

Newsletter May 2010

It was great to see so many of you at the North Somerset Show last Monday. Congratulations to those of you who won prizes. The winner of our Milk the Cow competition was Martin Snook from Land Farm, Puxton and runner-up was Tristan Davies of Regilbury Park Farm, Winford.

Fly and midge season will soon be with us so remember to treat cattle and sheep. A good number of you have taken up Blue Tongue vaccination once again. The risk of disease still remains as in previous years, so vaccination is a cheap insurance. If we were to have an outbreak and everyone then decided to vaccinate, there would not be enough vaccine to go around. This is because demand dropped last year leaving manufacturers with stock going out of date; they therefore took the decision to drop volume this year. Currently there is plenty of vaccine available.

Turn-out is always a good time to review the array of disease prevention measures available, including minerals, vaccines and worm boluses. No two farms are the same and so every farm has to meet the needs of their own cattle and sheep individually. Many people continue with the same routine until either they read or hear about a new idea, or the product they are using is taken off the market. We are very keen to help you tailor a plan to your individual situation, so please ask for our advice. For example, worming boluses are excellent for peace of mind when turning cattle away but they are prone to developing wormer resistance on your pasture. This should be avoided at all costs. The best way to reduce wormer resistance is to treat your animals as little as possible by targeting the treatment when they actually need it. This is achieved practically by using faecal egg counts to assess the level of infection. We hope to hold a meeting later in the summer to discuss the rearing of young stock with particular emphasis on worm and fluke control. More details will follow.

You may have read in the press about several new products on the market. Firstly Naxcel, which is a long acting Excenel, again with nil milk withhold. We have been trying this for the past few months with encouraging results, the downside is that it must be injected at the base of the ear in order to conform with meat withhold licensing. We are happy to show you how this is done. The other new product is Zolvix, this is a brand new class of wormer for sheep with no known resistance. Currently this is being reserved for farms with known resistance problems, please feel free to ask us about either of these products.

Don't forget our meeting on the 18th May at 11.00, the topic is Dry Cow Management and Body Condition Scoring. We will start at the Redhill surgery before an on farm workshop at Box Bush Farm, Redhill, (by kind permission of Alvis Bros and sponsored by DairyCo) followed by lunch. Please call the surgery to book your place.