

Membership and Non-Membership passes are available (Please contact us for details)



98th PLOUGHING & HEDGE LAYING MATCH
By kind permission of The Venables & Lea Families

THE CHESHIRE PLOUGHING MATCH

Holly Tree Farm, Lower Withington
Macclesfield, SK11 9DT
Wednesday 25th September 2024

Shire Horse & Tractor Ploughing Classes
Hedge Laying Competition · Machinery Demos
Trade Stands · Presidents Luncheon
Licensed bar



ADMISSION £20 · FREE PARKING

For Further Enquiries
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Cheshire Ploughing Match

On Wednesday 25th September the Wright & Morten Farm team can be found at the Cheshire Ploughing Match. We're very lucky that this year it is being held just across the road from the practice so expect to see lots of our lovely staff members throughout the day. We will have a range of challenges, quizzes and information at the stand with some great prizes to be won! We'll be firing up our BBQ nice and early to help you start your day with bacon/sausage/egg baps and then moving onto Mirel's famous burgers later on. You can find us on Stand G4 and we look forward to having a good catch up with everyone. Address for the Ploughing Match is Holly Tree Farm, Lower Withington, Macclesfield, SK11 9DT.

may not work that well but he still wants the job! The best time to do it is at least 6 weeks before breeding mainly to allow you time to replace your ram if things are not as ideal as we want them to be. Give Hollie or Mel a ring to discuss pre-breeding exams for your rams.

New calf colostrum in stock



We have recently started stocking a different type of calf colostrum at the practice. Unlike many colostrum powders the SCCL branded colostrum can be used as a true replacement for dam's colostrum as it is true bovine colostrum rather than a product manufactured using whey or skim protein. It is guaranteed free from a range of diseases including

TB and Johne's and is high in colostrum fat which is very important for newborn energy. Depending on whether you are using the colostrum powder to supplement or replace we would advise using different amounts of the sachet – starting from half a sachet up to 2 sachets. Whilst this colostrum powder may seem more expensive than some you can get off the shelf it is important to think why it is being used most on your farm and tailor which products you are using to each situation. If you want to discuss the colostrum powder you are currently using to see if it matches your requirements then please just ask one of our vets.

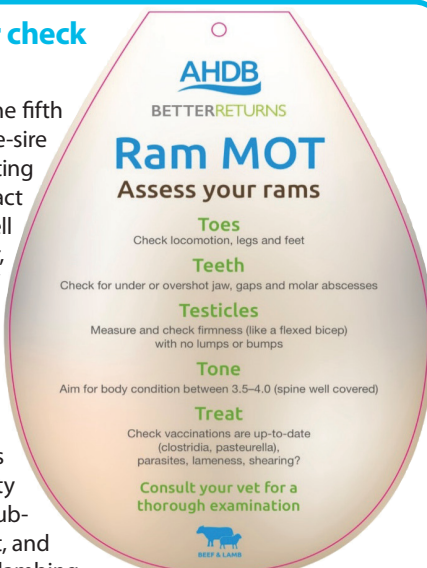
Sheep abortion vaccines update

As we head into sheep mating season we thought we would provide an important update on the abortion vaccine availability. The standard Enzoitic abortion vaccines (Cevac Chlamydia and Enzovax) are not available this year and manufacturing issues. We do have another vaccine (Inmeva) that covers Enzoitic abortion however it is an inactivated vaccine which must be given twice 3 weeks apart with the final dose being at least 5 weeks before breeding. This vaccine can also be used in the face of an outbreak so is a good one to remember about if things are not progressing well in lambing season. Advice will differ farm to farm based on previous vaccination history, sourcing policies and other risk assessments so please do give us a call for bespoke advice.

Toxo vaccines must be done at latest 3 weeks prior to mating and we are currently not experiencing any issues with supply. However, we always advise ordering as far in advance as possible to ensure your ewes are well protected. It is well worthwhile looking at your diaries now to make sure you have enough time to vaccinate.

Have you given the lads their check up before tupping this year?

Did you know it's thought more than one fifth of rams are sub-fertile? If you run single-sire groups, synchronised ewes, or large mating groups, this could have a significant impact on the success of lambing time. It's well worth giving all your tups a once over, checking all of the above for any signs of abnormality. If you don't feel confident doing the examination yourself, our vets are happy to assist in pre-breeding exams, with the added benefit that we can collect a semen sample from any suspect animals. We can also use this for investigating any suspect infertility issues through the autumn and winter. Sub-fertile rams will get fewer ewes pregnant, and will take longer to do it, meaning your lambing period becomes prolonged. Even if multiple rams are used, if the sub-fertile one is dominant, he can stop the others from working – he



AHD B
BETTER RETURNS
Ram MOT
Assess your rams

- Toes**
Check locomotion, legs and feet
- Teeth**
Check for under or overshot jaw, gaps and molar abscesses
- Testicles**
Measure and check firmness (like a flexed bicep) with no lumps or bumps
- Tone**
Aim for body condition between 3.5–4.0 (spine well covered)
- Treat**
Check vaccinations are up-to-date (clostridia, pasteurella), parasites, lameness, shearing?

Consult your vet for a thorough examination

HEEP & LANG

Goodbye and good luck to Ash



I'm so sad to be leaving Wright and Morten but taking a lot of wonderful memories with me! It really has been the greatest few years working as a mixed vet in beautiful Cheshire and Derbyshire- I have

loved treating your farm cats and dogs, along with the larger farm creatures. Thank you so much to the lovely clients who've indulged my chatty scouse ways on visits, and hosed me down after very rarely staying clean on farm! I'm very thankful to the wonderful W&M team – both clinical and non clinical staff who have brought me on so much since starting in September 2022 – It been a pleasure to work with such a progressive, forward thinking team. I'll miss you all very much!

I'm staying in the area but going to locum and try something new for a while. I'm hoping I'm going to pick up some new ways of doing things, and hoping to see some novel farming approaches across the UK and abroad; even planning a stint of charity vet work soon. I'm hoping to return with some new skills and stories in the future!

Calf Housing

Optimising calf performance requires attention to detail across many different areas of calf management. One area that often goes overlooked is maintaining calf housing, especially when things get busy! In order to achieve best results from your calves, whilst also minimising the incidence and spread of disease, it's important to consider 5 key requirements.

Space: It is a LEGAL requirement to provide calves on milk with a minimum space of 1.5m². In addition to adequate lying space, it is important to provide sufficient space for feed and water. This is especially important in group housing.

Ventilation: Fresh air with minimal draughts will help reduce the risk of bovine respiratory diseases, i.e. pneumonia. Examples of ways to improve ventilation include provision of fans, tubing and provision of the 'stack effect'.

Microclimate: Calves perform best at temperatures between 15-20C. This means that there should be plenty of fresh, deep bedded straw for them to be able to 'nest' which allows optimal metabolism without calves losing energy to heat themselves up.



Hygienic environment: Calf pens, hutches and igloos should be easy to clean out and disinfect between batches of animals (including floors and walls). Having a foot-dip on entry to the calf housing area minimises the risk of spread of disease between the adult herd and the youngstock.

Good drainage: Around 80% of a calf's day is spent lying down, which requires plenty of clean and dry bedding. Soiled and wet bedding provide the perfect environment for bacteria to thrive and present a high risk of infection to naive animals.

There are several different options for calf housing, and what is best for one farm will differ to another, so it's important to consult your routine vet if you are considering making changes to your current calf housing. For each calf housing system, there are advantages and disadvantages.

Individual hutches

Advantages

- Limit nose-to-nose contact between calves so are highly effective at reducing disease transfer.
- Allows calves to be in their preferred environment due to ample space.
- Reduces competition for concentrate feed, so starter feed intakes and individual health status can be closely monitored.

Disadvantages

- Disease control can be difficult to manage if there is poor drainage and the area cannot be rotated easily.
- Individual hutches can be hard to clean which increases labour.
- Red Tractor Farm Assurance and some milk contracts stipulate that calves should NOT be housed individually due to research showing cognitive deficits compared to socially reared calves (in pairs or more).

Group calf igloos

Advantages

- Group housing mimics a more natural environment, reducing stress which can lead to increased weight gain and increased intakes of starter feed - both of which make the transition period around weaning less stressful.
- Igloos generally maintain temperatures inside around 2.3C higher than the outdoor exercise area, and 0.8C warmer than conventional indoor housed pens.
- Research has shown that air direction changes roughly every 15 minutes in igloos, providing good ventilation.
- As they are bigger than individual hutches, igloos can be picked up with the loader, making cleaning and disinfection between groups easy.



Disadvantages

- Group housing can increase the risk of spread of respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases compared to individual housing.
- Additional wind breaks, such as large bales of straw, may be required during cold and/ or windy conditions.
- Sadly, learned behaviours with group housing is not limited to positive effects. Navel sucking and dominance behaviours are more commonly seen in calves that are housed together.

New builds

Advantages

- This is a blank canvas - so the design can be tailored to improve calf health and welfare.
- The building can be designed and maintained to accommodate all requirements to optimise calf health and performance.
- Provides nicer working conditions for labourers in harsher weather.

Disadvantages

- If continuously stocked, disease control may prove difficult if there are few or no rest periods between calves.
- Planning is required and capital costs will be high compared to alternatives such as igloos, hutches or renovations of current buildings.

Renovation

Advantages

- Overall costs are less than designing a new build.
- Can adapt the current shed to meet the requirements of the calf whilst also providing a better working environment for labourers.
- If draughts are adequately avoided, sheds can provide excellent shelter without preventing access to fresh air.

Disadvantages

- Natural ventilation is not often available, so there is increased reliance on mechanical ventilation.
- Drainage is not always very good in older sheds or sheds that have been converted into calf housing, which can severely compromise hygiene and subsequent disease levels.

Calf housing should optimise calf health and welfare and not be detrimental to the growth and development of the calf. Providing an adequate environment that is focused on maintaining excellent animal welfare, minimising infectious disease and improving the performance of the calf, is what we all should be aiming for. If you would like to discuss your current calf housing, or are looking to change your calf housing in any way, please do get in touch.

FARM
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 Like us on Facebook for up-to-date news and the latest events! Search 'Wright & Morten Farm Animal Services'


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