

Another newsletter and so much has changed since the last one. Who could have predicted then that there would be a war so close to us, causing a humanitarian crisis. And with such a massive effect on the world's economy. With soaring costs only time will tell where we will all be when the next newsletter comes out, scary times!

With no comparison to this crisis, things are also changing within Cliffe. Will has said his final goodbye yesterday and is looking forward to going to New Zealand this winter. Luckily we still have Carmen with us for a bit longer before she too starts up a new life somewhere else, not as far as Will but still too far for us to be able to hold on to her.

We are well on the way of finding replacements for these two so I'm sure you will hear more about that in the next newsletter.

In the meantime both Leanne as well as Catherine have completed their ATT training and are now fully qualified TB testers! By now a lot of you will have met them.

As you can read below Leanne has also completed a mobility scoring training and Catherine will be assisting Nick with sheep AI and ET work

To end up on a positive note it's nice to be able to say spring has sprung, the grass is growing and healthy calves and lambs are spotted everywhere!

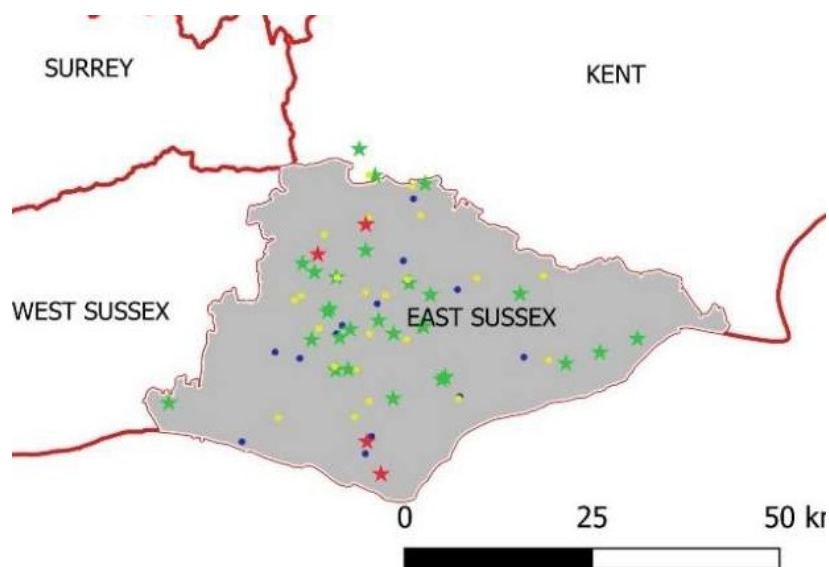


THE SOUTHERN EDGE BADGER FOUND DEAD SURVEY RESULTS.

Submissions of dead badgers to Diplocks in Ringmer have been extended until June 2022.

£25 plus VAT will be paid for each submitted badger.

Collections kits (essential for proper submission) are available from Lewes and Laughton.



Southern Edge RTA Results

- ★ Positive
- ★ Negative
- ★ Results pending
- Unsuitable for PME
- Southern Edge counties
- GB County outline

TBAS ADVISORY VISITS

The Cliffe Vet Team now offer TBAS Advisory Visits

The TB Advisory Service (TBAS) offer free on-farm TB advice visits. The vets at Cliffe have recently undergone training courses with TBAS to be able to offer these visits to our clients via their own vet.

All farmers are eligible for a free TB advisory visit. You may have recently undergone a breakdown and are worried about your future, or you may be TB free and looking for advice to maintain your TB clear status. The visit consists of a farm walk followed by a survey to identify potential TB risk factors around your farm. Bespoke recommendations are provided, and we follow up with a second visit six months later to assess your progress.

To book a TB advisory visit, please call us at the office or discuss with us when we're next on farm.



E: info@tbas.org.uk
W: tbas.org.uk
T: 01306779410



MOBILITY SCORING THE DAIRY HERD

Why Mobility Score?

Regular routine mobility scoring enables early detection and prompt treatment of lame cows (score 2 and 3), before lameness deteriorates. Prompt treatment results in a quicker recovery and less loss of production. It also reduces the need for repeat treatments, saving you

money. Mobility scoring data, alongside foot trimming data can help identify trends and contributory factors to lameness on farm. Changes can then be implemented to improve foot health.



How often should I do it?

Mobility scoring should ideally be done monthly. Some milk processors and supermarkets will ask for at least quarterly scores. If lameness is a real issue on farm, then scoring should be implemented monthly and reduced to quarterly as the situation improves.

How does it work?

Cows are observed walking on level flat concrete and a score allocated to them based on standardised criteria. It is more useful to have the same person performing the scoring each month so that observations are consistent.

Score 0 – Good Mobility – Walks with even weight bearing and rhythm on all four feet with a flat back.

Score 1 – Imperfect Mobility – Steps uneven or strides shortened: affected limb(s) not immediately identifiable

Score 2 – Impaired Mobility – Uneven weight bearing on a limb that is immediately identifiable and/or obviously shortened strides. Sometimes arched back.

Score 3 – Severely Impaired Mobility – Unable to walk as fast as a brisk human pace. Lameness is easy to identify – limping; may barely stand on lame leg(s); back arched when standing and walking. Very lame

Who does it?

There is no reason you cannot do this yourselves, but it is generally performed as cows exit the parlour, when most farm staff are busy sorting cubicles, scraping, feeding, or milking. An independent RoMS accredited scorer is preferred.

What is RoMS?

The register of mobility scorers, RoMS is an independent, self-regulatory body which encourages the widespread use of standardised, independent mobility scoring conducted by trained and accredited scorers on UK dairy farms to a set of professional standards.

Our ATT TB tester Leanne Mills is now accredited with RoMS and is now able to provide independent, competitively priced mobility scoring to any of our clients. Please call the practice to enquire.



OPTIMISING BEEF FERTILITY

The profitability of a beef suckler herd directly relates to amount of Kg sold at market. To make up these Kg, we add up number of calves and weight of calves. Therefore, good fertility is vital in the probability of suckler herds. How we achieve this is by a compact calving period and number of cows conceiving. A compact calving period means we can get a homogenous group at sale, strategic nutrition, disease control, heifer replacement (older animals to put to the bull) easier for group managements (vaccines, wormers etc..) and many more.

We will have a look at 2 farms in a case study below to explain this. Both were starting calving on 1st march and were aiming for store sales on 25th of October to a specific sale.

Case study:

Farm 1 (Blue) had 72% of calves in the first 21 days of calving, and as we can see from the chart below, they had an average weight of 295kg at a value of £505.

Compare this Farm 2 (Gold) which only had 30%.

Also, important to note, as we go into the 2nd and 3rd calving block, we lose £66 and £137 respectively on the calf value compared to ones sold in the first block.

This considering when all calves were sold, meant farm 1 had a revenue of **£136,380** compared to farm 2 which had a revenue of **£125,740**.

This means **farm 2 had lost a value of around £10,000** throughout the year due to more calves being born later, so didn't have enough time to get to the weight of the calves born in the first 21 days.

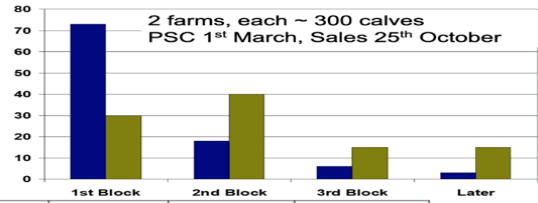


21 Cliffe High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2AH

Tel: 01273 473232

farmenquiries@cliffevets.co.uk





	1st Block	2nd Block	3rd Block	Later
Days to sale	227	206	185	
Weight	295	261	230	
Value (£)	505	439	368	
		- 66	- 137	

Therefore, to maximise the profits available, 65% of cows need to conceive in the first 3 weeks and over 95% in calf. Studies have shown, every cow getting pregnant in the 2nd or 3rd block is losing around 25kg of weaning weight each time and therefore profit.

If your calving data isn't meeting these targets, this is something your vets can identify and investigate. It can be due to many factors from nutrition, bull fertility to infectious disease but is something which will be causing profit loss and needs to be addressed.

QUARTERLY DISEASE REPORT – JANUARY – MARCH 2022

Cattle-

A 5 year old in calf suckler cow presented with lethargy, fever, inappetence and foul smelling faecal contents, she died despite antibiotic, anti-inflammatory and oral rehydration therapy. Post-mortem examination revealed ulceration of the windpipe, abomasum and small intestine with several areas of necrosis throughout the liver. Further testing confirmed **Systemic Mycosis** as the cause of death. This is an overwhelming fungal infection (fungal septicaemia) and is often secondary to immune system suppression. It can also be seen in animals fed mouldy feed or in those treated with prolonged courses of antibiotics.

A 10 year old Friesian cow was examined after being "off colour" for several days. On examination both jugulars were markedly distended and the animal had fluid (oedema) surrounding its brisket and jaw (bottle jaw) a pericardial effusion (fluid around the heart) was noted on ultrasound exam.

Post-mortem confirmed a "**hardwire disease**" as the cause of death.

Examination of the reticulum revealed a 10cm piece of tyre wire (*picture above*) protruding from the reticulum and forming an abscess in the liver.

This piece of wire likely penetrated the reticulum, diaphragm and then seeded infection into the heart. The most common source of these wires is degrading tyres on top of silage clamps, a review silage tyres was recommended, and magnet boluses administered to all cattle.



A further 4 herds had active **Neospora** infection diagnosed and 2 other herds had active **Johne's** infection diagnosed. In one herd with active Neospora infection there was a clear familial pattern which highlighted the importance of vertical spread as the main route of transmission throughout a herd. We recently ran a farmer talk discussing Johne's and Neospora, their importance and what control options are available which was well attended. When cattle are housed this is the ideal opportunity to perform infectious disease screens which can flag up important herd problems.

Sheep-

Two flocks had active sheep **scab infection** confirmed on blood samples. Affected animals produce antibodies 2-4 weeks after infection which means disease can be detected well before clinical signs start to develop, blood testing can provide a useful screening tool pre/post-purchase and also pre/post-housing to identify affected animals.

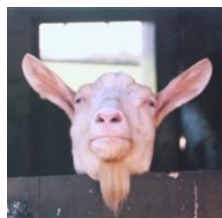
VACCINATIONS FOR SHEEP, GOATS AND ALPACAS

Clostridial disease

Sheep, goats and alpacas are all susceptible to clostridial diseases and infection is usually fatal. Clostridial disease is caused by many different types of clostridial bacteria found in the environment, particularly the soil, faeces and intestinal contents.

Some of the common diseases caused by the different clostridial bacteria are listed below and most commonly present as a sudden death:

- Pulpy kidney (Clostridium Perfringens type D)
- Lamb dysentery (C. perfringens type B)
- Struck (C. Perfringens type C)
- Tetanus (C.tetani)
- Black disease (C. novyi type B)
- Botulism (C. Botulinum type C&D)



(vaccinations for sheep, goats and alpacas continued)

Pasteurellosis

Pasteurellosis is another usually fatal disease caused by a number of factors including the infection with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Bibersteinia trehalosi* and or *Pasteurella multocida*. Stress is often a trigger for disease and this could include, transportation, weaning, castration, and going to markets.

Both Clostridial disease and Pasteurellosis can be prevented through vaccination.



VACCINATION PROTOCOLS:

SHEEP: Clostridial vaccine

Primary course: 2 injections 4-6 weeks apart for unvaccinated sheep.

Annual booster: 1 injection 4-6 weeks prior to lambing (this provides immunity to

the lamb via colostrum – 10-12 weeks for clostridial disease and 3 weeks protection for Pasteurella)

GOATS & ALPACAS:

Primary course: 2 injections 4-6 weeks apart if unvaccinated

Twice yearly spring and autumn. (4-6 pre-kidding/ to provide clostridial immunity to the kids)

LAMBS & KIDS: Primary course as above from 3 weeks of age.

CRIAS: primary course of 2 injections 4 weeks apart starting from 3 months of age. Annual booster thereafter.

Please contact the vets to discuss which vaccination is best suited for your animals, different vaccines provide cover for a different number of clostridia and some include Pasteurella and some do not.

COLOSTRUM IS GOLD!

Colostrum is a conversation we bring up every single year, time and time again – why? Because it is so important. Previously we have perhaps taken more of a backseat role with colostrum management in our sheep. But should we be taking more of a proactive stance? Normally we say just look out for those problem cases that may include triplets, those not seen to drink, and lambs born to ewes with poor udders/little milk. But if we leave lambs until we notice they haven't had a drink, or there is a problem it may be too late to intervene.

Colostrum contains vital antibodies that are protective against many diseases in the first few weeks of life when the lamb is unable to amount its own immune response against any diseases it may encounter. Colostrum is a key player (as well as hygiene) in controlling watery mouth, a hot topic now that Spectam is off the market. Colostrum also provides those vital antibodies that the ewe has made because of us vaccinating with Heptavac P+, protecting the lamb against pneumonia and clostridial diseases.

Lambs should receive 50ml per kg of bodyweight within the first 2 hours of life. This should be repeated in 2-4 hours. Knowing your average birthweight on farm will help you know how much colostrum to feed when you do need to intervene. Now it's a bit too time consuming and not practical on farm to be tube feeding colostrum to every lamb that hits the ground, so in most scenarios we can't measure how much the lamb has drunk. However, it is obvious if they are only at the teat for 30 seconds before being booted off that it hasn't drunk enough. So practically on farm we want to see the lamb up and having a good, sustained feed shortly after birth, but also going back to the ewe to have more feeds within the first 4 hours of life.

Whilst it is impractical to ensure the quantity of colostrum that the lamb receives, it is very quick and easy to ensure the quality of colostrum the lamb receives. Testing the quality of the colostrum produced by the ewes gives us the confidence that our lambs are receiving what they need, but also reflects on the nutrition that the ewe has been receiving in the run up to lambing. Ewes with a good plane of nutrition, good access to the feed face and optimal body condition scores have been shown to produce better quality colostrum. Again, whilst we may not be able to test the colostrum of every ewe, we can start by taking samples from any ewe we've had to assist with lambing, ewes with poor condition scores and those with poor udders.

Using a BRIX refractometer gives you an instant result that you can act upon by either letting the lamb drink from the ewe or supplementing it with better colostrum. When reading a result, you want a minimum of 26% in sheep (compared to 22% in cattle). Anything below 26% is not good enough and should be discarded and not be fed to the lambs. A helpful how to guide of using the BRIX can be found on the AHDB website, if not ask one of us when we are next on farm to show you. A BRIX refractometer is quite cheap to buy and can be purchased online with next day delivery!

As ever colostrum from an ewe is always better than bought in powdered colostrum, but powdered colostrum is better than nothing (and normally the more expensive it is, the better it is). Colostrum from ewes on farm will contain antibodies that fit the disease profile of your farm, better protecting your lambs. Ewes with plentiful, good quality colostrum (that has also sufficiently fed its own lamb) can be milked out and stored for future use, such as feeding triplets. Not only will this stored colostrum be better than anything bought in, but it will also be cheaper as the ewe has produced it anyway. Colostrum from other animals e.g., a cow, is not best practice as it can cause some health issues as well as the antibodies not lasting long enough until the lamb is able to produce its own immune response.

Colostrum is best stored in small quantities (such as in an ice cube tray) to make it easy to defrost and convenient to use in the quantities it is needed. Once harvested it should be put into the fridge/freezer quickly to prevent contamination and bacterial replication. Colostrum can be stored in the fridge for up to a week and in the freezer for 6 months. All equipment used to harvest and store colostrum should be thoroughly cleaned and well maintained to prevent contaminating colostrum. Defrosting should be done slowly in a warm water bath, not in boiling water or in the microwave. The colostrum should be given at 38 degrees, over 42 degrees and the antibodies will be ruined.

If you want to discuss colostrum control on your farm, or your ewe nutrition in the run up to lambing, please give us a call at the practice.