



### CALF CARE IN COLD WEATHER

Despite happening every year, we still often fail to plan for the sub-zero temperatures of winter, this is most dramatically seen in young calves which generally suffer a greatly reduced growth rate, more disease and higher morbidity & mortality. So what can we do about it and when do we start?

Every animal has a 'LOWER CRITICAL TEMPERATURE' or LCT, this is the lowest temperature at which it can maintain body heat without actively using energy i.e. below this temperature the animal is cold stressed and energy for growth and immune function is diverted into heat production! The LCT of dairy calves between 1-4 weeks (pre-ruminating) is between 10-25 degrees Celsius; calves in draughts/wet housing will need closer to 25 degrees, as will sick calves, skinny/underweight calves or calves still wet from birthing.

So what can we do? First know what temperatures your calves are living in – put a digital max/min thermometer in a central position in the young calf shed and check then reset it daily. When temperatures are regularly below 5 degrees we must consider options to help calves maintain body heat:

- Check amount of milk powder or milk being fed, and discuss with vet **increasing ration** during cold spells
- **Calf jackets**; have been in use now for a few years with very good success, calves with jackets consistently show higher growth rates than calves without by approx. 0.2kg/day. You do need to wash them in a washing machine at 60 degrees between calves to prevent becoming a source of lice etc..
- **HOUSING** – The practice can assess your calf housing and highlight areas to improve overall calf health, our knowledge of your farms history helps us decide the most important issues, we look closely at all these areas;
  - **Building size, ventilation and airflow**
  - **Drainage and humidity**
  - **Function – how the space is used by you and the calves**

**TOGETHER WE THEN CREATE A WORKABLE ACTION PLAN TO SUIT YOUR FARMS NEEDS** Contact the practice to see if your calves could benefit from housing check.

### A little word of thanks..

At the close of 2014, a year of big change for our practice, we would like to thank you all for your support during our merger. After six months of working together as a team, we are happily feeling the benefits of the new system and hope you agree that besides extra help available out of hours, it has greatly enhanced the service we provide. The trust and welcome our vets have been shown on their first visits to your farms has been genuinely heartening.

We are conscious that for many of you the past few months have been increasingly difficult and truly value your continued support at this time. Despite the worries this year has presented, we hope you have all feasted and enjoyed a merry festive season, and assure you of our unwavering commitment to helping you through whatever challenges this New Year may bring.

MBM FARM



# SHEEP CLIENT EVENING

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February: 7pm – 10pm

- **Barren ewes & abortion** – Just one of those things or preventable?
- **Parasites** – When to treat and what to use?
- **Post mortems** – When are they worth it, what do they tell us?

VENUE: SAC Auchincruive, Ayr, KA6 5HW

In Partnership with SAC, buffet & refreshments by Novartis & MSD

## INTRODUCING OUR TEXT REMINDER SYSTEM



We have now a text reminder system in place for vaccinations with boosters on a yearly basis.

We hope this will help keep your vaccinations on track, we also hope to soon be able to produce a reminder for BVD check tests to prevent herds going overdue and unnecessary herd restrictions.

If you would prefer not to receive any text reminders please inform the practice.



## HEIFER REARING COURSE FOR DAIRY CLIENTS

After the success and positive feedback of last years course, we are running the course again for those who missed out.

There will be four evening meetings in the Kilmarnock practice, and 1 afternoon meeting on farm. Topics and proposed dates;

1. Calving/the dry cow: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January
2. Neonatal care: Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January
3. Scour & nutrition: Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January
4. Respiratory disease: Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February
5. Housing & lameness: On-farm afternoon, lunch provided; Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February

Price: £5/night, course notes are included for each night which will build to form a useful reference folder for future use.

Refreshments provided, please let the practice know if you wish to attend and we look forward to seeing you there.

### **NEW PRODUCT FOR CALF PNEUMONIA - FINADYNE TRANSDERMAL; AN EASY TO USE POUR ON ANTI-INFLAMMATORY**



Rapid absorption leads to quick decrease in temperature\*\*



#### **Needle-free application**

- Minimises cattle stress
- Leaves no injection site lesions



#### **Convenient, ready to use**

- Non-refrigerated
- 6 month shelf life once opened
- Red colour – aids application and identification of treated animals
- Easy to measure dosing – no separate syringes and needles
- Short withdrawal (meat: 7 days, milk: 36 hours)



#### **MBM Veterinary Group**

Mauchline  
(01290) 550452

• Kilmarnock  
(01563) 522701

• Beith  
(01505) 502126



Find us on:  
**facebook®**