of the entire bull

A full check of the bull's teeth, heart and lung fields, body conformation and temperature will be performed by the vet. All of these components can affect bull fertility so the vet will be thorough in their exam to ensure nothing is missed and he appears fit to breed from the outside.

B) Reproductive System Evaluation

Size IS everything! There is a direct correlation between scrotal circumference and sperm output. This is also related to the fertility of the daughters the bull will produce! Different breeds have different scrotal size standards. The minimum however is 34cm at 2 years old.

Therefore, the vet will measure scrotal size and palpate the testicles for abnormalities. They will then perform a rectal exam and assess the bulls accessory sex glands internally before collecting a semen sample. This sample can then be looked at under the microscope.

The shape of individual sperm and their movement is then looked at and a score given to the bull depending on his results. A bull may appear normal on the outside but internally the shape (morphology) and movement (motility) of his sperm may show he is actually unable to get cows in calf.

C) Libido/Serving Capacity

The final part is an assessment of the bulls mating ability. If the bull passes the first two components he should then demonstrate the want and ability to serve cows. This requires the need for a cow in heat but is not compulsory.