

## **Newsletter February 2010**

On a recent trip to the butcher, I began talking to him about needle scarring in the Hind Quarter of cattle. He said it is most annoying as it always tends to affect the silverside. I promised him that I would put a piece in the newsletter to try and help the problem. Every intra-muscular injection has the potential to cause scarring and abscessation. Many newly licensed drugs are now indicated to be administered under the skin, for this reason. Often the biggest scar is left when young calves and lambs are injected in the back leg especially if the needle is not clean. I would suggest that if possible all injections are put under the skin if possible, if an intramuscular injection is necessary then try and put it in the neck muscle. In an adult animal the neck muscle is a hand width in front of the shoulder and mid-way between the top and bottom. If anyone is unsure then feel free to ask us when we are with you. It is also important to remember this in cows now as they too will enter the food chain now.

The cold and wet weather has brought with it the usual seasonal pneumonia cases. We often get asked about pneumonia prevention, and we are more than happy to offer advice with regard to housing modifications to help prevent problems. Vaccination is often advised in order to reduce the effects of pneumonia in specific situations, however unless the issues around housing and ventilation are addressed it can be a waste of money, that would be better spent on shed improvements. The key to shed design is to allow good drainage to provide a clean dry bed to lie on whilst having ventilation that avoids draughts and chills but allows warm air to rise from the floor and escape at the apex of the roof. The steeper the pitch of the roof, the better the draw of air vertically which in turn reduces the condensation build-up that will then keep the beds drier.

Many lambs are now being born, with generally good numbers reported. As lambs enter the rearing period and begin to forage for food, they are more susceptible to coccidiosis. This is best avoided by reducing stocking density and minimising faecal contamination of both food and water. Lambs affected will typically scour or appear with a dirty tail. In order to diagnose we need a sample of faeces which will enable us to differentiate from worms.

We will be running a practical foot trimming and lameness course on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, please phone the office to book your place. The DairyCo Condition Scoring meeting that was due to be held on 11<sup>th</sup> February has had to be delayed – we will let you know the date once it has been re-organised.