Relocation - Relocation

In order to continually improve our service we will be opening a new farm branch office in North Wales in early August. The office is located at Unit 16, Mold Business Park CH7 1XP which can be easily accessed from the A494, a convenient location for clients using Mold market to collect their orders. The office will be open 8-5pm weekdays with Saturday hours and new telephone number to be confirmed next month.

The new surgery sees the end of our tenancy at the Alford surgery, with Mary and Helen relocating to staff the Mold branch. Clients previously using the Alford branch are welcome to use the Mold or our existing offices located in Tarvin or Malpas for collections if preferred (locations and contact numbers on back of the newsletter).

Cheshire Show

We hope you made it to our stand at the Cheshire show for tea and cake. It was great to see so many from the farming community exhibiting the best of local agriculture and putting on another great show. Congratulations to all who enjoyed success in the various showing classes and especially well done to our very own Owen Tunney for his success with his Angus cattle. Don’t forget to come and see us at the Nantwich show, let’s hope the weather is as good!

Sheep Club Update

Following on from the launch of the sheep club last year, Gethin from Willows Farm Vets and Mark Pass from Beeston Animal Health have been busy working away visiting some of our clients to discuss how their sheep flock is performing, address any problems they encounter and provide joined-up thinking into treatment plans. This allows the effective and appropriate use of wormers, vaccines and other treatments in a time and cost-effective manner that ensures those clients are minimising the inappropriate use of medicines and hence extra cost.

For those of you who have not heard about the Sheep Club, I hear you ask “what’s it all about?” For a reasonable monthly fee you get:-

• 3 Visits a year-pre-tupping, pre-lambing and post-lambing. This allows forward planning to ensure treatments and protocols are up to date, and ensure losses are minimised.
• 6 hours “on-farm” time eg 3 x 2 hour visits with not visit fees. Looking at your figures e.g. scanning and lambing percentage, weaning, deaths and losses, poor performance.
• Also able to use for clinical work eg blood sampling, disease investigation; Ram fertility testing, Teaser preparation.
• Free faecal egg counting.
• Benchmarking within the group and comparison to UK figures.
• Free phone advice with Mark Pass and Gethin Edwards.

If you would like any more information please give Gethin (07795 574629) or Mark Pass (07876896566 or 01829 261361)
‘The Best Way Forward’

Reaseheath College still have funding available through the Prince’s Countryside Fund to help support farmers in Cheshire and surrounding areas with one-to-one advice and consultancy. The advice is 100% funded and can be focussed on finance, business management, environmental management and animal husbandry.

Comments from farmers who have benefitted from the funding include:

• “input and business advice has made me see the light at the end of the tunnel”
• “when farmers work so hard, it is difficult to think positively so that’s why outside advice is so useful”
• “the input gave us some great ideas for the future of our business”
• “this funding helped me make sense of and gave me confidence that I had made the right decision in changing my business from milking to rearing youngstock”

For more information contact Lesley Innes at Reaseheath College on 01270 625131 ext 7308 or email lesleyi@reaseheath.ac.uk

Congratulations . . .

. . . to Em and his wife Vicky on the birth of their son. Logan Rowlands was born on 21st June at a very healthy 9lb 4oz

Total Dairy Seminar 2015

The Total Dairy seminar provided an excellent line up of speakers this year again. Below are a few take home messages from the lectures that are particularly relevant and helpful to share with you.

Professor Jo Leroy from the veterinary sciences department at the university in Antwerp was keen to stress that metabolic health is crucial for healthy cows and healthy profits. He highlighted the need to focus on appetite and dry matter intake with the key to success being good dry cow management. Cows with good metabolic health are able to reproduce successfully even at very high levels of milk production. Speaking about dietary supplemental fats and dairy cow fertility Prof Leroy explained how a series of metabolic pathways in the body (with insulin playing a major role) can lead to a net increase in negative energy balance and little positive effect on oocyte and embryo quality from feeding more fat. The take home message here was that disappointing fertility at a herd level will not be solved by fat supplementation.

Dr Michael Wolf is a cattle vet from Wisconsin who specialises in cattle production medicine. His lecture highlighted the effects of heat stress on dairy cattle and how active ventilation (Power Assisted Ventilation) can transform the success of a shed. By measuring the temperature humidity index (THI) and effective cow side velocity (ECV), particularly in areas of increased stocking pressure like collecting yards he can set up fans to accurately reproduce desirable airflow and wind speed for the cows. Dr Wolf also introduced the physiology behind long day photo period lighting (LDPP), and how the economics of increased production, outweigh the installation and operational costs.

Greg Bethard and Matt Lange spoke from their experience as financial consultants for large scale dairies in the US. Their presentations were entitled ‘Surviving Low Milk Price’ and ‘Benchmarking to Gauge Performance in Tight Economic Times’ and were unsurprisingly very popular! They were both optimistic about the dairy industry explaining how population numbers, and demand for all food produce will follow with a rewarding milk price. They explained how a fluctuating milk price gave enormous opportunities for milk producers, and how the key to success is based upon careful financial planning to ‘ride-out’ the more difficult times we face, and operating a business that is as efficient as possible at all times, to make the very most of the ‘good times’.

Prof Jon Huxley presented a session on lameness which essentially duplicated our June newsletter article ‘Do lame cows get thin, or do thin cows get lame?’ the take home message from this was to avoid excess weight loss to help reduce the risk of lameness.

Next year the Total Dairy seminar will be held on the 1st and 2nd June and already there is a formidable line up of international expert speakers, the event is packed full of practical and relevant dairy information from around the globe and well worth a visit.