

Upcoming Events

Suckler Herd Meeting

Wed 15th Feb 7-8:30pm @ Chinnor RFC, Thame OX9 3JL

Evan will be hosting a talk discussing:

- Suckler cow nutrition
- Pre and post calving
- The new DEFRA Animal Health and Welfare Pathway Scheme
- Interest in setting up a new Suckler Discussion group

The bar will be open and hot drinks also available.

Open to all suckler clients, please contact office if you're interested in attending.

Red Tractor Medicine Course

Wed 22nd Feb 6pm @ Office
(approx. 1hr, drink and snacks provided) £35+VAT

Our course covers all aspects of medicines use, including storage, administration, disposal and record keeping to ensure you are up to date with all the Red Tractor requirements – *attendance on this course is now necessary for you to pass your farm assurance inspection so if you have an upcoming inspection and haven't attended the course please get in touch!*

Thame & Chinnor TB Steering Group

22nd February Farm Walk - details tbc

(Learn practical ways to improve on-farm biosecurity and better protect your herd from bTB including a demonstration of using camera surveillance to monitor wildlife activity on farm)

28th February 6.30pm- 8.30pm - next meeting @ Thame Market

The aim of the Oxfordshire Bovine TB Cluster Project is to look at a number of locally relevant ways to add to the existing TB controls, to understand what is driving the genetically-linked clusters of disease and to get on top of the problem. APHA have identified a number of 'clusters' of TB infection in the county and the one local to us is "Thame & Chinnor" shown in the map below:



We have had a couple of meetings already in the past few months with farmers in the area on the map but it would be great to see as many of you that are in this region there as possible – Becca and Kathriona attended January's meeting and would be happy to answer any of your questions about the project.

You can email oxfordshirecluster.project@defra.gov.uk to receive project updates including monthly newsletters direct to your inbox or share your mobile number to receive text alerts about upcoming events.

A year on from no Spectam - Pre-lambing nutrition and Hygiene

Going into a second year of lambing without Spectam the same principles as last year apply. Lambing pen hygiene, Ewe Nutrition and Colostrum quality are the key factors in preventing Watery Mouth and reducing lamb mortality.

Lambing Pen Hygiene

It is estimated that one in five lambs die because of unhygienic conditions. Lambing pens should be thoroughly cleaned before ewes come into lamb using a DEFRA approved disinfectant. Once the pen has dried, bed it up with plenty of clean, dry bedding. Continue to clean out and disinfect lambing pens each time they are used. This becomes more important as the season progresses due to the build-up of infection. Hygiene is just as important during lambing - disposable arm length gloves should be worn or you should scrub hands and arms with a suitable disinfectant. It is vital to keep feeding equipment sterile - teats, tubes, mixing buckets and other utensils should be disinfected between uses and left to dry correctly.

Navel dipping is also key. The freshly broken umbilical cord is covered in blood which is the perfect medium for the multiplication and spread of bacteria. Best practice is to use a 50:50 solution of 10% iodine and surgical spirits however with upcoming issues with the availability of iodine alternatives may have to be used.

Pre- Lambing Ewe Nutrition

Nutrition of the ewe pre-lambing can have vital implications for health and production around lambing time. Underfed ewes are more likely to suffer from conditions such as pregnancy toxemia and mastitis, have a lower lamb birth weight and survival rates as well as reduced colostrum and milk yields – leading to poor lamb growth and health. However overfed ewes can also encounter problems around the lambing period including prolapses and difficult lambings due to oversized lambs. Lambing difficulties can also delay the onset of lactation and large lambs may lack vigour. Overfeeding ewes also increases feed costs unnecessarily.

The lambs develop dramatically in the last six/seven weeks of pregnancy. This coincides with the ewe's dry matter intake reducing significantly when there is a dramatic increase in her energy requirements. Nutrient dense feed is therefore critical in late pregnancy. Forage should ideally be analysed to determine energy, protein and intake potential. Forage may cover energy requirements up to 7 weeks pre - lambing however, in the weeks before lambing will not. The gap between energy provided from forage and her new increased energy needs must be filled with additional sources such as concentrates, lick buckets etc. Hay has a slightly lower quality than silage so supplementation will need to be earlier.

Feed availability in lambing pens is another key consideration. Try to ensure all ewes can eat at the same time, limiting space such as by placing the feeder in the corner where one side can't be accessed means shyer ewes get worse quality feed. Consider also the number of ewes in the shed - bales will start to deteriorate after 3 days of being open, reducing their intake as the palatability decreases along with increased risks of Listeriosis. This is the same for feeding concentrates - fighting and shoving as well as certain stronger ewes eating extra creep causes dips in rumen pH and subsequently increases the risk of acidosis.

We recommend bloods to assess the ewe's metabolic status pre-lambing. This involves checking around 6-8 ewes 4-6 weeks pre-lambing and seeing if any alterations in feeding are necessary. This could be timed with clostridial vaccination if also needed.

Colostrum

Lambs should receive 50ml of colostrum per kg body weight in the first hour. After lambing check each lamb has a good supply. If not or the lamb is unable to suck you should feed the lamb using a stomach tube preferably with colostrum taken from freshly lambed ewes. Having a store of this in the freezer would be a good approach. Remember to warm the colostrum up gently using hot water, never microwave as this will destroy the antibodies.

Nimrod Red Start tubes can also be helpful to have on hand after any difficult lambings to stimulate normal breathing and activity, and to benefit from the effect of selenium of increasing antibody absorption from colostrum (see article on next page)




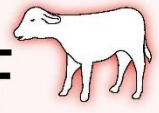


Coccidiosis

Coccidiosis tends to become a problem from about three weeks post lambing. If possible, late born lambs should not be grazed on pastures that earlier born lambs had previously grazed. This is particularly important if there is a long lambing spread.

#ColostrumIsGold Campaign

 <p>IMMUNE LAMB</p> 	 <p>AT RISK LAMB</p> 
<p>200ML OF GOOD QUALITY COLOSTRUM</p> <p>CONSUMED WITHIN 2 HOURS FROM BIRTH</p>	<p>NOT ENOUGH COLOSTRUM</p> <p>NOT CONSUMED FAST ENOUGH FROM LAMB BEING BORN</p>
<p>PLENTY OF ANTIBODIES ABSORBED</p> 	<p>FEWER ANTIBODIES ABSORBED</p> 

#ColostrumIsGold

 <p>IMMUNE BEEF CALF</p> 	 <p>AT RISK BEEF CALF</p> 
<p>UP TO 4 LITRES OF GOOD QUALITY COLOSTRUM (50g/L of IgG)</p> <p>CONSUMED WITHIN 2 HOURS FROM BIRTH</p> <p>EQUIVALENT TO 20 MINUTES OF VIGOROUS SUCKING FROM MUM</p>	<p>NOT ENOUGH COLOSTRUM</p> <p>NOT CONSUMED FAST ENOUGH FROM CALF BEING BORN</p> <p>LESS THAN 20 MINUTES OF VIGOROUS SUCKING FROM MUM</p>
<p>PLENTY OF ANTIBODIES ABSORBED</p> 	<p>FEWER ANTIBODIES ABSORBED</p> 

#ColostrumIsGold

 <p>IMMUNE DAIRY CALF</p> 	 <p>AT RISK DAIRY CALF</p> 
<p>UP TO 3 LITRES OF GOOD QUALITY COLOSTRUM (50g/L of IgG)</p> <p>CONSUMED WITHIN 2 HOURS FROM BIRTH</p> <p>EQUIVALENT TO 20 MINUTES OF VIGOROUS SUCKING FROM MUM</p>	<p>NOT ENOUGH COLOSTRUM</p> <p>NOT CONSUMED FAST ENOUGH FROM CALF BEING BORN</p> <p>LESS THAN 20 MINUTES OF VIGOROUS SUCKING FROM MUM</p>
<p>PLENTY OF ANTIBODIES ABSORBED</p> 	<p>FEWER ANTIBODIES ABSORBED</p> 

#ColostrumIsGold

AHDB have again launched their award winning #ColostrumIsGold campaign.

This campaign allows farmers, vets and other interested parties to communicate the benefits of colostrum and its role in reducing the need for antibiotics in cattle (beef and dairy), sheep and pigs. The campaign aims to move the industry away from an image of being reliant on antibiotics and promote good colostrum management to increase animal welfare and productivity.

The campaign aims to...

- Promote good practice measures through optimum colostrum management
- Encourage responsible medicine use through good colostrum management
- Promote and apply the latest research
- Be optimally timed to engage with majority of cross sector livestock industries

More information can be found on the Colostrum Is Gold website www.colostrumisgold.org

Using Nimrod Red Start to improve survival in newborn lambs and calves

Nimrod Red Start is recommended for use following a difficult delivery or following caesarean section and contains five ingredients that will reduce the mortality rate in the new-born lamb/calf:

- **Caffeine** and **Glucose** to stimulate breathing and to correct low blood-glucose concentrations.
- **Medium-chain fatty acids** to offer a readily available energy source for the new-born animal. Providing these fatty acids allows glucose to be freed up for essential use in the brain.
- **Vitamin A** to help combat increased mortality rates associated with vitamin-A deficiency.
- **Selenium** to improve absorption of antibodies (IgG) in colostrum.

Nimrod Red Start can be given immediately after birth to provide energy to encourage the new-born to get up and begin to suck colostrum. Lambings: ¼ of a tube of Nimrod Red Start immediately after birth and this can be repeated 6-8 hours later. Calvings: 1 full tube as soon as possible after calving; this can be repeated the next day if necessary.

Please get in touch if you have any questions/would like to purchase Nimrod Red Start - £5.35/tube, £32.10/box of 6

Animal Health and Welfare Review Launched

We have performed one successful trial visit for a farmer as part of the pilot scheme and have now received notification that the AHWR is finally open to all eligible farmers. This a funded annual farm visit, and initially only BPS (Basic Payment Scheme) eligible farmers will be able to register. To be eligible for a review a farm must have one of the following: 11 or more beef or dairy cattle, 21 or more sheep, and/or 51 or more pigs.

This will not replace your annual red tractor review, but can be used in addition to focus on any particular areas you would like to improve by funding vet visits, time and testing. At the moment this involves testing for BVD in cattle and faecal egg counts in sheep. This is a chance for you to have a vet out to talk/look at anything you are concerned about or would like to improve on and *the cost is covered!*

For those of you who are Red Tractor Assured this funding provides the perfect opportunity to meet the new requirements relating to BVD testing which were released in October 2022.

If interested famers need to head to <https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply> where you will find further information and be able to apply to the scheme.

Please speak to one of us before registering to maximise timings as the review must be done within 6 months of registering.

Any questions please get in touch with the office/any of the vets – **this will also be a topic that Evan is covering at the Suckler Herd Meeting on 15th Feb.**

New Product - Mederantil

We now have a new drug available to stimulate sucking in calves which is given by intravenous injection. The injection is an appetite stimulant and can also be used in adult animals (though this is not as common). Please give us a call if you have a calf which will not suck on its own and needs stomach tubing to discuss whether this injection would be of benefit.

Schmallenberg virus – Free APHA testing

Following the detection of fetal malformations associated with Schmallenberg virus infection in 2022, APHA will continue to offer free-of-charge testing in 2023 on samples from lambs, kids, and calves born with joint stiffness or other musculoskeletal deformities. Please contact us if you have any suspicion of schmallenberg and may require samples to be tested.

Cattle farmers wanted for research project

We have been contacted by a research student at the University of Bristol who is looking for both Beef and Dairy farmers to help with their project on sustainable parasiticide use in cattle – looking at patterns of wormer and insecticide treatment in the UK, to help farmers decide what treatments are best for both their livestock and the environment. They need cattle farmers to provide data every month about the type of wormer and insecticide treatments they have used. Taking part would involve filling in a monthly survey during 2023 - this can be done online or via a paper diary format and should only few minutes to complete.

They are hoping that each farm vet practice can sign up 3 – 5 clients, if you are interested please head to www.sustainablelivestockmanagement.co.uk for further details and the sign-up form. All data will be anonymised, and no individual farm will be identified.

NorCal Vets

Follow us on Instagram @norcalvets



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Cattle accommodation wanted!

Jenni is looking for a barn with field suitable to fit up to 30/40 head of show cattle.
Ideally max 20 mins from Grendon Underwood
Please contact Jenni on 07542 941022 if you can help

(The barn will need to be used year-round as the cattle will be in and out during the year and can't mix with any other cattle as they are part of a high health scheme)