Getting stock ready for a healthy winter

What wonderful September weather we have enjoyed! Grass continues to grow and field work is all on schedule; let’s hope conditions remain favourable for a successful maize harvest.

It’s easy to forget that winter is just around the corner and the good weather will change to cold, wet and windy. Below are a few reminders as we approach housing so you can have your stock ready for a healthy winter.

• **Pneumonia vaccines.** If you are planning to reduce the risk of respiratory disease in your cattle then remember to start your vaccinations before the risk period. Rispoval 4 is a popular choice for protecting young stock as it protects against BVD, IBR, RSV and PI3 which are all significant pathogenic viruses commonly found in pneumonia outbreaks. If you need to protect younger calves then speak to your vet about which vaccine is most suitable. Remember that adult cows need their IBR vaccine boosted every 6 months and the main risk period in many herds is during the winter. If you would like any help or advice about ventilation in your farm buildings then speak to your vet.

• **Parasite control.** The traditional ‘housing dose’ of wormer is still a popular and effective way of reducing parasite burdens. There are a huge range of products on the market all with their pros and cons. We appreciate that picking out the right treatment for your herd/ flock can be difficult with all the sales patter and special offers that goes on. Why not keep it simple and speak to your vet or our SQP Mark Pass at Beeston Animal Health for some simple honest advice. In addition we offer very reasonably priced faecal egg counts to establish if treatment is required and how effective treatment has been. Liver fluke continues to be a problem despite the relatively dry summer weather, again its best to speak to your vet about how best to test and treat for fluke in your herd/ flock.

• **Metabolic disease.** As predicted last month we have seen the annual increase in milk fever and other metabolic diseases associated with calving. We have a number of initiatives available to help reduce the risk of fresh cow illness including blood profiles, BCS and rumen fill scoring, dietary analysis, transition cow period assessment and scoring, ketosis monitoring using blood or milk (including a free technician service for ketosis monitoring). We also have a number of boluses which are useful in managing these diseases. For more advice about reducing the risk of milk fever and the other metabolic diseases in your herd speak to one of the vets.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bolus</th>
<th>When to use</th>
<th>What it does</th>
<th>Duration of action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cosecure</td>
<td>Normally at drying off</td>
<td>Supplements tarce elements Copper, Cobalt and Selenium (Iodine is optional)</td>
<td>Approximately 6 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rumbul</td>
<td>7 days before the risk period</td>
<td>Supplements Magnesium levels reducing the risk of Staggers and helping prevent milk fever</td>
<td>Depending on diet but two boluses normally last 28 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kextone</td>
<td>3 weeks before calving in high risk ketosis cows</td>
<td>Helps maintain positive energy balance through the end of dry period and early lactation</td>
<td>Pulse release with around 90 days action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bovikalc</td>
<td>At calving or when treating milk fever</td>
<td>Supplements calcium to reduce the risk of clinical milk fever</td>
<td>Lasts 24 hours and can be repeated as required</td>
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The third vet charity challenge took place on Saturday 28th September in Wiltshire. As usual we were inundated with applicants to be part of the farm animal team, but only the cream of the crop were successful... John Dawson, Rachel Adams, Emyr Rowlands and Vicky Rowlands! We started out on excellent form getting all the points in the canoeing and the team tasks but then injuries and dodgy bikes got the better of us so we had to settle for 15th place out of 47. However, we had a great day, worked really well as a team and raised lots of money for charity, so all in all a great success!

After completing 6 weeks in the South Island working with some very large herds (average 800 cows) during their busy calving period, I am now based in the North Island for a couple of months, working with a large team of vets, to help clients get the herds back in calf. The density of dairy cattle is quite striking and as with all farming systems across the world, there are battles in many areas of herd health. From infectious disease control to non-cycling cows, there is plenty of work to keep me busy. As with the UK, there is plenty of evidence-based science, and economics, applied to most of the strategies for targeting herds on all levels of veterinary medicine. It has been fantastic to learn about this to bring back to the Willows on my return in December, and ‘the Kiwis’ are keen to learn about our ways, with a similar attitude towards improving best practice, to ensure they are at the forefront of dairy veterinary practice. Despite my busy working schedule, I am making the most of any time off. Skiing predominated at the start of my trip, and surfing has taken over now I’m in the North Island. I’m also busy preparing for the Auckland Marathon! See you on the otherside!

Congratulations to Caroline and Dave Williams who got married on the 20th September. We wish you many years of wedded bliss!

It was great to be able to welcome so many friends and clients to our stand at last months ploughing match. The day was a great success and enjoyed by all.

FOOT TRIMMING
Contact Steve Austin
01565 723036
Visit per cow
£12 – 4 feet £10 – 2 feet
Block – £9.50
Bandage – £2.50
No Call out fee for 12 or more cows

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