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## **Dairy Cattle - Risk of Damage to the Sciatic Nerve**

A recent study has looked at the risk of damaging the sciatic nerve by injections given into the muscle in the rump of dairy cattle. In the pelvic region the sciatic nerve is flatter and wider than you might expect, less than 5mm thick but between 35 – 45mm wide. High yielding dairy cows in early lactation which are in mid to low body condition are more susceptible to sciatic nerve damage by injections because this nerve may only be positioned at a depth about 25mm under the skin.

Damage to the nerve results in weakness & flexion of the affected back leg(s), knuckling of the hoof, pain and lameness.

The study recommends injecting into the neck instead. If this is not possible then positioning of the needle is important to avoid nerve damage. Measure one hand's width back from the wing bone of the pelvis & inject into the muscle at the outer most point of the rump.

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## **TB Policy Update**

From the 1st May 2018, APHA will consider the delayed removal of in-calf TB reactors or Direct Contacts(DCs) that are due to calve within 60 days following their identification. APHA will inform all keepers by telephone of the potential option to delay removal when contacting them to arrange removal of TB reactors from the farm.

If delayed removal is requested, APHA will carry out a Veterinary Risk Assessment (VRA) to assess the situation on the farm.

If the VRA is satisfactory, the following declarations will be required:

- A signed declaration from the owner/keeper (form TB212) they will comply with conditions.
- A signed declaration from one of the Ikin & Oxenham vets that certain conditions for approval can be met. This will be a private arrangement and at the keeper's expense.
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PLEASE NOTE:

1. APHA may carry out unannounced ad hoc inspection visits during the retention period to your farm.
2. No herd testing will be instructed whilst the reactor/DC remains on farm and Short Interval Testing will be delayed until at least 60 days after removal of the reactor/DC.
3. Detailed guidance of the conditions required and the declaration forms will be available from 1st May on Gov.uk or from APHA. The conditions will also be listed on the declaration documents.

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## **TB Policy Update**

From 1st June, vets will have to carry out a review of herd/flock health, performance and antibiotic usage as part of changes to the Red Tractor Assurance standards. The antibiotic review will look at amounts and different products used with recommendations to responsibly reduce use without a negative impact on animal welfare.



## Calf Pneumonia

We are all familiar with the cost implications, reduced growth rates and potential longer term production losses, but diagnosis can be difficult. Some symptoms are not always obvious indicators of pneumonia & so go unnoticed which means treatment is delayed.

The table below has been devised by a local vet researching pneumonia and looking to highlight these key signs by simply observing calves & without the stress of handling.

### Calf Health Scoring

	0	1 (Mild)	2 (Severe)
Cough	None	Single spontaneous cough	Multiple spontaneous coughs
Nasal	None	Cloudy discharge, one nostril	Purulent or excessive discharge both nostrils
Eye	None	Watery discharge not running down face	Discharge running down face
Ear	None	Head shaking or ear flicking	One or both ears drooping or head tilt

If the total score is 2 or greater, then the result is positive and treatment is required sooner rather than later. Give the system a try.

As always, we are happy to advise, assist and/or visit as necessary.

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