



THE
WOOD
VETERINARY
GROUP



Beef and Dairy - Johne's Disease

Johne's disease is not a new or changing disease, but with modern research and data being collected all the time we are now in a far better position than ever to develop control and eradication plans and understand the financial implications of this disease. When we see a cow with clinical Johne's unfortunately there are many more animals in the herd already infected waiting to develop disease. You may remember a small piece in the January newsletter about an initiative (National Johne's Management Plan NJMP) to eradicate Johne's disease from the UK.



You will be seeing a lot more of this logo. Whilst we already know that being Johne's free is

important, Reading University and Pan Livestock have published some research on the wider and hidden damage that Johne's disease or the presence of Mycobacterium paratuberculosis does to a herd's productivity.

Implications at farm level for a cow:

- 2 x as likely to have lower milk yield**
- 2 x to have a high SCC**
- 2 x as likely to have a case of mastitis**
- Slower to conceive**

Over the next newsletters we are going to inform you about the 6 possible plans to be adopted by Dairy herds by October 2016 inline with the NJMP with levy boards and processors. Whilst the plans exist for dairy herds, beef herds can take the same advice and apply it to them. Look out for more segments with the purple logo!

Dairy Key Performance Indicators (KPI) April Meeting

After nearly four years of benchmarking the 30 dairy herds in the practice using records from NMR, CIS or other farm computer software, we have seen dramatic improvements in the efficiency and performance in Gloucestershire herds. By looking at trends in Key Performance Indicators such as conception rate, calving interval and pregnancy from the data that you all collect every day we have seen some improvement in **Conception rate, Pregnancies by 100 DIM and SCC (chronic SCC)** with some units doing better than others. As a group the trends are moving in the right direction but when we are juggling so many elements at once it is crucial to not let any of them fall behind.

So aspects are better! Now what?

With a good turnout at the April meeting we had plenty of discussion around how best to move forward.

The Key Points were:

- Dry period quality affects egg quality and future pregnancies – don't scrimp or save here
- Submission rate is an area that we can influence the most but seems to remain stable across herds and years – let's keep the focus here going forward
- In the four years benchmarked we have definitely seen better access to forages and more consistent high level feeding – this must be supporting the cow health and productivity
- SCC – if a herd is rumbling along with more than 10% of the milking herd in the 'CHRONIC SCC' group it will be very difficult to maintain a herd cell count under penalty level – look at the cure rate you achieve in this chronic group (unlikely to be over 17%) and decide if these cows need to go in the current economic climate

Dry Your Best – Are we making the most out of the Dry period?

In recent months there has been very heavy focus on the role of antibiotics in the dry period and this has brought about much discussion around the process of drying off cows in general. How? When? and the problems you all encounter around drying off. One topic mentioned time and time again is yield. As we are breeding for higher yielding cows they are often producing large volumes of milk well into the late lactation. So let's re-visit the guidelines:

1. Cows should be dried-off abruptly when they are producing less than 15 litres – as mentioned easier said than done!
2. Cows must be removed from the milking herd to stop milk let-down stimuli
3. Separate job done after milking
4. Clean disposable gloves should be worn and kept clean
5. Teats should be cleaned and must be thoroughly dried
6. Teats should be dipped in an effective germicidal teat pre-dip and the appropriate contact time allowed before wiping off
7. The teats should be swabbed with surgical spirit, starting with the furthest away and working towards the closest teat (picture)
8. The dry cow treatment (sealant with or without antibiotic) should be infused into the nearest teat first, then into those furthest away to prevent contamination of clean teat ends.
9. Teats should be dipped in an effective germicidal teat post-dip and cows left to stand for 30 minutes after treatment to allow teat sphincters to close before they are allowed to lie down



From the above list, Number 1. is the uncontrollable and variable element that cannot be managed. Most cows tend to self-limit but there will be the odd cow that just refuses to tow the line. Until now.....

Currently, intermittent milking and abrupt diet changes are often used but these can increase the risk of mastitis and metabolic disease dramatically. Milk leakage or milk accumulation in the udder can lead to bacterial proliferation and accumulation as well as painful engorgement. This milk leakage also reduces the quality of the seal that we get from our internal teat sealant. An abrupt dry off is still the ideal.

VELACTIS is a new injectable hormone product that can be given to cows prior to dry off deadline to:

- Reduce milk production
- Decrease udder pressure
- Cut milk leakage by 80%

By administering Velactis it suppresses the hormone Prolactin which drives milk production and results in a quick drop in milk production over a very short time.

As yet we do not have many more details regarding when it gets given or the price point but as soon as we know more we will distribute the information as we know there will be many of you that find this useful for a handful of cows.