

Winter's coming!

One thing you can always be sure of is the relentless march of time and as I write this intro to our autumn newsletter it certainly feels like summer has raced past and winter is fast approaching. This edition of the newsletter also represents a milestone for us as it is two years since we started the practice. Where does the time go! As ever it has been another busy few months for us with both existing and new clients needs keeping us out of mischief. This time of year always marks the "Results" season with both my students at Harper Adams and also our Spring calving herds finding out whether their hard work paid off. PD season is a long slog but on the whole results have been good this year with most herds achieving their targets. Overall that successful summer has been mirrored by most of our herds with the trials and tribulations of 2018 seemingly behind us, forage stocks restored and fertility thriving. Let's hope this isn't the calm before another weather storm.

That brings me neatly to this month's exciting newsletter. With changes coming thick and fast to various farm assurance schemes we have put together a guide to the key changes to help farms stay ahead of the game. Alongside our regular features there is also a report on our progress in reducing antibiotic use on farm. Also with end of season parasite treatments looming Mark provides a summary of what your options.

Dave



Upcoming training courses

Wed 20th Nov – Milksure part 1–

Back by popular demand, another chance to attend this valuable course if you missed it(last time.

Wed 11th Dec – Infectious disease control –

As part of the BVD stamp it our campaign we are running another free meeting centring on the control of Johne's disease and BVD at herd level. This meeting also gives herds not yet enrolled in the scheme the opportunity to access funding for BVD control.

Farm assurance update

In August 2019 Red tractor announced several changes to their dairy standards which is to be implemented in October 2019 and will be required for all reviews after that date. Whilst some of these changes are relatively minor, a number of major changes have been made. Previously many of these have been recommendations that have been set out in the appendices of the dairy standards however these have now been made requirements.

Many of the new changes and additions focus on animal health and welfare and include the requirement to have in place protocols on calving procedures, lameness management, pain relief and management of downer cows including the use of shackles. Additionally, some changes relating to food safety have been introduced. Both animal health and welfare as well as food safety firmly sit within the remit of your vet and as such Red Tractor now specifically require the

Health Plan to be written in association with you vet.

An area where there has been significant change is that of the strategies to control infectious disease. This includes diseases such as Johnes and BVD. Evidence of implementation and active participation of the National Johnes Management Plan (NJMP) and the BVD Eradication Plan is required. Appropriate declarations for the NJMP must be completed and signed by a BCVA Accredited Johnes's Veterinary Advisor. All three of us at Horizon are accredited advisors. This like the other policies

must be present and accessible on the farm.

Furthermore, evidence of active management of other infectious diseases in addition to the above and relevant to the herd is also required. This includes but is not limited to the



control of lameness, parasites, TB and IBR. A more detailed biosecurity protocol to reduce the risk of infectious disease entering the farm is now also required.

Consistent with the increased awareness of antibiotic use, more detail on the use of antibiotics on farm is now also required, with an annual medicines review to be completed by your vet. This should include analysis of drying off protocols with specific reference to the use of sealants and the implementation and use of selective dry cow therapy. The review now also needs to include all cascade/off-label use of medicines along with discussions on any preventative treatments. There is also a requirement for this to include all antibiotic failures. In a bid to reduce the amount of antibiotics used on farm, the use of preventative treatments such as vaccination should also be included in the review.



A significant requirement that has been introduced is the requirement of the at least one person, who is responsible for administering medicines has undertaken training and holds a certificate of competence/ attendance from training undertaken since October 2016.



This includes Milksure and veterinary led courses.

In addition to the introduction of new and more detailed requirements, some details have been removed. For example, this previously recommended targets for colostrum provision to calves have been removed. The new wording states only that the calf should receive adequate colostrum. This therefore puts the emphasis on those responsible to ensure and demonstrate that colostrum provision is adequate.

Whilst we have highlighted a few changes to the standards

here these have been associated with only health and welfare with some associated with public health. I has been impossible to cover everything and we therefore recommend that you visit the Red Tractor website where you'll find the standards together with all changes published in full. There are likely to be areas which require further thought and discussion for your farm so please ask us for help now as it's much easier to deal with these now rather than the day before your next farm assurance visit!



Antibiotic reduction program—work in progress

Last month saw the publication of data from the first major UK milk buyer to put a line in the sand and assess antibiotic use across the majority of its membership. Muller certainly took a risk in grasping the nettle on this issue but with the growing concerns and lobbies for change nothing will be achieved if we are too afraid to tackle this issue head on.

In many ways the Muller analysis provided positive messages with the groups average use sitting very close to the UK target of <math><21\text{mg/kg}</math> by

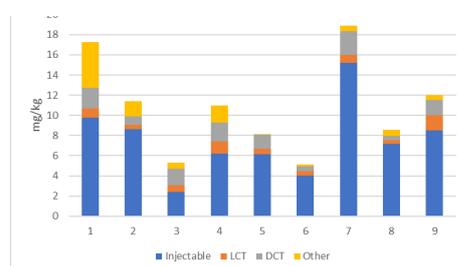
2020.

As you will be aware the need for us to play our part in addressing this issue for human health is important. It is also coming at you from all directions with retailers and processors taking an interest and Red Tractor including requirements in their standards.

Ever since we started the practice we have embraced the principles of challenging what we do and working with clients to refine their medicines use. We also like to think we were

at the forefront in tackling antimicrobial resistance, being one of the first practices to completely cease the use of the most critically important antibiotics.

Whilst an ongoing project it has been great to see the progress that has been made so far this year during review meetings, with every one of our herds already below the national target



What else have we been up to this month

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Summer always marks a busy time for development projects, both on farm and industry based. Training has been a big focus for us over the last few weeks with Mark running two on farm foot trimming courses and Dave helping more farms through their Milksure accreditation.

Meanwhile parlour developments have been in focus for many. Although we are frequently tormented by the photos from Dan's jet set lifestyle as an international parlour guru, the last few weeks have been a

little less glamorous working his way through a significant project for Farming Connect in Wales. The project has certainly thrown up some interesting findings and talking points.

Finally the summer shows have as ever afforded a great opportunity to catch up with both clients and old acquaintances in

a relaxed environment. UK Dairy Day always marks the end of the season. Again this year it was a whirlwind of an event with so many people to speak to along with Dan being asked to present on the role of Genomics in driving herd performance.



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Medicines update - It's good news! Although I'm saying that whilst touching a huge piece of wood!! Teat sealant now seems to be flowing through the supply chain, the local anaesthetic crisis has ended and Spirovac is even back in stock ahead of schedule.

As we head through the autumn into winter, we're firmly in high risk time for endoparasites - gastrointestinal roundworms and liver fluke. Weather conditions this year has been favourable for the proliferation of pasture based parasites. It's relatively straightforward to determine levels of infection. For roundworms faecal egg counting is straightforward with fluke best measured by bulk milk and/or blood sampling. Estimation of faeces for fluke eggs is an inaccurate method at this time of year.

Choosing a roundworm treatment is fairly straightforward however that's not the case for fluke. Complexities with the fluke lifecycle, time of year, withhold periods ranges of sensitivities to flukicides can make choosing the correct flukicide less straightforward. If you are unsure, please contact us to make that correct choice.