



THE
WOOD
VETERINARY
GROUP

FARM NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2022

TBAS

With the ongoing struggle in Gloucestershire to reduce bovine TB outbreaks in herds, we are always looking for new strategies to reduce farm risks both for individual farms and the wider area.

The TB advisory service offers free visits to discuss TB risk on farm, and offers four simple cost effective, practical recommendations based on the risks identified.

The TB Advisory Service has been running for 4 years, funded by the rural development program for England (RDPE). 98% of Farmers that had a free farm visit said the recommendations at the end were useful and 90% rated the service as excellent.

Defra is now funding the TB Advisory Service for the whole of England, previously it was only available for farmers in the high risk and edge areas. This new funding also allows those farming other TB susceptible species (camelids, deer, goats, pigs and sheep) to have visits not just cattle keepers.

The top 5 recommendations from previous visits include using badger proof water and feed troughs, fencing off badger setts from cattle, using the website www.ibTB.co.uk to look up a sellers TB history prior to purchase and putting up wildlife cameras to identify what badger activity is in the farm yard and where to prioritise badger proofing measures.

TBAS operates using a two visit system. One initial visit with one of our TBAS trained vets working through farm environment and management over a couple of hours. The end of this visit will result in a list of priority actions and where necessary ways to access funding. Then a second visit is booked in 6 months later to review how the recommendations have been implemented and if not what challenges were faced in the process. If you would like to access the service call the practice to book in your initial visit.

All CPHs are eligible if they have TB susceptible livestock.



Fed up of playing the TB lottery?

Experienced farm advisers are available to give advice by telephone or during two free on-farm advisory visits.



Mastitis Scheme

Whenever we get a clinical mastitis, it is really useful to know what pathogens might have caused it, not only for that case of mastitis but also to build up a picture of what pathogens are the key ones on your farm.

This information then forms the backbone of the management strategy for mastitis control on your farms – whether it is mainly environmental or contagious, dry period based or lactation based.

- **Collect a sample of every mastitis case in the proper aseptic technique BEFORE TREATMENT.** A good sampling technique has a very significant impact on the quality and usefulness of results:
- Clean the teat (and wash and dry if dirty)



- Discard the first 4-6 squirts of milk: this contains bacteria from in the teat sphincter, but which are not causing mastitis, and must be removed
- Rub the end of the teat 10-15 times with a swab of methylated spirits
- Open the sample bottle, keeping the lid facing downwards and the opened bottle almost horizontal. This prevents particles of dust and bacteria dropping into the bottle giving a false result
- Finally, with the bottle between horizontal and a 45 degree angle, squirt in one jet of milk and replace the cover immediately
- Label with farm name, the cow number, the date and quarter affected
- For immediate processing the sample needs to be taken to the laboratory as soon as possible, kept cool in transit



BUT... IF YOU FREEZE THIS SAMPLE IMMEDIATELY then they can be processed in groups giving us an up-to-date pathogen profile and preventing wild guessing about which treatment did or didn't work and why! You can discard samples from the freezer as you go - just retain the last few month's worth of samples. Processing 5 or more samples increases the chance of isolating a significant pathogen.

To support this testing we have some funding towards 10 mastitis samples for culture. Any pathogens can then also be run for sensitivity at normal cost. This is a really great service and one that needs to become routine practice for our dairies rather than a panic when mastitis is getting out of control. Speak to your vet about submitting samples and which cases to sample.

Medicine Orders

When you ring the office to order medicines, every medicine must be authorised by one of the vet team. As you can appreciate, some days it can be a while before a vet is free to sign off on the order so, please remember to give us plenty of notice especially for medicines that need to be ordered in. This is especially important if you are dispatching someone from the farm to come and collect medicines to avoid them waiting around unnecessarily.

WHAT3WORDS

As we hurtle boldly into the modern era embracing technology as we go, it turns out the postcodes are getting pretty useless for the job we do. Be it a TB test at your other site, a cow needing help in a field or just a tricky farm to find, What3Words is becoming rather handy especially for our newer members of the team. Every three-metre square of the world has been given a unique combination of three words – you can pick whichever square you want to use. We can then use this information to find you and we can log any regular sites onto your client account. Anyone can use the What3Words website, or you can download the app and then pick the most useful square i.e. the bottom of the farm drive or field entrance. It is also worth memorising yours or having the app on your phone as emergency services call handlers can use them too. Let us know your w3w the next time you speak to the office.

The practice w3w is: CRAFT.STONES.TURKEY



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