

Farm News September 2023

## Glenthorne Farm Vets Newsletter

*In this issue we look at Colostrum Management in Calves, take a look at the new veterinary Attestation Rules and investigate what can be done about foul in the foot.*

### Colostrum Management in Calves

*Current research shows that 26-50% of new-born calves don't get enough colostrum, putting them at a much higher risk of disease or early death. However, good colostrum management can help give calves the right start and protect them in the future.*

Protecting each new-born calf from infectious diseases is a major priority for every cattle farmer as well as ensuring they are healthy and productive in the long term.

### Diseases that threaten new-borns

Calf scour and pneumonia pose real threats as soon as the calf is born, but good colostrum management can help give it the right start and protect it into the future. Antibodies that the dam has built up in her immune system can't pass through the placenta to the calf. But she can pass enough antibodies through her colostrum to her new-born. Not only will this help improve the calf's immune system, but it will help ensure its future health and growth.

Guidelines suggest that each calf needs 3 – 4 litres, or 10% of bodyweight, of colostrum which should be given at birth with a follow-up feed of a similar size within the first 12 hours. It can get this by sucking or via a stomach tube, but sucking is preferable.

The calf's ability to absorb the beneficial elements from the colostrum decreases rapidly so it is essential that it is given as soon after birth as possible. Within 6 hours, it can only absorb 66% of the antibodies and within 24 hours, this reduces to zero.



### Avoiding Calf Scour

During peak calving times or an outbreak of calf scour, it is possible to ensure that calves are getting the best protection by utilising a variety of different management options and diagnostic aids that can prevent it.

- Isolate, test and treat any calf showing clinical signs.
- Make sure all calves ideally get 3 litres of colostrum within the first 6 hours of life. If there are any doubts, use a stomach tube.
- Clean and disinfect pens regularly. Leave to dry fully. If you have issues with cryptosporidiosis, specific disinfectants are available.
- Bed daily
- Remove afterbirths as soon as possible
- Don't give mastitic milk or pooled colostrum
- Don't mix different age groups of calves



- Tend to healthy calves before dealing with sick calves
- Clean feeder, feed/water troughs, passageways etc and clean and disinfect any equipment regularly
- Make sure milk replacer is fed at the correct concentration/temperature and mixed properly
- Halofuginone (Halocur) is licenced to prevent cryptosporidiosis
- Toltrazuril (Tolracol) is licenced to prevent coccidiosis
- Vaccines are available for Rotavirus, Coronavirus, *E. coli*, BVD and *Salmonella* – calves must receive adequate volumes of good quality colostrum for passive transfer of antibodies.

*Call the Farm Office on 01889 567200 to have a chat with a vet about the best options available.*

## New Veterinary Attestation Rule and Red Tractor Assurance

On 13<sup>th</sup> December, a change in legislation will mandate that ALL farmers selling livestock for slaughter must have carried out an **Annual Farm Veterinary Visit**.

This visit is necessary for the product from the animals to be eligible for export outside the UK. The primary purpose behind implementing this new rule is to align with EU export requirements. It ensures that there are checks in place to verify the absence of notifiable diseases and to provide general guidance on farm biosecurity.



**THE GREAT NEWS FOR RED TRACTOR ASSURED FARMERS IS THAT YOU ARE ALREADY COVERED AS DEFRA HAVE CONFIRMED THAT RED TRACTOR IS A QUALIFYING SCHEME SO YOU DO NOT NEED TO DO ANYTHING ADDITIONAL – SIMPLY CONFIRM TO BUYERS THAT YOU ARE RED TRACTOR ASSURED**

## Foul in the Foot

### What is it?

Foul in the Foot is a painful condition affecting the feet of cattle caused by bacteria such as *Fusobacterium necrophorum* and *Prevotella melaninogenica*. Damage between the toes (also known as the interdigital space) allows these bacteria to invade and spread causing infection and inflammation which is very painful. It is important to identify and treat cases as soon as possible to optimise welfare and productivity of cattle.



### Clinical signs

- Painful, hot, swollen feet
- Damage to the interdigital space
- Sudden onset lameness
- Foul smelling odour

If untreated, these signs can lead to reduced feed intake and therefore poor performance, such as a reduction in daily weight gain or milk yield. It can also increase the cull rate of your herd if there is chronic damage. This can also have an economic impact on your farm.



## Predisposing factors

Anything in the environment which can lead to damage in the interdigital space can result in Foul in the Foot – this can be anything from cuts, scrapes, puncture wounds or abrasions.

The danger arises when cattle with damaged feet spend prolonged periods of time in dirty conditions, including deep slurry or muddy ground. These conditions allow the bacteria to gain entry through the wound and establish an infection.



## Prevention

The risk factors for Foul in the Foot cannot be completely avoided but some small changes can be made to reduce the likelihood of the disease. These include efficient slurry scraping, keeping feet clean, upgrading walkways for cow comfort and adding gravel to deep mud around water troughs. The introduction of footbaths may be necessary if the herd are struggling with a high frequency of cases. These herds may require a routine footbath using either formalin or copper sulphate.

## Treatment

Cases of foul may eventually resolve without treatment but in order to reduce long term lameness and ongoing productivity effects, rapid treatment is essential. This should include injectable antibiotics and anti-inflammatory drugs as well as local disinfection and antibiotic sprays. In severe cases amputation of the digit may be required.

*Please call the Farm Office on 01889 567200 for options on treatment.*

## Sarah Weston

We are all delighted to report that Sarah, the Farm Office Manager, is recovering well from her recent knee surgery. She is taking a well-deserved rest from the farm office for a few weeks whilst getting back on her feet.



Nurse Nettie is prescribing plenty of Metacam, cuddles and vitamin D. We wish her all the best for a speedy recovery and we can't wait to welcome her back soon!

## TB NEWS

From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023 there have been some changes to the requirements for post-movement testing in England.

This will affect anyone who is on annual whole herd TB testing and in the 'Edge area' eg. (some of) Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire AND buys in from high risk areas eg. Staffordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, West Midlands, Herefordshire or Wales.

Please follow the following link for more information <http://apha.defra.gov.uk/documents/ov/Briefing-Note-1523.pdf> or do not hesitate to contact one of the vets.

- Any cattle moved to herds located in annual testing in Edge areas, *from* areas of higher TB incidence (eg 6-monthly Edge areas, High risk areas or Wales) will now need to be post movement tested



- These compulsory Post Movement tests will need to be arranged and paid for by the keeper within 60 to 120 days of arrival.
- They cannot be moved off the holding until they have tested negative except for slaughter.
- A post movement test will not be required if an annual surveillance or other government funded test takes place within the 60 to 120-day window.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### Uttoxeter Agricultural Society Ploughing Match



Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2023

By kind permission of J B and R J Bettson  
on land off Holly Lane, Kingstone,  
Staffordshire ST14 8QD

Come and see us for a cuppa and a chat

### Brailsford Ploughing Match

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023

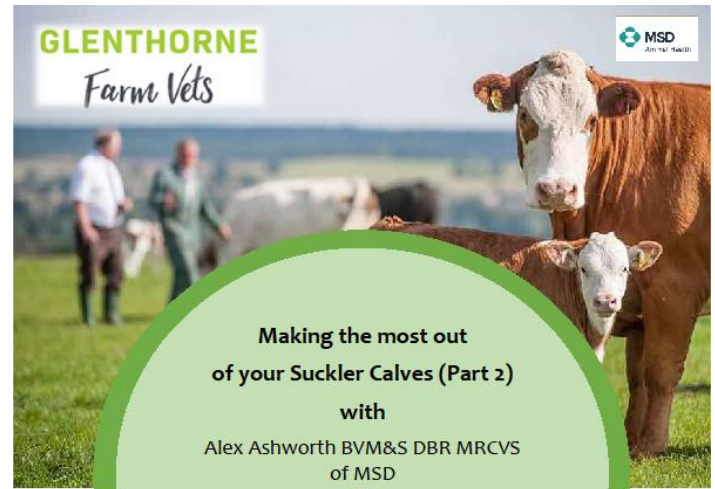
By kind permission of TR & EC Ball,  
Carr Farm, Cubley, Ashbourne,  
Derbyshire DE6 5FB



Be our guest at the Ploughing Match and  
join us for a Hog Roast

## Making the most out of your suckler calves

*Find out about the Suckler Herd Performance Checklist*



**Making the most out  
of your Suckler Calves (Part 2)**

with

Alex Ashworth BVM&S DBR MRCVS  
of MSD

at  
Marchington Woodlands Village Hall

on

Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

at 7.30pm

Join us to find out about the Suckler Herd Performance Checklist. This helps vets and farmers work more closely to improve suckler herd performance

The evening will focus on cow fertility, rearing older calves and data collection, creating a practical action plan for improved cow and calf health and herd productivity on farm

Free to attend – Everyone welcome!

Refreshments are available kindly sponsored by MSD

Please contact the Farm Office on 01889 567200 to book your place

## MASTERING MEDICINES COURSE



Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
10.30 am at the Practice

Contact the Farm Office on  
01889 567200 to book a place

