

Farm news



Rob Howard BVMS MRCVS



Ketosis: State of the Nation Part 2

Last month we looked at different ways of monitoring the level of ketosis; research has shown that ketosis levels vary throughout the UK, with an average level of 30% but ranging from 10% to 60%. This will vary dependent on several factors including housing pressure, environmental pressure and nutritional pressure; one farm can vary month-to-month, which is why regular sampling is important.

Addressing Ketosis at the herd level:

Ensuring that the environment, housing and nutrition are as good as they can be will help to reduce ketosis at a farm level. Working with your regular vet to investigate the transition period is beneficial (this can be worked into your routine fertility visits).

Addressing ketosis at a herd level will ensure you cater for the average cow in your herd, however there will always be outliers who need special attention through the transition period in order to adapt to Negative Energy Balance and avoid Ketosis.

The outliers

What is an outlier? As a rule of thumb, cows that are 'Sick Old Fat or carrying Twins' (SOFT) require special attention. Treating these animals with TLC will help e.g. ensuring that they have more than adequate feed space and water access, but Kexxtone Boluses can also be used at 3-4 weeks before calving to target cows at risk of Ketosis. According to TSDG (Tesco Sustainable Dairy Group) guidelines, Kexxtone use is permitted and should be used on a targeted basis. Its use does not form part of the TSDG Dairy Health Index measurement of antibiotics and is included for monitoring purposes only.

Warning: the active ingredient in Kexxtone (monensin) is very toxic to dogs so it is recommended to keep dogs away during bolus administration and to keep cows in a holding pen for an hour after treatment to make sure they haven't regurgitated the bolus.

For more information call our practice on **01332 294929** or email farmandequine@scarsdalevets.com



TB Advisory Service

Jess Reynolds BVM BVS MRCVS

We are excited to announce that we are now offering free one-to-one on farm TB advice visits, providing bespoke recommendations for your herd whether currently clear or under TB restrictions. All cattle farmers across the High Risk and Edge area of England are entitled to receive this free advice which is funded by DEFRA and the EU through the Rural Development Programme for England, until 2020.

Visits

In my personal experience, every visit is different depending on the farm in question and can be tailored to suit your individual needs. Visits typically last from 1-3 hours and we will have the benefit of already knowing your system and type of business to help advise you accordingly. We will discuss any TB concerns you may have and then walk around your buildings and any accessible pasture to understand risk factors associated with housing, feeding and badger activity on land. At the end of the visit, we will discuss what we have seen and provide practical recommendations to reduce your TB risk.

After the visit you will receive a bespoke report which will cover the practical recommendations discussed on farm with us. Don't worry, there is no penalty for not managing to input all recommendations, we are here to help and can provide advice on implementing changes after the visit too!

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What else can we do?

- If you don't have time for a visit we can provide telephone advice free of charge or one-to-one drop in clinics at our practice on Markeaton Lane too!
- Manage your biosecurity: you can track TB breakdowns nationwide to check the TB status of herds you are purchasing from or those local to you via ibtb.co.uk.
- Keep up to date: see all the latest information on how to protect your herd from TB, including new legislation via tbhub.co.uk.

If you have had a TB breakdown, you will have received a Farm Level Data Pack from APHA, which explains the level of TB risk to your herd. This can really help you identify how TB has been transmitted to your herd and will include the pattern of TB breakdowns, movements of cattle in the last 5 years and genotypes of *M.bovis* isolated in the lab from reactors (which can help identify the geographical area where that strain is commonly found). The report even shows genotypes of *M.bovis* isolated from TB breakdowns around your farm. Keep this report handy, we can use it at your free TB advice visit!

To book your TB advice visit, drop in session or to receive telephone advice please call us on 01332 294929. We will need your CPH, UK herd number and Single Business Identifier before your visit.



Congratulations to Fay!

Fay's recently achieved her certificate in advanced veterinary practice in Camelids – becoming one of only a few UK vets to hold this qualification.

A lot of hard work and dedication has gone into reaching this level. Well done Fay!



New Red Tractor Standards

Emily Sycamore BVetMed CertAVP MRCVS



Farm assurance schemes are in place to ensure high standards of health and welfare for farmed animals, provide traceability in the food we eat and to ensure high standards within the food producing industry.

As of October 2019 the requirements for the Red Tractor Dairy Farm Assurance Scheme are changing, all of the old requirements are still in place, however there are some new requirements that it is important you are aware of.

Examples of the information/protocols which should now be included in the health plan (in addition to what is already included) are:

- A Johne's Control Strategy signed by a BCVA Johne's accredited vet (we have several of these at the practice).
- A BVD eradication plan.
- Plans for lameness management, including a mobility scoring protocol, foot trimming protocol and a foot-bathing protocol.
- A copy of your milking routine protocol plus any information regarding your Mastitis Control Plan and/or information from the AHDB Dairy Mastitis Pattern Analysis Tool (if these have been done/used).
- A protocol of Dry Cow Therapy (including details on the thresholds used for your selective dry cow therapy protocol).
- A section on protocols regarding calvings: protocol for use of calving aids, Management of the cow/calf at separation and disease control at calving (e.g. with regards to Johne's disease etc.).
- A policy on the use of pain relief on farm.
- A protocol for use of shackles/hobbles on farm.

- At least one person who deals with the administration of medicines should have attended an approved training course dealing with this subject matter.
- Protocols for dealing with emergency situations on farm – for example; fire, flood etc.
- Details of your parlour plant cleaning protocol.

This list is not exhaustive, and many of these new areas are already covered by Scarsdale Vets' existing herd health plan. We will be launching an updated version of our herd health plan to ensure that it is fully compliant with these required additions.

Although being a necessary requirement for farm assurance, your herd health plan should ideally not be viewed as a 'tick box exercise' that just has to be done to gain farm assurance status. Herd health plans are intended to be usable, dynamic documents that are updated as and when changes occur on farm. They should be used as a reference guide and the process of filling in the herd health plan should be undertaken alongside your vet who can help and advise over what policies, protocols and plans would best suit your farm.

For more details visit assurance.redtractor.org.uk/standards

Book your place on one of our Mastering Medicines courses

Attendance will comply with the new Red Tractor guidelines for farm staff involved with the administration of veterinary medicines to have attended a course on the appropriate use of these products. Each course takes place at our Markeaton Lane practice on the following dates:

- Thursday 7 November 2019
- Thursday 5 December 2019
- Thursday 9 January 2020
- Thursday 6 February 2020

For more information or to book, call our team on 01332 294929

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Pride Veterinary Centre
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Shelton Lock
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Hilton
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Stapenhill
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