

Newsletter January 2011

Happy new Year to you all, this year seems to have come in with a bang on the weather front, lets hope things settle down a bit more this year and allow for a good growing year!

We are beginning another DIY A.I. Course on the 18th January, if you are keen to have a go and have not yet registered then please let us know. You may have heard by now of the 'Healthy Livestock' initiative, this is modulation money that is being redistributed to help raise awareness of health and production diseases through veterinary support. The scheme pays for 70% of the costs involved in diagnosis and tailored advice from ourselves. The Mastitis scheme is now up and running and allows for detailed analysis of milk records with expert input and a unique plan to be put in place to reduce future incidence; please speak to Clare for more details. We are now about to start BVD and Johne's strands, we are holding an evening meeting on Wednesday 19th January at 7.30pm at the Redhill surgery. All those who would like to learn a little more about these diseases are welcome to attend. Enrolment is dependant on attending the initial meeting to enable you to take advantage of the funding. Please call Redhill to book your place.

We will shortly be following up with the Cattle lameness and Pneumonia strands so watch this space for more information.

This month we are also pleased to announce the launch of the **Tibbs and Simmons Performance Plus Partnership**, for Beef and Dairy customers. This is a membership scheme where by investing in an annual subscription we will be able to offer health monitoring and performance benchmarking. Members will also be entitled to discounted preventative medicines. We feel this is an exciting development to our range of services on offer, more details will follow shortly or feel free to enquire.

As many of you are about to start lambing I thought I should remind you of the legal requirements when tail docking lambs. The amputated tail should cover the vulva of the female and the anus of the male. This rule is now being enforced under the Single Payment Scheme cross compliance and failure to comply could result in deductions!! It is also beneficial to the sheep to have a reasonable length of tail as it maintains muscle tone and nervous sensation around the tail base. This can help prevent rectal and vaginal prolapse in the future as well as reducing faecal contamination. This is because they are able to lift their tail more completely when it is slightly longer and are also better aware of what their tail is actually doing.

Due to the rise in incidence of cases, Sheep scab infection has recently been made a notifiable disease in Scotland once again. I suspect that the same would have happened in England and Wales were there enough funding available to facilitate the change. If you are buying in sheep then be vigilant for signs of scab – itchy sheep, discoloured wool, bald patches etc. Ideally incoming sheep should be isolated from the main flock for 10 days to monitor for the development of signs of scab as well as other disease; new arrivals should also be routinely treated with a long acting avermectin such as dectomax before entering isolation.