



Frame, Swift and Partners Newsletter February 2013

So what's new? A dry start to the New Year? Well it was when this was first being written!

Schmallenberg virus is here. We have been looking for evidence of Schmallenberg virus in the area for a while and have now found evidence from bulk milk samples that the virus was circulating last autumn. The classic problems are deformed calves or lambs. This is caused by infection in the early stages of pregnancy. So beware of lambing or calving difficulties coming up. If you are having difficulties, don't persevere, ring us! At the time of writing, there had been no *proven* clinical signs from the infection in our area. Controversially, it has been declared by DEFRA as a 'low impact' disease but individual farms have seen some heavy losses. New infection in dairy cows can also cause milk drop and diarrhoea, as well as abortions and early embryonic death. As you probably know, like bluetongue (which never got this far north), it is spread by midge bites, so infection spread it is only during the 'midge season'. The good news is that a vaccine is just around the corner.

Fluke Following the wettest year ever we are experiencing the worst ever problems with liver fluke. Sheep are prone to 'acute fluke'- with deaths in the early stages. If they get over this stage they can progress to chronic fluke (or persistent infection). Cows suffer the chronic form more than the acute form. Avoiding wet grazing (!) and preventive treatment with flukicides are the mainstays of control. This has been a major factor affecting cow and sheep condition this winter, along with lack of winter forage on some farms.

Medicine regulations Everyone is getting hot under the collar about antibiotic resistance in farm animals and this being transferred to humans. As a result, there have been a couple of changes that affect us.

(a) WE CAN NO LONGER SUPPLY 'TERRAMYCIN' OR 'AMFIPEN' WATERY MOUTH PILLS FOR LAMBS. They are not licensed for farm animals and anyway there are much better drugs for control, namely spectam and orject. These can be used routinely if other management measures don't work. Basic measures are to:-

1) **Improve lambing hygiene:-** dag dirty ewes pre lambing; ensure plenty of dry bedding especially if feeding wet silage and ensure good drainage; make sure water troughs aren't leaking or rain entering via damaged gutters/ down spouts!; ensure adequate space especially if bad weather stops early turn out; clean out and disinfect individual lambing pens between ewes; remove ill lambs and ewes from the main lambing shed; remove all ewes with aborted or dead lambs immediately and remove all cleansings along with adjacent straw.

2) **Improve colostrum quality and transfer to the lamb.** Stomach tube at risk lambs with 50ml/kg colostrum within 6hrs of birth (200ml for medium 4kg lamb). 200ml/kg (800ml) colostrum is required in the first 24 hours for a 4kg lamb; dip navels as soon as possible and repeat a few hours later.

(b) A recent ruling has made the inclusion of tetracyclines in milk powder for calves illegal. This has frequently been used in calves on milk machines. Small amounts can be used but only added to the milk itself for individual or small batches of calves.

TB Cumbria is now on 4 yearly testing unless you or a neighbour have had problems. This is a long gap between tests! Buying cattle from the south is dangerous even if they have been pre movement tested. TB comes in cattle not badgers to Cumbria. So avoid this if possible. If you can't, keep the bought in animals separate and get a private post movement test done.

Infectious disease- Evening meeting and free bulk milk testing

What do you know about IBR, BVD, Leptospira and Johne's disease? They are all diseases which cause losses but which can be controlled and even eradicated in some cases. They can also be monitored and controlled under what are called the national CHeCS scheme (cattle health certification standards). We are delighted that Paul Burr, the head vet at Biobest which is a vet lab running the CHeCS scheme is coming to talk to us. It would be good to get more pro active in preventing these diseases. Some funding is available in our area for BVD investigation and control, so come along and find out more at the Edenhall Hotel at 7.30pm on February 21st.

Sample pots are available for free IBR and BVD testing bulk milk testing at the surgery.

Invitation



Frame, Swift & Partners

Would like to invite you to an evening meeting on

Thursday 21st February 2013

To be held at

Edenhall Hotel, Edenhall.

(7.15pm arrival for 7.30pm prompt start)

An evening entitled:

'Infectious disease- everything you wanted to know but were afraid to ask'

(Topic: Control schemes for- IBR, BVD, leptospirosis, Johnes)

Including food & refreshments

Speaker:

Paul Burr BSc(VetSci)Hons BVM&S PhD MRCVS

From Biobest Labs, Edinburgh

To ensure we have enough food please RSVP:

To the practice by the **Tuesday 19th February 2013**