



Lanes  
FARM VETS

# Newsletter

October 2020

Dates for your diary:

**Medicines Course**—we don't have a date set for the next course. Please register your interest if you require attendance and we can organise a date when there is sufficient interest.

## **AI Course—5th, 8th & 9th October**

We are running another AI course alongside Embryonics as the previous few have been highly successful. The course is £535 plus vat, young farmers get 10% discount. Held at Arnside Tower Farm, Arnside. Start time on the first day is 9:30am. Places are limited to 6 so ensure you register early to avoid disappointment. Please call Embryonics to register on 01606 854411.

**Selekt pump clinic**—Thursday 22nd October at Green Lane, Garstang. If you have a Selekt pump that requires servicing please drop it off at the surgery (with your name on it!). Selekt will service for free, if substantial repair work is required they may charge for replacement parts.

**Computers!** We are currently in the process of changing our Practice Management System. This is necessary to avoid some of the frustrations we have had with our previous system. We have planned and prepared extensively to ensure it is as painless as possible and hope that any teething problems are minimal. Our new providers are very proactive and keen to tailor the system to both our and your needs so we welcome any constructive feedback to improve your experience.

*'A local practice committed to delivering  
outstanding service'*



**Green Lane Vet Centre, Garstang PR3 1PR Tel: 01995 602468**

## Ten ways to improve cattle housing:

- 1) Light control** is beneficial for milk production. 18h a day at over 200 lux can increase yields by an average of 2L/day. Conversely dry cows exposed to reduced lighting (8h) during a 60d dry period can increase yields in subsequent lactation by 3.2kg. Dark periods should be >30lux to allow safe movement.  
Natural light is cheapest but LED lighting has reduced the costs of supplementing with artificial light. Avoid south facing sky lights to avoid heat stress on warm days. (see below)
- 2) Heat stress** above 25°C (possibly less if humidity is also high) can negatively impact on dry matter intake, milk yield (up to 20%), fertility, embryonic survival and mastitis rates. Ventilation is the key with unrestricted inlets and outlet. Mechanical systems can be helpful, especially in areas of gathering eg collecting yards.
- 3) Hygiene**, particularly in calving pens, is paramount to reducing disease. Slurry and faeces contamination of calving and youngstock areas increases the risk of scours, Johnes, pneumonia viruses & Salmonella. Don't leave sick cows in calving areas and remove calves asap to reduce exposure. Clean calving areas regularly by removing all organic matter, using a detergent to remove the biofilm and engrained dirt, a disinfectant (at the correct concentration and time exposure) to destroy bugs and then leave to dry (lime speeds up drying).
- 4) Comfort** to encourage cows to lie for 12h per day. Providing 5% extra cubicles of correct dimensions for cow size (see AHDB recommendations) has been shown to maximise lying time. Deep bedding will reduce hock lesions. Head and neck rails should not cause lumps and bumps if placed correctly.
- 5) Enrichment** can improve cow well-being. Brushes are very popular and more novel ideas include padded posts, tractor wires, social play areas, straw bales and punch bags.



6) **Surveillance** technology is readily available to monitor cow activity without disturbance avoiding delays in calving whilst still allowing early intervention when necessary.

7) **Feed access** improvements will increase dry matter intake and milk yields along with fertility and disease resistance. A minimum of 66cm per cow feed space and wide passages allows optimum intakes. Dead ends and bullying opportunities will reduce intakes.

8) **Water** makes up 87% of milk and limiting water not only reduces milk yield but affects rumen function and increases heat stress. 10% of cows should be able to drink at any time, a minimum of 10cm per cow trough access is necessary to allow this. Cows will drink 2-5 times per day and usually after milking. Dead ends and bullying around water troughs will reduce intakes. Clean water is essential – empty organic matter and floating mice regularly!



9) **Floor surfaces** will impact on foot health. Broken and irregular concrete will bruise the sole horn (leading to white line disease and ulcers) and damage the skin between cleats (predisposing the cow to foul and digital dermatitis). Rubber matting in standing areas (feed face, collecting yard and parlour) will protect feet and good grooving prevents slipping and encourages good bullying behaviour.

10) **Monitor & react.** Dirty cows, lameness, increased standing time, hock lesions, back lesions and neck lesions are all indications that housing is negatively impacting on cow health. Don't ignore these signs, they will also be impacting on cow performance.

Not all improvements need to be expensive. Focusing on a few simple, key practical changes can make all the difference to the health, welfare and performance of your herd.

## Sheep abortion—its not too late to control Enzootic abortion.

If you haven't vaccinated for Enzootic abortion before putting the tups in (or have left it too late to vaccinate 4 weeks before putting tups in) do not fear. There is an alternative dead vaccine called 'Inmeva' that can be used during pregnancy to reduce the risk of sheep acquiring infection and aborting. It requires 2 doses 3 weeks apart.

I'm afraid you are too late to vaccinate against Toxovax if tups are in or going in within 4weeks. This vaccine has no alternative and as it is live it must not be given to pregnant sheep or within 21 days of mating. Currently there is approximately a 10 day order lead time for Toxovax as it is made to order.

## Foot Trimming Course

We are running our next foot trimming course in line with Embryonics.

This course will be held at Arnside Tower Farm on 30th November—2nd December 2020.

As usual please book your place direct with Embryonics on 01606 854411.

The course is £475 plus vat and young farmers get a 10% discount.

Call now to avoid disappointment!

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