



WENSUM VALLEY VETS NEWSLETTER

Our Ovacyte Worm Egg Counting Machine

Earlier this year the practice invested in a state-of-the-art worm egg counting machine which can identify all relevant species of worm present in sheep and cattle in the UK. This will allow us to target our treatment to groups most at risk of disease and diagnose the cause of problems such as diarrhoea, poor weight gain, weight loss and listlessness. This automated process is significantly more precise than the previous method of manually counting and is available for one-off worm egg counts or as part of our **Smallholders Club**.



Worm egg counting is recommended and now common practice for most keepers of livestock instead of



Uses of Modern Technology in Farming

This month's newsletter focuses on the use of technology in farming and how our some of our clients are putting it to good use on their farms.

Virtual Fences

The collars pictured above are part of a 'virtual fence' system, employed at a local beef farm. Field perimeters can be set and edited through a smartphone app, the cows are trained and when the cow approaches the 'virtual fence' they move away. The position and movements of



'blanket worming' or worming periodically. It often results in financial benefits, as money is saved by not using wormers, as well as the long term benefits of not causing wormer resistance problems.

Fluke Testing:

The Ovacyte machine can also identify fluke eggs! So we can now provide in-house fluke testing for sheep, cattle, goats and camelids

SCOPS/COWS recommend Faecal testing in Winter, Spring and Late Summer, during the chronic disease risk period every 4-8 weeks.

However a more achievable approach would be to conduct Faecal Testing at housing, followed by a Faecal Egg Count Reduction Test (FECRT) if positive results are detected, and then to test again 2 months following turn out to look for reinfection from the pasture.



each individual animal can be monitored through the app too!

So far the farm has had great success teaching their cattle to respond to the sound and have not had any escape their 'virtual fields'. The collars are comfortable and are a suitable weight for heifers and cows, being individually fitted to ensure that the cows can't remove them. Our vets have enjoyed learning more about this interesting technology and how it can be put into use for strip grazing, collecting cows into a smaller area, creating corridors and as an invisible barrier. It's always exciting to see innovative changes on farms and feel part of the process of our clients' success.



Milking Robots

Dairy farming can be a labour intensive process, with the time milking cows consuming large periods of time at both ends of the day. It is also known that twice daily milking does not suit all individual cows, with some more comfortable and producing greater milk yields if milked more frequently. These are amongst the many reasons that many dairy farmers have installed "milking robots" to replace traditional milking parlours.



The robots clean their teats, apply the milking cluster and milk the cows without human intervention, and cows can choose when they use the milking robot throughout the day and night with frequency and individual production recorded for farmers to analyse. Training the cows to use the milking robot and tempting them into it with highly palatable feed are needed to begin with, but soon it becomes second nature to them.

Our vets love hearing about changes, progress and plans on your farm!

