MAD MARCH NEWSLETTER...

Dear Customer

The month of February saw some very changeable weather; some days were washouts with temperatures reaching 10°C, while occasionally we were waking up to strong frosts followed by sunny afternoons. This difference in temperature contributed to many outbreaks of pneumonia. So if you had one you were not alone. Fortunately we did not see many deaths and it was well controlled with antibiotics.

The weather was also to blame for a rise in *E. coli* and *Strep uberis* mastitis which has led to rising Bulk Milk Somatic Cell Counts. It is really important to react to high SCC cows quickly as you may then be penalised for producing milk over 400,000 cells/ml.

Future Meetings
All meetings are to be held at
H&C Pearce and commence at 7:00pm for prompt 7:30pm start. Drinks and nibbles will be provided.

March 10th 'Maximising Suckler Cow Fertility'
We will be focussing on the aims of suckler cow production, the role of the bull, cow condition and trace elements.

Invites have already gone out so if you want to attend please give me a ring to confirm your place!

Mobile: 077725 035093
Vet Practice: 01844 212034

March 31st 'Game Bird Meeting'
Topics will cover:
- DEFRA's Code of Practice for the Welfare of Game Birds Reared for Sporting Purposes. What does it mean for you?
- Aivlosin: the only licensed antibiotic for the use on game birds. We will be looking at its uses
- Game Bird Worms- consequences and control. Dave Cunnah from Janssen Animal Health (Flubenvet) will attend to give this talk.

To register your interest, give me a call!

April Meeting: Date TBC
DEFRA have promised to come to talk to us about TB including recent parish testing interval changes, how close TB is, government policy and the biology of TB and what are the risks to humans.
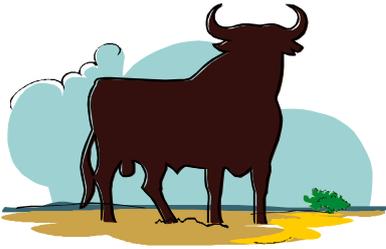
Dairy Co
Andy Dodd from Dairy Co and NorCal Veterinary Services are in the process of starting up a new farmers meeting group which will be local to our area (South Bucks, East Berks). Topics for this Spring will be: Making good forage, Ventilation, and Heifer Rearing.
NorCal will inform all Dairy Farmers direct of these meetings. **Meetings to take place on farm and lunch will be provided.**

BEEF News...

Bull Breeding Soundness Examination
Now is the time to have your bull MOT'd **before** the breeding season starts. While very few bulls are **infertile**, many are **subfertile** (produce fewer calves than a fully fertile bull). Give yourself the assurance that your bull is fully fit.

For **£75:** a 'Bull Breeding Soundness Examination' where we will test semen quality and physical soundness before the breeding season commences.

Stopping Coccidiosis in Calves
Coccidiosis in calves causes intestinal damage, resulting in **depressed growth and performance and greater susceptibility to other infections**.

Coccidiosis in caused when cells in the lining of the animal's gut become infected with a single-celled 'parasite' of a species called *Eimeria*. Its life cycle ultimately leads to the destruction of the intestinal cell. This parasitic infection is spread to other animals when it reproduces by forming oocysts. An infected calf will shed millions of Coccidial oocysts in its faeces, every day. Other calves contract the infection when

they consume these oocysts from the environment. Many Coccidial infections exist at a sub-clinical level, and so it is often not tested for. Yet an underlying Coccidial infection will still cause production losses.

Signs of Coccidial Infection
The first obvious sign of Coccidial infection is a calf with scours. But this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Coccidiosis is **highly contagious**, so all in-contact calves will be carrying some level of infection too, even if it is sub-clinical. Scouring usually begins about two weeks after infection. So by the time a calf is showing clinical signs of Coccidiosis, the damage to the intestinal lining has already been done. Other signs include:

- Loss of appetite reduced feed intake
- Retarded growth Dehydration
- Secondary infections Death (in severe cases)
- Watery diarrhoea accompanied by
- straining mucus and blood

.
Treatment
The most practical way of treatment is the use of Oral Baycox (cost approximately £3.50 for a 60kg calf). One dose at about 3 weeks of age will drastically decrease the risk of disease. The timing of the dose depends on how soon calves pick up the disease. Speak to Evan to discuss use at your Farm.

Calves with severe scours will need to be seen by the Vet.

Often farmers will dehorn calves at the same time saving valuable resource.

DAIRY News...

Metricure® is back on the market and available. Postpartum uterine infection is one of the most common causes of infertility and make an important economic loss to the dairy industry.

Metricure® Is an aid in the treatment of acute and chronic endometritis (whites).

New Mastitis Vaccine

Startvac® is the first licensed mastitis vaccine to give protection against E. coli, coagulase negative Staph. And Staph *aureus*. These bacteria are the main causes of subclinical and clinical mastitis cases. This vaccine has only been in used in the UK for the past year, and farmers and Vets are both giving it good reports.

Please ask Evan for more information.

With **Turn Out** just around the corner beware of LDA's...

Below is a **'Spotters Guide'** to LDA's:

- Affected cows are most commonly freshly calved:1-20 days post calving
- A history of Metritis, over fat or poor heifers have a higher risk
- Look at RUMEN Fill: left hand side behind the ribs. Often they will feel soft as opposed to firm to touch. These are signs of low feed intake
- Often LDA cows will appear to be slightly tucked up as if they have mild discomfort
- Look to see if they clear up all their cake in the parlour. Often LDA cows will be ketotic and the first sign is they go off their cake
- Listen with a stethoscope over the last rib, flick your middle finger hard over that area and listen for a 'ping'. Move the stethoscope around over the whole area and try flicking your finger. 15% of LDA come and go so worth repeating if you do not find the first time

IF IN DOUBT PLEASE CALL US OUT...