



Firstly a couple of requests from our admin team:

TB Tests

When you are booking in a test please can you let us know if the cattle are being tested at more than one site. It can often take a long time to move from one site to the next, and if we are not aware of the situation, we will not allow enough time for the vet to do the test, which will mean they run late for all their subsequent tests. So, when you arrange your test, please let us know of this, or any other factors which may mean that the test takes longer than we would expect.

TB Paperwork

DEFRA have changed the system by which we submit TB test results to them. It is all done electronically on a system called SAM. This system is set up so that we cannot print out test results for holdings which are under restriction. So, if you have had reactors or inconclusive reactors at your test, or if you have had a short interval test, we will not be able to print out the test. If you need to have a copy you will need to contact the animal health office in Carmarthen. Please allow a few days to receive a copy of your test from them.

BACS Payments

This is a very quick easy and cheap way to pay your bill, but if you do use it please make sure that you give your name and account number as a reference, so that we can trace who the payment has come from. Your account reference number can be found on the top and bottom of you invoice.

Rearing Healthy Store Lambs

For lambs that you want to finish by November (short-keep lambs), it is important to select high-quality lambs from known suppliers with a good health status and already vaccinated against pneumonia and clostridial diseases. Lambs should be quarantined on arrival and treated for sheep scab and resistant worms using SCOPS principles. Treatment could include: moxidectin (Cydectin 1% injection), or an OP plunge dip plus either monepantel (Zolvix) or derquantel/abamectin (Startect). It is important to check withdrawal periods with short-keep lambs. If they cannot be treated against scab the lambs should be kept separate from any other sheep. The lambs should also be walked through a footbath containing 3% formalin twice during their 3 week quarantine period.

If lambs are to be kept longer and finished between January and March (medium/long-keep lambs) there are other issues which need to be considered in addition to the quarantine procedures described above. Often they will be fed concentrates or brassica crops to assist finishing. If fluke is a risk these lambs should be treated with triclabendazole in October and faecal samples checked for fluke eggs 3 weeks later to ensure effective treatment (triclabendazole resistance is on the rise in sheep). Systemic pasteurellosis is the most commonly diagnosed cause of death in store lambs with mortality rates up to 20%. Clostridial diseases such as Pulpy Kidney and enterotoxaemia often follow a change of diet therefore store lambs should be protected against pneumonia & clostridial disease using two doses of Ovivac- P Plus four weeks apart. Concentrate feeding brings the risk of grain overload from either heaps of grain on stubbles or too rapid an introduction of grain feeding. Adequate roughage should always be available and whole grain fed, if possible, to slow down fermentation. Where lambs are finished on concentrates, it is important that wether lambs have unrestricted access to fresh water to avoid urolithiasis or gravel. Ewe rations containing magnesium should be avoided. Addition of ammonium chloride to the ration can help prevent this condition.

Rape & kale when fed exclusively can cause brassica poisoning. The main toxin destroys blood cells causing anaemia. This toxin increases with the age of the crop so long-keep store lambs should not be grazed on these crops for prolonged periods, and a pasture run-off or supplementary feeding should be provided. The risk of poisoning can be further reduced by introducing lambs to the crop gradually.

Pneumonia Vaccines

As the season of mists has started, a reminder that you can vaccinate your calves against pneumonia before housing, to help protect them at this very stressful time. There are several vaccines available, but the ones which provide the broadest cover against the causes of pneumonia, Rispoval 4 and Bovipast RSP, require two doses several weeks apart before full protection is achieved. If you need any advice on the use of these products or any aspect of pneumonia treatment and control, please ring and talk to one of the vets. Vicky is also on hand to carry out housing assessments, and advise on improvements to your existing buildings to reduce the risk of pneumonia. Grants are still available from Farming Connect which will cover 80% of the cost of our service.

BVD Vaccines

We have been looking at the use of BVD vaccine within the practice and have noticed that some of the vaccine purchases look a bit haphazard. If you are starting off a herd for the first time all cattle need 2 doses given 4-6 weeks apart. Any new stock coming in to the breeding herd will also need these 2 initial doses. This initial course should be followed up with annual booster vaccinations given every 12 months of the initial course. This regime does not protect the unborn fetus completely, so if BVD infection is present in your herd, it is very important to identify the carriers with blood tests or ear tag samples. Please ring us if you want more advice on this.

Shows and Meetings

We enjoyed seeing so many of you at Usk show. Congratulations to all of our clients who won prizes with their livestock and also to Owain Williams from Rhadyr Farm who won the pair of wellies in the prize draw sponsored by Novartis.

We would like to invite our dairy clients to a joint DairyCo meeting with Belmont vets. It will be on the 7th November and the speaker is Ian Ohnstad, an expert on milking machines. He is well worth hearing so put the date in your diary now.

Car Sticker Competition

The winner of this month's prize, a Herefordshire Deli Hamper sponsored by Zoetis was Teresa Baker, Llangattock Park Farm. If you haven't got your sticker yet please ask for one at the desk and display it in your vehicle for your chance to win next month's prize.

A Joke for October

An American holidaying in Scotland goes into a small country inn. The only other customer is a wiry little man in a tweed cap with a Collie asleep at his feet.

"Excuse me", says the American, "Are you a farmer?"

"Aye"

"What size is your farm?"

"Oh, just a wee farm – mebbe ten acres."

"Ten acres! Do you know, friend, back in Texas I can get up at sunrise, saddle my horse and ride all day 'till the sun goes down and d'ye know in that time. I'll only have covered a third of my farm!"

"Aye," replied the farmer. "I had a horse like that once!"

Quote of the month

Thanks to Dave Watkins of Maerdy Farm for this gem after his son Will attended our Farmskills afternoon on Calf Rearing at Hardwick Farm. **Dave:** "So Will, how did you get on?" **Will:** "I didn't learn much about calf rearing but Dad, we really ought to get some of those robots."

Rob, Jane and the team at Farm First.