

**SPRING 2011  
GAME BIRD NEWSLETTER**

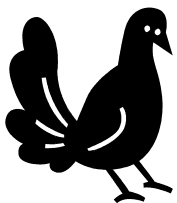


**Welcome to our first edition of  
'Game Bird' news!**

NorCal Veterinary Services was established in November 2010 by Evan David BVSc MRCVS. With over seven years experience working with game birds, we have created a mobile lab to perform on site post-mortems as well as provision for lab facilities within the office complex at H&C Pearce in Thame.

We recognise the special problems associated with the rearing and management of game birds and domestic poultry and thus offer a comprehensive veterinary service which includes on site visits together with disease diagnosis and the supply of medicines.

If you wish to contact a vet please call on **01844 212034 or 07725 039093.**



**Lessons from Last Season**

Last season heralded a very dry and cold spring and hot early summer which led to good egg production and hatching percentages.

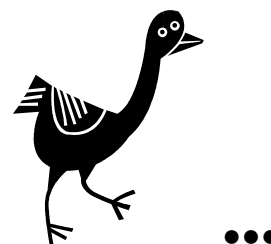
This was followed by good dry days on the rearing field. There was the odd problem with controlling heat in hutches, yolk sac infection from some imported chicks and some high starve out percentages due to management issues.

I saw very little Caecal Spironucleosis (Hexamita) on the rearing field, however I did find a considerable amount of Coccidiosis especially in young partridges. There was some talk among keepers of Baycox "not working" or some resistance in partridges, but upon further investigation it was not the drug being the problem but more the timing of its use.

Once out in the release pens, the weather changed to moist and mild. These conditions were perfect for worm eggs to turn to larvae which were then consumed by birds. Following high burdens of worms, birds lost weight and in some cases there were many deaths.

With the onset of rain we saw cases of Hexamita, Trichomonas and Black Head on one shoot. Once birds left the release pens and birds were mixing with each other, we saw cases of Mycoplasma, and some deaths most annoyingly, just before the start of the shooting season.

In general though, birds flew well and so a good season was had by all. Over...!



## Forthcoming Meetings

**Date:** Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011  
**Time:** 7.30 pm  
**Venue:** H&C Pearce, Thame

The meeting will have four topics:

1. Discussing DEFRA's Code of Practice on the Welfare of Gamebirds reared for Sporting Purposes
2. The uses of Aivlosin, the only licensed antibiotic for game birds
3. "Gamebird Worms – consequences and control" detailing the different worm types, life cycles, blackhead, consequences, control with Flubenvet and Solubenol (cascade - off licence use in water)
4. Questions & Answers session

Nibbles and refreshments will be provided.

Please respond to Evan, to book your place and for catering purposes, by either text message or call 07725 039093 ideally by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March. Look forward to seeing you there!

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NorCal Veterinary practice is able to offer bespoke Health Management programmes & Hatchery Advice at very competitive prices – for more information or to book your initial appointment contact Evan on 07725 039093

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**Opening Hours**  
Mon – Fri 08.30 – 5.00pm  
Sat 09.00 – 12.00 noon  
**Telephone: 01844 212034**  
**Mobile: 07725 039093**

dedicated to the health of your business

## Preparing for the 2011 Rearing Season



### **Routine Disinfection...**

Even if equipment was cleaned and disinfected before being stored away for winter it will need to be cleaned and disinfected again before being used in the coming season.

Remember: equipment being used to rear young chicks needs particular attention and efforts need to be made to reduce Coccidial oocyst (egg) levels to a minimum.

Coccidial oocysts are very persistent and remain in small cracks and under organic debris for long periods. Physical cleaning is therefore of utmost importance in reducing oocyst numbers. Unfortunately most disinfectants do not kill the oocysts so it is important that ALL sheds and equipment get a terminal disinfection with a product that is effective in killing Coccidial oocysts.



Bi-Oo-Cyst is a product that does kill oocysts when used according to the manufacturer's instructions and is available from the practice.

## GAME BIRD BREEDING

	<b>Pheasants</b>	<b>Grey Partridge</b>	<b>Red-Legged Partridge</b>
Body weight point of lay Cock	1500 grams (1100-1850 )	420 grams	525 grams
Body weight point of lay Hen	1150 grams (850-1400)	325 grams	400 grams
Cock:Hen ratio	1:6-1:8	1:1	1:4 - 1:8 when not in pairs
Minimum daily water intake per laying hen	200ml	70ml	100ml
Peak production	75%-85%	75%-85%	75%-85%
Eggs laid per hen	35-50	35-50	35-50
Normal egg weight	27-36 grams	14.5-15.5 grams	16-18 grams

**For all species:**

- At 2 weeks in lay expect 50% egg production
- At 3.5 weeks in lay expect peak production
- Collect eggs at least twice daily with the last collection after 6 pm
- Be sure to record for each pen: number of hens and cocks, mortality (cause), weekly food consumption, eggs collected per day, eggs set or sold, and any medication

"Our goal is to provide our clients with the highest level of service possible. We will never compromise on that commitment. We aim to strike the right balance of a professional service which is delivered in a friendly and personal way."

Evan David MRCVS BSc BA