



Lanes
FARM VETS

Newsletter

June 2020

Hello again!

What varied weather we are having! At least its never boring.

Unfortunately our planned series of meetings are still on hold thanks to Covid-19. We are still hoping we can organise something soon, maybe an outdoor meeting if weather and social distancing regulations permit.

In the meantime we have continued our Cow Signals series in the newsletter. This month **cow flow** is under focus.

We are pleased to say that our remote health planning is going well and the digital version we send is perfect for uploading onto the Red Tractor portal for when you have an inspection (we can also send a paper copy for your records). We have had several clients use the portal and it seems to be fairly straight forward to upload the required documents. Please don't leave it to the last minute to get your plan updated either, it should be updated every 12 months. We are trying to contact everyone whose plans are now out of date or due an update soon. Red Tractor audits are still going ahead and are being carried out remotely at the moment but this may change as restrictions are eased. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions regarding health plans.

We have PPE in place to now be able to carry out disbudding and castrating so please contact us if you require them done. Those that were normally carried out by Helen will still be charged at vet tech rate even if carried out by a vet (any work which requires a vet will be charged at normal vet rate).

Take care.



Check out our facebook page for up-to-date news and please send us pictures of your innovative handling successes allowing social distancing whilst safely treating animals. Prize for the best!

Lanes farm vets on facebook or email: farmteam@lanesfarmvets.com

'A local practice committed to delivering outstanding service'



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Cow signals—part 4: Cow flow

Optimising cow flow on farm can reduce time spent herding cows into and out of the milking parlour, allow stronger expression of oestrus and easier access to feed and bedding areas. When we get it right we see shorter milking times, fewer lame cows and happier, productive cows.

Unfortunately, the exit race from the milking parlour often takes the form of a cow obstacle course (in both old and newly built milking parlours!), usually exhibiting a combination of at least 2 or 3 little challenges. A narrow, poorly lit passageway, with right angle bends, slippery ground, poorly maintained concrete or slats and a foot bath is not at all un-common and can lead to frustrated milkers and slow cows.

Elsewhere on the farm poor cow flow may go un-noticed, but other obstacles to be overcome include dead end passages, narrow crossover points and cows packed tightly in the collecting yard.

Whilst the cows are out at grass may be the perfect time to make small alterations to existing buildings – improve footbaths, add light fittings to alleyways, widen crossover points or even open up the ends of buildings to remove dead ends (see pictures). Did you know you would need to remove 6 head to head cubicles to create 1 extra crossover point?



Please get in touch if you would like us to send you a guide to foot bath design, the AHDB dairy housing design guide or if you would like a vet to work through ‘parlour wizard’ with you if considering making alterations to the milking parlour.

Milk replacement powder—what's the difference?

There are lots of replacement milk powders on the market for lambs and calves, with an accompanying range of prices. This article looks at some of the differences to help select the right one for you.

When looking at milk powders the first thing to notice is that most good quality ones have a crude protein of 20-26% and fat content of 16-20%. However it is the ingredients that make up these analyses which are just as important.

When looking at listed ingredients it is always the highest inclusion rate first and then in declining order. Tips for assessing quality:

- 1) Milk based protein is much better digested compared to plant or egg based products. Look for dried skimmed milk, whey and casein compared to high levels of egg, soya, wheat gluten or pea.
- 2) Recent research has discredited the popular belief that the reduced milk clot seen in the abomasum with whey contributes to scour—there is no evidence it is a factor.
- 3) The young ruminant (under 2 weeks old) can digest milk fats better than vegetable fats. Avoid palm oil, coconut or soybean in this age group as it is more likely to cause scour. After 2 weeks old the digestibility is the same.
- 4) Fibre is an indicator of protein quality.
 - <0.15% fibre indicates egg or milk protein
 - >0.20% indicates plant protein
- 5) Ash should be less than 8% in total of dry matter
- 6) Vitamins and minerals are fairly consistent between products and don't usually warrant inspection

Make sure you are comparing dry matter inclusion rates. If a moisture content is mentioned it will be fresh weight and you need to consult with the manufacturer.

Next month we look at colostrum replacements.



FOSTON DISCONTINUED

We have been advised that Foston injection has ceased to be manufactured. Once the stocks are gone we cannot get anymore.

Foston is a phosphorus injection usually administered into the vein or muscle. It is indicated for down cows with milk fever when phosphorus is low as well as calcium. It is also involved in ketosis (slow fever). Phosphorus deficiency is usually secondary to calcium deficiency. Treatment of milk fever with calcium (i/v or under the skin) usually corrects the phosphorus level too but with a delay of several hours. Occasionally low phosphorus can occur as a primary disease.

A quick & cheap blood test that we can run at the surgery will identify what the calcium, magnesium and phosphorus levels are.

There is no direct alternative to Foston however there is a new product which contains phosphorus and vitamin B12.

Vigophos is licensed as a treatment to secondary ketosis (eg following an LDA). The phosphorus component could be useful as an adjunct to milk fever and the ketosis element is likely to be useful as these cows are a high risk for slow fever.

The product is licensed as a 3 day course for intravenous administration however we have been informed that it is being used successfully intramuscularly on some farms. As this is 'off licence' usage according to cascade a 7 day milk and 28 day meat withhold should be applied (used intravenously there is no milk or meat withhold).



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