

Farm Animal Practice Newsletter: January 2010

In this month's newsletter, we meet a new resident who will be working in the practice, outline some of the courses and events on offer over the next year and issue a reminder about ordering vaccine. In Clinical Update, we discuss bluetongue vaccination and the use of anti-inflammatory drugs in calf pneumonia.

Extra pair of hands in the practice

A word from a new face who joined us this winter...

"Hello - I am Margit Groenevelt (which I know is a difficult name to pronounce!). I am Dutch, 26 and qualified in January 2009 from Utrecht University, Holland. Some may find my accent confusing, but I worked in Ireland for nine months. I loved it there, but the opportunity at Bristol to do a combination of practical work, teaching and research made me come over. I am doing week-on/week-off with the FAP and with Nick Bell on cattle lameness research. I am also very interested in small ruminants and hope to start my specialisation in a few months. I hope to see you all soon, maybe on farm or on one of our courses!"



Vaccine reminder!

Vaccination is a key method of preventing infectious disease, and spring is a common time of year for annual booster vaccination in livestock (as it's the optimum season to boost immunity for a variety of conditions). In order to help us keep prices as low as possible, we are not able to carry large stocks of these fragile products, so **please remember to order your vaccine in plenty of time**. This is particularly important for lungworm vaccine. Speak to any of the team to discuss what vaccines are available and which may be appropriate to protect your animals.



Coming up this year...

We have a variety of courses and training events planned for the next year—we'll be publishing more details nearer the time. These include:

- **Mobility essentials**—2 day cattle foot trimming course
- **Udder essentials**—introducing the DairyCo Mastitis Control Plan

Look out for more details in the press, future newsletters and at www.langfordvets.co.uk.

In this month's newsletter...

New resident	1
Vaccination reminder ...	1
Coming up this year... ..	1
Bluetongue refresher ...	2
Treating pneumonia in calves ...	2

Practice News



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Bluetongue vaccination – is it really still worth it?

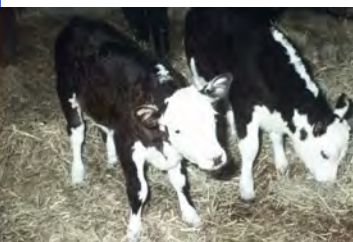
It's easy to think that because we've not seen bluetongue virus circulating in the UK over the last couple of summers, the threat from this disease has declined or disappeared. In fact, bluetongue was still present and very active on the continent last summer, and there are many ways in which it could be reintroduced to the UK. As the weather has a major impact on the ability of the disease to spread, rate of transmission can easily vary significantly from year to year, and two years where the conditions did not favour spread of disease don't necessarily mean things will be the same this summer.



The chances of your animals being exposed to the virus are probably quite small (although unpredictable), but if it occurs there are likely to be major consequences, both in terms of the health and welfare of your livestock and for the economic success of your business. Vaccination represents the only practical way of reducing this risk, and represents extremely good value “insurance” against bluetongue. Prices start from just 59p/dose (excl. VAT), and we recommend that vaccination courses are complete before the end of March—**pre-order your vaccine now to protect your stock!**

Treating calf pneumonia—the role of anti-inflammatory drugs

This winter so far has seen a higher than normal incidence of pneumonia in calves. While prevention is always better than cure (see box), by recognising disease early and treating appropriately you will be able to minimise the effects. Although viruses are usually the underlying cause of disease, secondary bacterial infection often increases the severity of the disease significantly. Antibiotics have therefore always been a mainstay of treatment—an appropriate choice should be made in consultation with one of the practice vets. However, it is clear that pneumonia often causes major lung damage that persists after the animal appears to get better, leading to reduced growth rates and poorer performance. Lung damage can be reduced by treating with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as Metacam™ in conjunction with antibiotics. Combined antibiotic and NSAID preparations (e.g. Resflor™) are also available—speak to one of the vets to discuss whether it is appropriate for you to hold NSAIDs in stock on your farm.



We looked at preventing calf pneumonia in the newsletter back in November '07—an archive of newsletters will shortly be available on our website at www.langfordvets.co.uk

Clinical Update

 **Langford** Farm Animal Practice
VETERINARY SERVICES

Langford House, Langford, North Somerset BS40 5DU Telephone 01934 852650