



KERNOW
DAIRY VET SERVICES

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Welcome to our dairy focused newsletter

Getting parasite control at housing right

The majority of you will have housed your milking herd before now but may still have young stock or dry cows out at grass for a few more weeks. Lung worm, gut worms and liver fluke are a high risk due to the wet autumn we have had and your cattle are likely to be carrying a burden of parasites which can have a negative effect on production and fertility. For milking cows the options are limited. Eprinex or Eprizero are licensed zero milk with hold pour on products which can be used against worms, but we would advise testing your bulk milk levels prior to spending the money on wormer to see if there will be a cost benefit to its use. Non lactating heifers and dry cows can be wormed with an ivermectin based pour on at housing such as ivomec classic as long as they will not be producing milk for a minimum of 60 days. On most units this will not be practical for dry cow treatments and we would advice sticking to eprinex or equivalent during lactation. The use of Ivomec pour on in youngstock will help to control lice and mites in housed heifers as well as kill gut and lung worms.

Liver fluke control is more challenging. Fasinex 240 is licensed for dairy cows when dry and heifers, and will kill all liver fluke stages from 2 weeks old. The downside is a 48 day + 48hrs post calving milk with hold. Ideally cattle should be housed for 2 weeks then drenched to kill off all stages of fluke. In reality with pressures on with hold time this may be done as soon as dried off, and if the stock have been housed for more than 2 weeks prior to treatment this should be highly effective. Care should be taken regarding length of dry period, predicted calving date and with holds. Zanil is licensed for milking cows and will cover against adult fluke stages only. The with hold is just 3 days so this is an option for heifers that may have grazed high risk pastures, that have calved in and missed a pre dry off fluke treatment with fasinex. We advice monitoring dung samples from dry cows and heifers to assess the necessity to treat your herd. Rumen fluke is appearing on more of our farms and Zanil at present is the drug of choice for controlling this.

Most combination products such as closamectin pour on and ivomec super are not permitted in dairy cows. In some cases these products can be used in non lactating heifers up to mid pregnancy, but we would advice avoiding using them on any animal that may produce milk in their lifetime, to minimise the risk of bulk tank failures, as these drugs are now being tested for routinely.

Please speak to one of our vets for a tailor made plan for parasite control on your farm.

Article written by Amy Jones MRCVS



Please do not hesitate to call us on 01208 76403. Office hours 8.30am-5-30pm Mon-Fri and 8.30am-12pm Saturday and we have vets available 24 hours a day.



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IBR Control

IBR (Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis) surveillance testing has shown an increase in its presence on some dairy units locally. Bought in cattle are high risk as they shed the virus when stressed, particularly when calving and then joining the herd, but the disease can be carried on clothing or boots from market or other farms. Historically IBR would appear with an increase of pneumonia cases and sick adult cows with heavily discharging noses and eyes, milk drop and a high temperature. Now with so many farms having a low level immunity from natural exposure we see a more subtle but arguable more costly version of the disease. The cow's immune system is suppressed by the virus which then increases the risk of post calving endometritis (whites) and mastitis. With modern cows being on the knife edge of energy balance, any drop in dry matter intake due to a viral infection can increase the risk of ketosis and disease associated with it as well. Fertility is affected by these increased risk factors for ketosis, but directly the virus can cause issues in the uterus and result in resorption of early pregnancies and failure of conception. We advised all of our dairy clients to either vaccinate against this disease or monitor their bulk tank levels quarterly. Please contact your vet to discuss further and draw up a vaccination control plan.



Article written by Ben Hutley BVSC Cert CHP MRCVS

Mastitis risk of straw yards

Straw yards are great for cow comfort and lameness reduction, but can quickly become a huge risk factor for mastitis. On a high number of units, mastitis rates originate from the dry cow accommodation which is often on a straw yard, and if this is not kept clean the bacterial load can build up quickly. Adding in the fluctuation of calving patterns and that at certain times it can become heavily overstocked, the problem can escalate periodically. For dairy farmers that house the milking herd on straw yards the risk increases for the lactation period too. 10 square metres per cow of straw space is recommended and scraping out surface contaminated straw and re-bedding twice a week should be done. Preventing the straw depth building too high is important to reduce heating. Ideally a layer of sand should be put down with straw on top. Applying lime or a genus made product called SOP should be considered prior to applying more straw to help reduce the bacterial level. If housing on straw the risk of environmental infection with E.coli and strep uberis increases. This means that a rapid killing effective pre dip such as lactic acid should be considered, and to improve your cows immunity the vaccine Startvac or Ubac could be deployed. Please contact us for more information on these vaccines to help reduce your mastitis rates and antibiotic use over the winter period.



Article written by Phil Dawber BVSc MRCVS