

NorCal News...

Please book your TB test well in advance, we are really busy!

Thanks to APHA changing all of your tests to 6 monthly we will now be entering an incredibly busy period. We will be endeavouring to do everybody's test inside 2 months as well as all of the calvings/lambings/sick cows/sick calves.

We thank you for your patience

CASE OF THE MONTH

This month vets Becca and Jo had to go to perform a caesarean on a heifer that was too small to give birth naturally. The calf was too large to pass through the pelvis, this is most likely because the heifer was too young at conception. The procedure went very well with mum and calf doing very well!

Teenage pregnancy is one of the main reasons we must perform a caesarean but is something that can be easily avoided in a few ways...

- Ring your calves <7 days old (legal requirement!) – if unsure of how to do this please ask us and we would be happy to show you
- Arrange a vet visit to castrate your bull calves that you don't intend to keep for breeding.
- Separate your bull and heifer calves early before sexual maturity! (Some people graze separate groups of cows that have bull calves, and cows that have heifer calves) Heifers can be caught earlier than you think! Bulls can be sexually mature between 9-10 months which is very dependent on breed, body weight and testicular weight (measured in scrotal circumference). As cattle puberty is dependent on weight not age, a heifer has to reach approximately 40% of its mature body weight for puberty to begin.
- Lastly if you are concerned that your bull or a non-castrated bull calf has 'caught' your young heifers too early then get us out to PD and give an injection which terminates the pregnancy.



Abortion in Ewes

As lambing has begun for some, and many flocks are preparing for lambing, we have started to see few abortions occur amongst ewes.

Many of these can be sporadic but some may lead to 'abortion storms' where more than 2% of the flock are affected. Where sporadic abortions are often caused by handling procedures and movement, abortion storms are often caused by highly infectious agents.

Enzootic abortion (chlamydia), Toxoplasmosis and Campylobacter and the three main causes of abortion in UK flocks.

Any ewe that has aborted must be isolated, any aborted material discarded and the area disinfected (if inside the lambing shed).

Any ewe lambs fostered onto an aborted ewe should not be kept for future breeding.

The minimum requirement for diagnosing the cause of abortion are:

- Foetus or foetal stomach contents
- Placenta
- Maternal blood sample

If any ewes abort in your flock and you are concerned it could be due to an infectious cause, maybe you have brought in new stock, or your flock is naïve and unvaccinated, please contact one of our vets.



Milksure

One for the dairy farmers!

Milksure is a training course developed to help reduce the frequency of bulk tank antibiotic failures. However, the course provides so much more than this –

For a start, it complies with the Red Tractor requirement from October 2019 for all dairy farms to have at least one person trained in medicine handling and storage.

Secondly, it provides an opportunity to review which medicines you are using, and how you are using them, to make sure you are legally compliant and getting the best value for money.

Thirdly, it is a really useful training course for new and existing staff to encourage their personal development and make sure everyone on the farm is using medicines correctly.

Finally, many milk buyers are now making **Milksure** a requirement for their suppliers!

The course is done in two parts - some 'classroom based' training (1.5-2 hours), followed by a practical session on farm to carry out a farm specific risk assessment.

If you would like more information, please get in touch with the practice or give Sophie a call on 07889 701340.

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