



Red Tractor Assurance

Members of the Red Tractor Assurance are required each year to review their herd health with their veterinarian. Presently we can sign this without seeing any records however it is helpful to keep accurate health and treatment records.

IT HELPS US TO BE ABLE TO SIGN AND COMPLETE THIS REVIEW IF YOU CAN PROVIDE THIS INFORMATION.

Please take a moment of time to create a handy place to tally the following case numbers as they occur;

- Mastitis
- Lameness
- Culls + reasons
- Involuntary culls (died/emergency slaughter)
- Assisted calvings
- Calf mortality; 1st 24hrs & 24hrs – 42days
- Milk fever
- Retained Fetal Membranes

This will save both time and stress when your review is next due. Please ensure all farm workers know to record cases too.

** REMINDER FOR BVD TISSUE TAGGING **

Many of our clients are now using BVD tissue tags. This is a relatively cheap and reliable way to screen all calves in a herd. We remind clients using ear tissue tags to fulfil their yearly BVD status test, that any calves reported as insufficient sample or inconclusive require individually bled to complete your status allocation. Also please use the provided submission forms to submit tags, either to the practice or by post, as this ensures the results are registered & entered on the Scot Gov system.

GET THE MOST FROM CIS

For herds that milk record with CIS it is possible for us to access this data if you sign a consent form. The benefit to you is that with our 'Total Vet' software we can analyse fertility and mastitis data (if recorded) to identify the specific management areas that you may need to focus on to improve performance. If you are interested please contact the practice (Michael Fallon or Mark Crawshaw).



Colostrum Facts – The Key To Healthy Calves

- It is a minimum of 3 weeks before your calf produces its own antibodies, until then it relies on the antibodies it absorbed from its colostrum for protection.
- Calves with inadequate colostrum transfer will be difficult to keep alive. If your calves are taking scour/pneumonia in first 3 weeks look at colostrum.
- Colostrum quality varies, colostrum from beef cows usually contains 2-3 times more antibodies than dairy cows, the higher yielding the cow the more dilute its colostrum and after the 1st milking colostrum becomes very poor.
- For adequate protection a calf should receive **10% of its bodyweight** in colostrum within the first 6 hours of life, i.e 40kg calf = 4ltr or 50kg calf = 5ltr
- Calves absorb 60-80% of antibodies in colostrum fed in the first 6 hours, 10-15% from colostrum fed at 6-12hrs and <7% from colostrum fed at 12-36hrs
- Colostrum should be collected/fed cleanly, dirt greatly reduces absorption i.e. clean teats pre-stripping and keep a clean calving box – calves will ingest dirt from bedding/cows legs/udder when first searching for a teat.
- Feeding colostrum for the 1st 3-5 days gives calf much more energy to keep warm at its most naive stage of life and overall improves performance in early life.
- UK available Colostrum supplements or syringes mostly act as digestive aids/energy sources, when looking at antibody levels they cannot be compared to fresh or frozen colostrum, this is why they are labelled as SUPPLEMENTS NOT REPLACERS.
- Calves can be bled between 2-9days for colostral antibodies which can help identify if a colostrum protocol change could benefit you young calf health. If you would like advice on your colostrum management please give us a call.

OUT OF HOURS SERVICE

If you require a farm vet outside normal office hours, simply call **any of our 3 branch offices** and follow the instructions, Kernow, our answering service will then take your details and contact one of our 2 on call farm vets who will respond ASAP.

In the event that you are not redirected to Kernow or one of our phone numbers does not work for some reason, please try calling either of the other 2 branch numbers instead;

Mauchline 01290 550452

Kilmarnock 01563 522701

Beith 01505 502126

A problem in one branch is unlikely to affect the other branches phone systems.

If you do experience problems getting through please let us know so we can deal with the problem and keep our system working efficiently.

The Golden Rules of Assisted Calvings

1. If malpresented and you cannot correct after 10mins of work call the vets, overworking bruises the cervix increasing risk of tears, retained cleansing & metritis; delaying could cost the calf & cow. We try our best but cannot arrive instantly!
2. If correct presentation but you cannot pull out one foot in length of both legs (front or back) without excessive strain there is a high chance the calf is too big – call the vet.
3. Once you call us **STEP AWAY FROM THE COW!** Instead prepare 2 CLEANED buckets of warm water, restrain the cow and if we need to do a caesarean we will need decent light, something to act as a table, a place out of wind/dust and helping hands!

**CAESAREAN
= LEFT SIDE**

**CLIP RIBS -
THIGH**



Johne's Disease

Johne's disease is an increasing problem in UK dairy farms; in 2011 NMR surveyed 710 UK dairy herds of which 73% had at least 1 positive cow. Some milk buyers are interested in looking for Johne's disease in cattle due to the possible, but unproven link between Johne's disease and Crohn's Disease in humans.

Johne's disease is caused by a bacterium akin to TB and like TB, it is a disease that is slow to progress. Most animals are infected when young and take a number of years before they show clinical signs. In fact it is very unusual, but not impossible, to see clinical Johne's disease in animals under 2 years old. Routes of infection include;

- In utero (when the calf is in the womb)
- From an infected dam's colostrum or milk
- **Faeces from an infected animal contaminating food, water or bedding or the dam's teats thus infecting the calf.**

Infection from the faeces of an infected adult is the most important route of spread. Therefore maintaining good hygiene in the calving pen can limit the spread of Johne's in the herd. Another big risk factor is the feeding of pooled colostrum or waste milk and this should be avoided as it is a very good way of spreading infection.

As the disease progresses in the infected animal it causes progressive thickening of the intestine. This results in the loss of function of the intestinal wall which is no longer able to absorb the contents of the gut to the level it could previously. The gut becomes overwhelmed and the animal develops very watery diarrhoea, often with bubbles in it. Even though the cow usually continues to eat and appear 'bright of the head' she will lose body condition. Classically Johnes presents shortly after calving. The stress of calving lowers the cow's immune system and she is no longer able to keep this disease she has carried for years in check. The disease is ALWAYS PROGRESSIVE AND WILL BE FATAL, early culling before condition is lost and to prevent further spread through faeces is strongly advised. Johnes survives both in soil and in slurry, therefore try and minimise youngstock exposure to fields recently spread.

Johne's disease is difficult to control and requires a concerted effort between farmer and veterinarian for a number of years. The problem lies with its ability to spread whilst remaining clinically hidden for many years, and the poor sensitivity of the tests available to identify carriers/shedders. Whilst the animal is clinically unaffected, it can be tested falsely negative for multiple years before we find they are positive. And so a large number of infected animals go unseen for a number of years, spreading the disease within the herd before final detection and culling. Tests available include, dung, blood or milk sample, however these should be combined with appropriate herd management to effectively control this disease. If you wish to discuss how Johnes maybe impacting your herd, testing strategies or herd management please speak to one of our farm vets.



MBM Veterinary Group

Mauchline
(01290) 550452

• Kilmarnock
(01563) 522701

• Beith
(01505) 502126



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