

Farm News October 2022

## Animal Health & Welfare Pathway

Glenthorne and the NFU recently held a successful evening meeting by way of an introduction to the Pathway. Whilst the scheme is at the development stage, it has been designed to help farmers bolster the health and welfare of livestock, and at the same time improving the bottom line. Having completed the first step, farmers will continue along the Pathway supported by grants which will be launched soon.



The review is not designed to replace health plans already in place, but to further focus on specific areas on farm that will enhance livestock performance, therefore improving productivity. Part of the review includes an annual vet visit paid from the scheme so that farmers can work closely with the vet to identify areas of priority. It is available farmers with more than 10 cattle, 20 sheep and 50 pigs, who are eligible for the Basic Payment Scheme.

For mixed farms, the qualification is per species, so access to funding is quite substantial. For example, if there are recurrent mastitis problems in a dairy herd, funding could be used for investigation and diagnostics to create an action

plan. For a sheep flock, it could be for a lameness review or parasite control plan.

To access the funding, farmers will have to register (not open yet) through the government gateway. When registration is complete, contact the Farm Office to book the vet visit at a time and date convenient for you.

## TB Advisory Service

We are now offering free tailored advice on TB through the TB Advisory Service. This service is funded by Defra and provided by our own vets, who are happy to provide advice on how to reduce the risk and impact of TB on your farm.



Vets can carry out an on-farm visit to discuss all aspects of TB including wildlife ecology, biosecurity, building design, movements and trading options tailored to each individual farm. Please contact the Farm Office on 01889 567200 to arrange a visit.



# Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis

This highly infectious disease is not often fatal but can have a serious impact on the welfare of your herd. Here are some tips on spotting the early signs, through to diagnosis and control.

Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR) is a highly contagious disease caused by Bovine Herpes Virus 1. The disease mainly presents as acute inflammation of the upper airways but also causes sporadic abortion and fertility issues. Whilst IBR is rarely fatal, cattle cannot clear the disease so remain lifelong carriers. The virus resides in the animal and can reactivate at times of stress resulting in further shedding of the virus.

The disease is endemic in the UK with studies showing over 50% of herds are infected. The disease has serious impacts on animal welfare as well as causing economic losses and having trade implications.

## Clinical Signs

Naive cattle of any age can be affected. Most cattle present with a high fever, nasal discharge and conjunctivitis (runny eyes). Affected animals will often appear depressed with reduced appetite and milk drop. Animals may cough and have bad breath. Abortion tends to occur weeks to months after infection, in rare cases secondary bacterial pneumonia may result in death.

## Transmission

The most common route of infection is through direct transmission of the virus via the nasal and ocular discharge from acutely or latently infected animals. Though infection may also occur through semen or embryo transfer.

## Diagnosis

Whilst clinical signs are often a good indication of the disease, confirmation is made by testing for rising antibodies in paired blood samples. One sample taken during initial illness and the second 4 weeks later. The presence of rising antibody levels helps determine those primarily infected

from those that are latently infected which will also have IBR antibodies.

When it comes to monitoring, bulk milk samples can be used to assess the level of antibodies in the herd and thus indicate the prevalence of the disease.

## Control

Culling of infected animals will help break the cycle of infection though may not be feasible in herds with high prevalence. Therefore, it is recommended that in these herds, vaccination strategies are applied, whilst in herds with low surveillance test and cull strategies are used.

Multiple vaccines are available for IBR. Marker vaccines can help differentiate between those latently affected versus those vaccinated. This is crucial when trying to prove disease status of an individual animal or herd for selling or exporting.

## Farm Office Info

Please continue to phone medicine orders through to the Farm Office as this is more efficient. Our medicine order delivery days have changed from daily to Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoon so please bear in mind when ordering your meds and vaccines, so we can plan for these to be delivered as soon as possible.

A reminder of the contact details for the Farm Office...

Direct line: 01889 567200

Email: [farm@glenthornevets.co.uk](mailto:farm@glenthornevets.co.uk)

Sarah, Amy and Fiona are there from 08.30 to 17.00 to make diary bookings, book TB tests, request vet call backs, make up medicine orders, take orders for vaccine and non-stock items and take card payments.

Give us a follow on Facebook '**Glenthorne Farm Vets**' to find out about up-coming events, news and features.

