

farm news



Antibiotic Residues in the Dairy Sector: Introducing MilkSure

Carolyn Baguley MA VetMB CertAVP (Cattle) MRCVS, RCVS Advanced Practitioner in Cattle Health and Production



The dairy sector uses relatively few antibiotics in comparison to other farming sectors, but carries a high risk of residues.

Each year approximately 500,000 bulk tank samples are tested for antibiotic residues, of which about 0.25% fail. If every collection was tested, there would be over 7,000 failures. And how much milk enters the food chain above the MRL (maximum residue limit) at an individual cow level that is not detected through testing? Breakdowns of the causes of contamination, and of failures by treatment type, are shown in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Causes of contamination on farm

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| Animal ID error | 41 % |
| Medicine problem (e.g. off-label use) | 26 % |
| Plant failure | 18 % |
| No reason found | 11 % |
| Other | 4 % |

Table 2: Bulk tank failure by treatment type

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Milking cow tubes | 48 % |
| Dry Cow Therapy | 35 % |
| Injection | 10 % |
| Combination treatment | 7 % |

The new MilkSure initiative – part of the industry's strategy on antibiotics – is led by DairyUK and has been developed in conjunction with BCVA (the British Cattle Veterinary Association). It is a training course for British dairy farmers and their employees, and its mission is to safeguard the production of wholesome, residue-free milk. Farmers will benefit from the course by having fewer costly milk residue failures, using medicines more efficiently, and demonstrating to customers a clear commitment to producing pure, safe milk.

The three-hour course is provided by the farm's own vet, using a workbook and other learning materials. A technical section is followed by a practical session on-farm. An online test completes the training (the vet can sit with the farmer and help them with

the test), after which a certificate (valid for 1 year and worth 7 Dairy Pro points) is issued. If enough farms are interested, the technical session (1 ½ hours) could be done as a group workshop, and the individual on-farm practical sessions completed later.

You may have been asked to complete the MilkSure course by your milk buyer, or you may be interested in signing up yourself or your employees. Visit the MilkSure website (milksure.co.uk) for more details, including the cost of the course (this includes a registration fee, payable to MilkSure, plus the cost of the vet's time to deliver the training, payable to Scarsdale).

Please let us know if you would like to sign up. If you have signed up already (you can register on the MilkSure website directly), or if you need any more information.



Worming Lambs

Right product at the right time to improve lamb growth

Robert Howard BVMS MRCVS



The grazing season is well upon us and now is a good time to think about reviewing your worming protocols to improve lamb performance this year.

A mild spring has encouraged early grass growth but the mild winters over the past few years have increased the number of worms on pasture surviving from year to year. Combined with ever increasing resistance throughout the national flock, it is therefore essential that tactical worming is put in place to maximise profitability.

Faecal Egg Counting (FEC)

This is a valuable way of estimating the level of worm burden within your grazing lambs to decide whether or not there is a need to dose the lambs with wormer. Treating too often can be expensive, both in terms of wormer and time, and can increase drug resistance.

Follow these easy steps to perform a FEC:

- Take a small amount of very fresh dung from at least ten randomly selected piles and put in a leak proof pot – available free from Markeaton
- Within 24 hours bring the samples to Markeaton

- A vet will call you when the results become available and will offer appropriate, bespoke advice. This will include advice on which product would be right for you

Even low numbers of worms cause a decrease in growth rates through a reduction in appetite, damage to the gut wall causing reduced nutrient uptake and potentially diarrhoea. Appropriate management will ensure your lambs grow on well to finish quickly and maximise your margin.

We provide full worming management strategies and advice to farmers including grazing management and planning. If you think your lambs are not performing as they should then give us a call.

Abortion Vaccine Reminder

Emily Sycamore BVetMed MRCVS



With lambing not long over for some sheep farmers, it's scary to think that it's already time to start preparing for tupping time – especially in terms of protecting your ewes against infectious causes of abortion.

Enzootic Abortion of Ewes (EAE), caused by *Chlamydophila abortus* and Toxoplasmosis (*Toxoplasma gondii*) account for around 70% of all diagnosed cases of abortion in ewes.

EAE causes late-term abortions (2-3 weeks pre-lambing), with placentas and discharges from aborting ewes being the main source of infection for other ewes. Abortions usually occur in the pregnancy after the initial infection, and so disease can be brought in by apparently healthy ewes. Vaccination (between 4 months and 4 weeks pre-tupping) of uninfected animals protects against abortion, and in animals already latently infected both abortion rates and shedding are reduced.

Toxoplasma infections occurring in the first 60 days of pregnancy result in foetal death. Infections between 60 and 120 days of pregnancy result in abortions, mummifications, stillbirths and the birth of

weak lambs, whilst infections after 120 days result in normal healthy lambs. Infection is via the ingestion of oocysts which have been passed in cat faeces, and minimising contact of ewes with cats plays a role in the control of the disease. Abortions are not a source of infection to other animals, and vaccination at least 3 weeks prior to tupping will stimulate immunity in ewes.

If you would like any more information regarding these vaccines, please give us a ring at the practice.

Please do remember that both of these diseases are zoonotic and pregnant women should avoid contact with pregnant ewes.



BVDFree England

The BVDFree Scheme aims to eliminate BVD from all cattle herds in the country by 2022, and will be run on a voluntary basis until most of the cattle industry is covered by the Scheme, when a solid case can be presented to the Government for collaboration on the introduction of compulsory measures.

Carolyn has recently completed the BVDFree training modules and passed the test set by the BCVA (British Cattle Veterinary Association). This has given her a higher level of awareness of BVD, its control and of how the new BVDFree Scheme works.

Contact her at the practice, speak to your routine vet, or visit www.bvdfree.org.uk for more information about BVD or BVDFree England.

I'm backing



BVD Tags

For those of you who are 'tag & testing' with the BVD tissue tags, a note of caution as the weather warms up. Once a sample has been taken, the tags should not be exposed to extremes of temperature, or the BVD DNA in the tissue sample may denature, which could lead to falsely negative results from samples that are actually positive. Store them in a cool dry place until they are sent off – this doesn't have to be in the fridge, but make sure you avoid direct sunlight, hot windowsills, warm radiators etc.



Welcome!

We welcome two new team members, Vicki and Guillermo, who are both looking forward to getting to know the Scarsdale clients!

Vicki Rhodes BVSc MRCVS



Vicki graduated from the University of Liverpool in July 2015 and then completed a farm animal internship at University College Dublin, Ireland. She then worked in mixed practice before joining the Scarsdale Farm Team in April 2017.

Vicki enjoys all areas of farm vetting, with a special interest in individual surgery cases and young stock. She is currently completing a Dairy Herd Health Certificate and is a BCVA Accredited Johne's Veterinary Adviser.

Vicki enjoys baking and helping on the farm in her spare time, especially during lambing season. She completed the summer show season with pedigree Simmental cattle, winning a few rosettes and is looking forward to training new calves ready for this year.

Guillermo Serrano



Guillermo joins us as a TB tester. Guillermo qualified from the Complutense University of Madrid in Spain in 2015. Right after finishing the degree, he moved to the UK and worked in food safety in Cornwall and Devon.

Guillermo is mainly interested in farm animals and he would like to have his own farm in the future.

Guillermo is really passionate about football and plays it whenever he can. He also enjoys hiking on sunny days and travelling to discover new cultures.

Contact us:

FARM & EQUINE CENTRE
Markeaton Lane, Markeaton,
Derby DE22 4NH
Tel: (01332) 294929

MAIN HOSPITAL
Pride Veterinary Centre,
Riverside Road, Derby
DE24 8HX
Tel: (01332) 678333

PARK FARM
Park Farm Centre, Allestree,
Derby DE22 2QQ
Tel: (01332) 554422

DUFFIELD
15 Town Street, Duffield
Derby DE56 4EH
Tel: (01332) 841700

MICKLEOVER
3 Vicarage Road,
Mickleover,
Derby DE3 0EA
Tel: (01332) 518585

HILTON
6 Witham Close
Egginton Road, Hilton
Derby DE65 5JR
Tel: (01283) 732999

OAKWOOD
Unit 9, Oakwood District
Centre, Oakwood,
Derby DE21 2HT
Tel: (01332) 666500

SHELTON LOCK
247 Chellaston Road,
Shelton Lock
Derby DE24 9EG
Tel: (01332) 700321

**THE SPRINGWOOD
VETERINARY CENTRE**
90 Spring Terrace Road
Stapenhill, Burton-on-Trent
DE15 9DX
Tel: (01283) 568162

STRETTON
36 The Green, Stretton,
Burton-on-Trent
DE13 0EQ
Tel: (01283) 565333

post@scarsdalevets.com

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