

All the latest news and advice from our expert team

# Farm news

January 2022



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Senior Farm Vet B VetMed CertAVP MRCVS

## New revamped Vet Tech services at Scarsdale Vets

**We have thought long and hard about the services that we can offer you here at Scarsdale, and we have decided to revamp our Vet Tech scheme.**

### What's a Vet Tech, I hear you ask?!

A Vet Tech is a non-vet member of staff who is trained in carrying out certain services on your farm. They come with the back-up of our veterinary team, allowing for a smooth and efficient case hand over for anything that might need to be passed on to one of our Farm Vets.

### What can they do?

We are launching the scheme offering several services which we hope that you will find useful and should help you get those awkward-but-necessary tasks carried out.

### The services include:

- RoMS-accredited mobility scoring - a requirement for most dairy contracts, but also useful in beef herds.
- Calf disbudding.
- Calf pneumonia scoring – help to pick up pneumonia cases early and keep on top of problems. Our VetTechs come and 'score' your calves based on a number of parameters which determine whether early treatment is required. The earlier treatment is carried out, the greater the chance of recovery and the lower the impact on the animals' future production.
- Parasitic wasp application.
- Clarifide sampling - genomic testing of calves to establish their future breeding and production potential based on genetic markers in their DNA. This can allow breeding decisions to be made from a young age. Our Vet Techs are trained in carrying out this sampling for it to be sent to the laboratory for analysis.
- Body condition scoring – this can be useful in both dairy and beef herds. Tracking the body condition of an animal over the year can highlight times where problems may occur, whether that be calving issues or potential issues with fertility and metabolic disease.
- Cleanliness scoring – many dairy contracts require this to be carried out routinely – let us take that task off your plate!
- Milk sampling – need to get milk samples from your herd for a quarterly test? Got a mastitis issue that the vets are investigating and need sterile samples taking? Perhaps our Vet Techs might be able to help you collect these and free up your time.

### How much will it cost me?

Our Vet Tech services are charged out on time, at approximately one quarter of our Vet rate, with mileage to and from your premises to be charged on top of this.

Our Vet Tech services are currently available on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays so please speak to our reception team, one of our Vet Techs or one of our farm vets for more information and to book.

Also, if you would be interested in our Vet Techs assisting with a service that we do not currently offer, please speak to us and we will see what we can do to facilitate this - we are always looking at ways of adding to our Vet Techs' skill-set!

## Medicine Matters

**Norbrook have alerted us to a change to the Closamectin Pour On SPC (Summary of Product Characteristics, the boring-but-very-important paperwork that accompanies every medicine), warning against mixing treated with untreated animals:**

*Due to the significant likelihood of cross-contamination of non-treated animals with this product due to grooming (licking), all animals in a group should be treated at the same time and treated animals should be kept separately from non-treated animals throughout the withdrawal period. Non-compliance with this recommendation may lead to residues violations or, in very rare cases, it can lead to adverse events in non-treated animals.*

You may have noticed that Orbenin Eye or Opticlox ointment haven't been available for a few months, and it was unfortunate that the timing of this coincided with an autumn wave of pinkeye. An intramuscular injection of Alamycin can be used to treat pinkeye, as can Orbenin Dry Cow in the eye (same ingredients as Orbenin Eye, but because the name is different and so technically it's not licensed to treat pinkeye, a standard off-license withdrawal period should be applied...).

Calciject 5 (red top) was another casualty of the latest round of unavailability, but we do have plenty of Calciject 2 (green top). Same amount of calcium but no magnesium.

**Speak to your vet if you need more details on whether this is relevant or not for you!**

For more information call our practice on **01332 294929** or email [farmandequine@scarsdalevets.com](mailto:farmandequine@scarsdalevets.com)

**Scarsdale Vets**  
Farm

[scarsdalevets.com](http://scarsdalevets.com)

# Johne's Progress Tracker: the new way to track Johne's disease in dairy herds

Johne's disease, also known as Paratuberculosis, is a well-known disease in the farming industry. It is endemic in the UK but the true prevalence is still unknown - in 2006 a UK study indicated that at least 64% of the herds had at least one positive case. This disease is a chronic, contagious bacterial disease, caused by a bacterium called *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (MAP). It affects cattle, sheep and other ruminants like goats. Johne's is spread mainly through muck to mouth and new-born calves are most susceptible to acquiring infection.

Most of us have dealt with or seen a cow with the typical clinical signs of progressive weight loss and severe diarrhoea. These cases are often just the tip of the iceberg and further investigation at a herd level is needed - it is thought that for every animal that develops clinical signs there will be 7 to 10 others spreading the disease on farm. The financial impact on dairy herds is substantial; being thought to be over £2600 in a 100-cow herd with clinical cases.

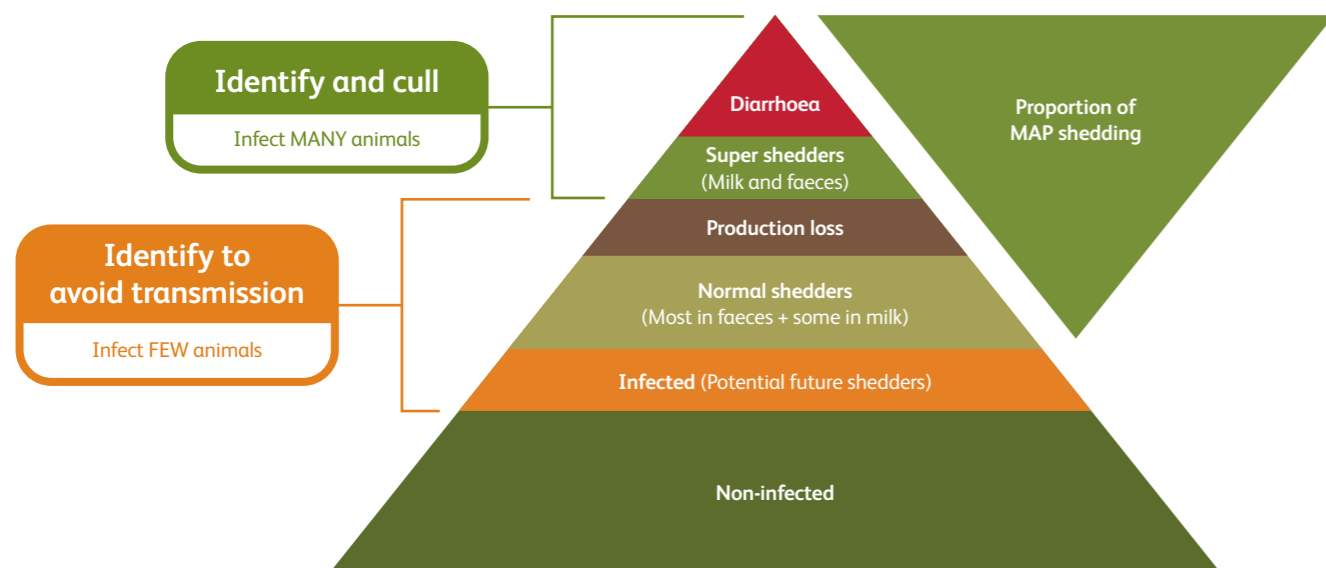


Figure 1. A cow with Johne's

The diagnosis of infected animals is done by tests on milk or blood but, due to the way the disease develops, these tests have strong limitations and a single negative result doesn't mean that an animal doesn't have Johne's. Increasing the rate of testing increases the sensitivity of the test and, currently, the gold standard is quarterly whole adult herd testing through the milk recording organisation.

Johne's is one of the most important, yet also one of the hardest, diseases to eradicate on a farm. Until now the main focus has been on identifying the positive animals and using the number/percentage of them to rank herds. This has its limitations, so new metrics and targets have been developed by the Johne's Action Group to help vets and farmers interpret the results from a herd perspective.

## The iceberg concept:



Gualter Graça  
Farm Clinical Director  
DVM MRCVS

### Level and severity of the disease on the herd:

- Average Test Value** – This is the average of the individual cow values to create a herd value, showing the level of disease in the herd. The ranking of the herds given by this value is stronger because it considers the whole herd rather than just looking at the tip-of-the-iceberg cows.
- POS @ >=30 / >=60 / >=100** – Here, a little bit like SCC, we are looking at some results cut-offs and analysing what percentage of the herd is populating the different levels – i.e. what percentage of the herd has a positive (POS) result over 30, 60 or 100. This allows us to study how the infection is distributed in the herd.
- J5 % (overall)** – percentage of the herd classified as high-risk cows - these are the known red cows.
- J4 % (overall)** – percentage of the herd classified as a new infection on that test date - this metric is useful to know how much new infection is happening.
- J4 % (parity 1)** – percentage of the herd in their first lactations that recorded positive on the last test date.

### Management of Infection:

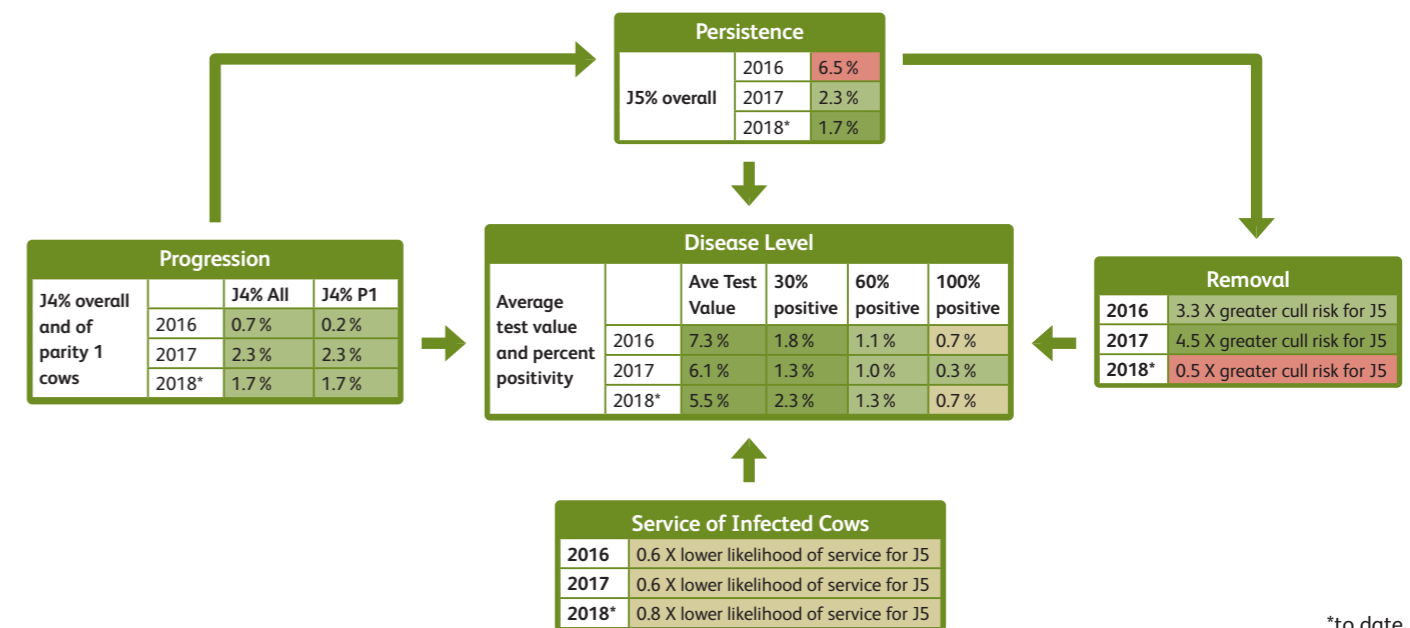
- J5 Service (Relative Risk)** – this value looks at the likelihood of a 'red' cow being served. Assigning final lactation to these cows is an important step on a Johne's control program, as they pose a high risk of spreading an infection on farm.
- J5 Calve (Relative Risk)** – here we find out how likely a J5 is to calve compared to a J0/J1/J2/J3. A higher value here, like the previous one, means that the farm is failing to manage this high-risk animals, increasing the risk of disease spread within the herd.
- J5 Exit (Relative Risk)** – Here we look at how likely a J5 cow is to leave the farm within 150 days after the positive test. A value over 1 means J5 cows are more likely to leave the farm; a value of 4 means a J5 cows is 4 times more likely to leave the herd. Here, opposite to the other two metrics we are looking for a high value, as this indicates that the farmer is intentionally culling high risk cows.

Table 1 shows the results of a survey looking at these metrics in a randomly-selected sample of 253 UK herds – how does your herd compare to the top-performing (Q1) and the bottom-performing (Q2) herds?

Table 1. Data sourced from Herd Companion website, from a study done by the University of Reading using a pool of 253 randomly-selected herds, all carrying out quarterly Johne's testing.

Metric	Qualifying herds 2020 n = 253 herds		
	Q1	Median	Q3
Average Test Value	7.54	9.23	10.28
POS @ >=30	2.9 %	4.7 %	6.5 %
POS @ >=60	0.7 %	1.4 %	2.7 %
POS @ >=100	0.0 %	0.4 %	1.1 %
J4%	1.6 %	2.4 %	3.2 %
J4% L1	0.9	1.8 %	3.0 %
J5%	2.2 %	3.8 %	5.9 %
J5 Service (Relative Risk)	0.24	0.55	0.80
J5 Calve (Relative Risk)	0.52	0.74	0.97
J5 Exit (Relative Risk)	1.81	2.69	4.06

## The Johne's Progress Tracker also has a dashboard that tracks Johne's disease and targets key areas to work on:



\*to date

Figure 3. Johne's Dashboard Graphic, Herd Companion

With these new metrics we can look at the progression of Johne's disease and analyse how well your control plan is working. We have moved from focusing on the tip of the iceberg to decreasing the number of lower risk cows (J4/New test positive) and implementing husbandry procedures that will reduce the spread of disease. Our vets are trained in Johne's control and we are happy to start using this new tracker to help you dealing with Johne's in your herd.



# Protect those lambs!

## (by vaccinating your ewes)

'Colostrum is gold' as the saying goes, but not all colostrum is equal with some containing insufficient antibody levels.

To ensure lambs receive enough antibodies in the colostrum against clostridial diseases, ewes need to be given a HeptavacP Plus booster 4 – 6 weeks before lambing. It's important to remember that any unvaccinated stock who are lambing receive a primary course of two doses 4 – 6 weeks apart, with that second dose falling 4 – 6 weeks pre-lambing. Therefore, good calendar management is needed to ensure vaccines are ordered and administered in time.



**Dave Charles**

Farm Vet CertHE(Biol.) BVSc MRCVS



# Mortal Combat

## Wasps vs Flies

**Wednesday 19th January, 11.30am**  
Markeaton Lane, Derby, DE22 4NH

Come and find out about biological fly control and whether it could help on your farm. Suitable for all housed livestock.



# Lambing Kits

**£70\***

Save over 30% compared to buying these items individually! Our kit contains:

- 2 VetLube bottles
- Rectal gloves
- Digital thermometer
- Dip cup (for navels)
- 10% Iodine 500ml bottle
- 'Ewe Go' drench 1L
- Lambing ropes
- Lamb stomach tube
- 1 Volostrum sachet
- 1 50ml glucose 50%
- 1 Virkon sachet
- 1 RedStart tube
- 1 Selekt Restore sachet
- 1 free beanie and pen (while stocks last!)
- All presented in a handy storage tray (recycled plastic)



\*Inc VAT

# Essential Needle Kit

Save 50% compared to buying the items individually!

- 10 5ml syringes
- 10 18g 1" needles
- 10 10ml syringes
- 10 16g 1" needles

**£5\***

\*Inc VAT

**Farm and Equine Centre**  
Markeaton Lane, Markeaton, Derby DE22 4NH  
01332 294929

Alfreton  
01773 304900  
Pride Veterinary Centre  
01332 678333

Allestree  
01332 554422  
Shelton Lock  
01332 700321

Hilton  
01283 732999  
Stapenhill  
01283 568162

Langley Mill  
01773 304914  
Stretton  
01283 565333

Mickleover  
01332 518585  
Wollaton  
01159 676586