

## Newsletter March 2010

You will notice a few staff changes this month. Unfortunately, Rob's working visa expires, and despite our best attempts we didn't manage to get it renewed, so he is leaving for Canada in the middle of the month. We are sad to see him go and thank him for all his hard work over the last few months. As you know, he was here to replace Jim, who following a months delay in starting his rowing, is still in the Atlantic with 500 miles to go! Therefore, Kevin has flown down from Scotland to give us a hand for the next month or so....

On the whole, I would say that the general body condition of livestock is very good this winter, probably reflecting the quality of conserved forage from last summer. This has reflected generally in fewer problems with metabolic diseases such as ketosis and milk fever in the cows. Conversely, we have noticed a number of farms with a high incidence of whites (endometritis) post-calving; many of these cows calving in the late autumn and early winter, having been kept at grass perhaps a little too long. Cases of endometritis occur after the introduction of bacteria at or after calving, typically after assisted calvings, milk fever, retained cleansings etc. The cows with whites often show a discharge when led in the cubicles but many do not show any signs at all, as the infection will hide inside the uterus un-interrupted. It is vitally important to get these cows checked as soon as possible after around 10-14 days to reduce the potential poor conception rates and delayed return to cycling. Some cows will require multiple wash-outs to clean up and a few heats before they become fertile.

We have a few meetings for you to consider attending this month. Ed's foot trimming course this week was over subscribed, so we are running the day again on 31<sup>st</sup> March! Let us know if you would like to participate. The Wrington and District Rural Business Forum is holding its last meeting for this winter on 25<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm Winford Manor. The Black Farmer, Wilfred Emmanuel Jones, will be speaking with food afterwards. Just turn up if you are interested. DairyCo is running a Farm Walk at 10.30am on 30<sup>th</sup> March at Batch End Farm in Lympsham to discuss making more of your grass. Again you can just turn up; we can give you directions if you need them. Also a timely reminder that we will have a stand at the North Somerset Show on 3<sup>rd</sup> May; please pop in for a chat and a cuppa.