A group of research scientists in Germany have recently discovered a new haplotype mutation in the Holstein breed that causes death in calves 3 weeks to 6 months of age. Already labelled HCD (Haplotype Cholesterol Deficiency), homozygous calves that have inherited the undesirable gene from both parents often present with chronic diarrhoea, that does not have an underlying pathogenic cause diagnosed and does not respond to standard treatment. Over time, these calves have an increased incidence of loss of appetite and body condition, eventually depleting all body fat reserves. These weakened and thin calves are then prone to secondary infections, often resulting in death from pneumonia or apparent starvation. Examination of blood samples from those affected has revealed a cholesterol deficiency that prevents the normal deposition of fat in body tissues. There is no cure or effective treatment for these calves, as they essentially have no cholesterol. The condition has been labelled as a Haplotype Cholesterol Deficiency because the exact location of the defective version of the gene or genes within the haplotype have not yet been identified. In its simplest terms, a haplotype is a set of DNA variations that tend to be inherited together. HCD calves must be homozygous for the gene in order to be clinically affected, and therefore must have carrier parents on both sides. The actual name of this inherited disorder could change when the precise error in lipid metabolism and/or the actual gene involved is discovered. Because the exact gene has not been identified and there is no genetic test available yet, researchers are relying on analysis of pedigree and genomic data to identify likely carriers of the gene within the Holstein breed. It has been proposed that the North American sire “Maughlin Storm” born in 1991 was the original individual who carried the new gene mutation and his widespread use has caused a distribution of the mutation and formation of carriers within the Holstein population worldwide.

If you suspect you have an animal with this new condition them speak to one of the vets for further information and testing.
Introducing . . .

Sam Bowker

My name is Sam Bowker and I am delighted to be joining the farm team at the Willows. I have grown up on a mixed livestock farm in East Devon with exposure to dairy, beef, sheep, pigs and even reindeer, and am moving up from Cambridge with my wife Sarah having recently graduated.

I am looking forward to getting to know the farms in the area, and am passionate about working in partnership with farmers to maximise profitability through improving animal health - I firmly believe healthy animals are productive animals.

Outside interests include sport (particularly hockey, tennis and football - I am a big Manchester United fan), church and enjoying the outdoors. I look forward to meeting you on farm.

Dan Robertson

I joined the Willows farm team at the beginning of August, having graduated from Liverpool vet school this July. Despite not being from a farming family, I grew up working on farms and in 2008 began a small Charolais herd of my own. I also previously worked for Genus ABS in Northumberland as an AI and RMS technician for two years, and studied Animal Science at Newcastle University before studying to be a vet.

Outside of work I enjoy playing sport-in particular rugby union although I am partial to the odd game of league too. I am also a keen footballer and squash player, although not particularly good at either!

Nantwich and Denbigh Shows

**NANTWICH**

This year’s show was a great success and we were delighted to welcome so many of you onto the stand. It started slowly, but as the forecast improved more people turned up, until by BBQ time it was standing room only. As per last year, we were pleased to see many Hampton and Manor Court clients join us for a drink and a bite to eat. The day was topped off with us winning the FIRST prize for the Small Agricultural Business Stand!! Thanks again to those who joined us on the day . . .

**DENBIGH**

This was a new show for us to coincide with the opening of our new Mold Office. Although we had to set up in the rain the day before we had a dry day for the show. It was a superb show and it was nice to see so many of our clients – both English and Welsh join us for food, drink and a natter . . .