

**NorCal News...** **Congratulations** to our vet Sophie, who was awarded the Dairy Industry Vet of the Future award at The Bath and West Dairy Show! This prestigious award is given to one newly qualified vet each year and is based on a research project and an interview with a panel of judges. Well done Sophie!

## CASE OF THE MONTH

This month we were called out to calve a cow that had been scanned in calf with twins. When vet Sophie arrived, the cow had already had one calf. However, when she went to retrieve the second one she found two more calves still inside the cow, fighting to come first. Once detangled, these two were safely delivered to leave the new mum with plenty to do! Triplets in cattle are extremely rare (around 1 in 105,000 pregnancies), and for all three calves to survive is even more unusual.

Although the calves were strong for triplets, they were still small and would have struggled to stand and suckle within the first couple of hours. It is vital that all calves receive plenty of good quality colostrum as soon as possible (at least 10% of bodyweight in the first 6 hours). We stripped the cow out and topped this up with some powdered colostrum, ensuring a good feed for each calf. Over the next few days we made regular checks on the calves to ensure they continued to thrive, and all three are doing well.



It is really helpful to us when we come out to assist with calving's if there is a well-designed system for restraining the cow safely and allowing us the access we need. The gate pictured above, with a self-locking head-yoke and swinging side gate, is perfect as it is easy to guide the cow into and if we need to perform a caesarean it swings away to give access to the left hand side. It also has removable rails which are great for allowing access to the udder. These gates can be built into a calving yard, or used as a separating gate between two calving pens.

## Introductory offer!! Pelvimeter!

We now have a pelvimeter at the practice. This is a device that is used to measure the size of a cow's pelvis - it is inserted rectally and then we take a horizontal and a vertical measurement and use these to calculate the total area of the pelvic canal. It is particularly useful for making breeding decisions in heifers.

A narrow pelvis is the second most common cause of difficulties at calving time (after oversized calves). This can be due to undergrown heifers, or to normal variation in pelvic diameter between individuals. Pelvic measurement can help you identify individuals that have small pelvic canal's relative to their age, size and breed. This way, you can make informed breeding decisions about these animals, be that breeding them to different bulls, not keeping replacements from them, or choosing not to breed from them at all.

**For a limited time we are offering a discounted rate for visits to do pelvic measurements.** Ideally, pelvic measurements can be combined with a full pre-breeding check to ensure that animals have healthy and functioning reproductive tracts before service begins.



## Johnes Disease and the National Johnes Management Plan



Johnes disease is a chronic, lifelong disease caused by the bacteria *Mycobacterium avium* subspecies *paratuberculosis*. It is most commonly known as a disease of cattle, but can also affect sheep, deer and many others.

Most affected animals are infected with Johnes when they are very young, but do not show any signs of disease or test positive until years later. This makes management of the disease a big challenge as a consistent approach to control is required for several years to see results.

In clinical cases, Johnes causes diarrhoea and severe weight loss, but it also has less overt effects on the herd including reduced milk yield, reduced fertility and increased somatic cell count.

As of October 1st 2019, it is a requirement of the Red Tractor standards that all assured dairy units are taking part in the National Johnes Management Plan (NJMP).

The NJMP has been designed to be adaptable to a range of different farm types and systems, recognising that for a complex disease like Johnes there is no 'one size fits all' approach.

The first step of putting together your management plan is doing some baseline testing to find out whether Johnes is present on the farm. Once the Johnes status has been established, we can work with you to choose one of the six possible management strategies identified by the plan.

We will then support you to implement this management strategy and the testing requirements, if any, to monitor your progress.

**The NJMP must be undertaken with the guidance of an accredited vet – fortunately many of the NorCal vets are, so get in touch with us to get started!**



### HOME COUNTIES CATTLE FOOT TRIMMING.



Providing a professional foot trimming service to Bucks, Beds, Herts, Oxfordshire and surrounding counties

Fully licensed cat 1, Dutch diploma foot trimmer

Member of NACFT  
ROMS accredited mobility scorer.

Contact Matthew Cambridge  
07837429464  
homecountiesfoottrimming@gmail.com



Join  
Buckinghamshire R.A.B.I  
for an evening of

### Christmas Carols

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 7pm

At Thame Farmers Market, North Street,  
Thame, OX9 3FP

Mince Pies . Mulled Wine . Raffle . Auction  
Entrance – Donation to R.A.B.I



Follow us on Facebook



NorCal Vets Thame

Pearces Yard, Aylesbury Road,  
Thame, OX9 3AS  
Tel: 01844 260 616  
Mob: 07725 039 093 (Evan)  
thame@norcalvets.co.uk

NorCal Vets Wantage

Unit 8a Elms Farm Business Park, Grove Road,  
Wantage, OX12 7PD  
Tel: 01235 429 767  
Mob: 07711 923 909 (Jono)  
wantage@norcalvets.co.uk