

# NEWSLETTER

## October 2008 No 28.



### Fertility Focus

#### Pregnancy Diagnosis

The time of year for suckler herd pregnancy diagnosis is approaching. It is essential that the bull has been out for at least 5 weeks, this allows accurate and rapid diagnosis. The cost of PDing is minimal compared to the money you could save on identifying barren cows. Latest costings (Beef Farmer August 2008) show that a barren suckler cow costs £2.20 per day (cost of feed and delay in sale of progeny). In a 100 cow herd where 20% don't get in calf that is £44.00 per day! Pregnancy testing costs approx £2 per animal hence testing the 100 cows to find the 20 barren ones has paid for itself in less than 5 days!

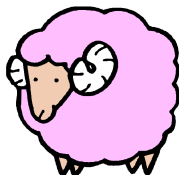


#### Teenage Pregnancies

This is all too common and is a significant welfare issue as well as an unwanted financial burden (caesarean/dead calf /damaged heifer). A simple way to avoid these problems is to check all steers are steers, and to treat, with prostaglandins (estrumate), any heifers that are over 5 months old that have run with the bull or a rig (needs to be done asap as it is only effective within 100days of being served). Tightening the calving pattern so that the bull is in for only 9 weeks lowers the risk of heifer calves being served.

#### Bull Fertility

Bull fertility is sometimes overlooked and a problem that is only discovered after the breeding season is over when there is little you can do. We encourage everyone to consider fertility testing their bulls 6 weeks before they go back in with the cows. This allows time for any potential problems to be identified and dealt with. 27% of bulls tested are sub-fertile or infertile and given a barren cow costs £2.20 per day for a beef suckler and £4 per day for a



dairy cow it doesn't take many days to pay for the cost of having a bull tested which costs from £68.50 per bull.

#### Ram Fertility

The same goes for rams, they should be fertility tested before tupping. If you know your rams are in good working order then you can expect, if ewes are healthy, a lambing percentage of greater than 1.8 lambs per ewe.

#### Example:

You have 40 ewes with a ram and he only manages to get 20 in lamb.

First you have a potential loss of 36 lambs, which, at the height of this season were paying £4 per kg dw (FW) - so that is a loss of 36 x 20kg dw x £4 per kg = £2880

In addition you have 20 barren ewes that you have fed all winter.

This compares with the cost of ram testing which is £32.50-£52.20 per ram .

#### Heat Detection in dairy cows

We now have 3 dairy farms which, have invested in new heat detection systems. Although between the 3 of them they are using 2 different systems all work on the same principle; the cows wear neck collars which monitor activity and send a signal to an in-parlour computer system which shows the individual cow's activity. As most cows significantly increase activity when in oestrus this gives the herdsman a good indication that cows are "on bull" and ready for artificial insemination. With oestrus in dairy cows becoming more difficult to detect due to reduced man power on farms and alterations in genetics, altering the expression of tradition oestrus behaviour, this is a very useful tool allowing huge financial savings. It is also being used on one farm to look for sick cows by looking for cows with a lower than expected activity level.

*Congratulations  
To Tracy and Duncan  
Jeary on the birth of  
OSCAR*



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As many people are aware we are waving Rachel off on a round the world trip next month. We are all extremely jealous and know she will have a fantastic time. She is going to Thailand then Aus and New Zealand before returning home via Fiji and the USA. If anyone knows of any must see places or knows of good places to stay then she is looking for suggestions. Although she is pretty irreplaceable, Ben is going to take on the unenviable task on a full-time basis. We are also hoping to support him with a part-time technician in the near future. Some of you will know Ben either from when he came and spent a few days with us earlier this summer or as a member of the RNR running team. Ben is joining us on 6th October to learn the ropes before Rachel leaves us on the 24th October.

## RNR 2008

“Competing for the second time in the Round Norfolk Relay, Norfolk Farm Vet Knackers won their class for casual running teams in last week-



end’s race. The Norfolk Farm Vets’ team, made up of clients, friends and running colleagues of the Grimston based business completed the course in 24 hours 10 minutes, finishing a creditable 15th place overall. Whilst the team’s performance was bolstered by the outstanding individual runs of Molly McKay, James Robinson and Johnny Laybourne, there were other performances of note. For the men, Ben Collison’s intense training regime paid off with his blistering run, clocking 6.22 minutes per mile, to complete his 15.08 miles in just over 1 hour, 36 minutes. Whilst for the women, 15 year old Rebecca Daines narrowly missed a course record, completing her 5.49 mile stage in 36 minutes and 56 seconds; a heady 6.43 minutes to the mile. The benefit of being a casual team was that it allowed the group’s organisers to blend both the running skill of some of the members with the charisma, good looks and personality of some of the older, but less experienced runners; thus producing a team in stark contrast to some of the “monochrome”, bland elite teams. Thanks must go to the huge band of supporters without whom the team wouldn’t have succeeded, including Jim Moss, training guru, time keeper and professional insomniac, John Bray, minibus driver and unsung local story teller, Paul and Joan Stevenson and Julian Howard, who not only competed to continue his experiment on whether lager can be used as a sports drink, but provided a barbeque lunch for all the runners and support members. “ Submitted by Gavin Lane to Lynn News.

### For Sale/available:

Cast-iron bath, free to a good home—call John at the practice.

4PETS—services including dog walking, pet sitting, small animal boarding, pet to vet, home check (while away) etc. Contact Beverley on 01362667027.

**14 Week Labrador Dog Puppy for sale** please call Mr Deadman 07766641513

**Pedigree Angus Bulls For Sale** please Trevor Stebbings on 01553 630603

### People:

Trevor Buxton Call 07909935597—relief milker with years of experience.

Pauline Buxton—Sheep dog training. Call 07979500879.

### Wanted:

4-5 year old Beef Shorthorn Bull. Call the office.

As most of you are aware we are strongly behind the campaign to encourage people to buy locally and reduce food miles, hence we recommend that everyone buy locally either via the Fakenham Farmers Market on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month or directly from the producers listed below:

Duncan Jeary	Beef	07880 508104
Mrs Temple	Cheese	01328 820224
Pointen Bros.	Dairy Produce	01263 860338
John Garner	Game, lamb, turkeys	01328 700277
Houghton Hall	Lamb, Mutton, Beef, Pork and Eggs	07793 208655
Sandringham Beef and Lamb	West Newton Shop	01485 542219
Courtyard Farms	Organic Beef, Lamb and Pork	01485 525251 or courtyardfarm.organic@virgin.net
Perfick Pork	Pork & Lamb	01328 829317
Mr Day, Hindolveston	Beef, Lamb and Vegetables	Farmers Market.
Simon Dann	Norfolk Farmhouse Ice-cream	On Farm/Local Shops.
Gavin Lane	Salt Marsh Beef	sales@saltmarshbeef.co.uk
Van Beuningen	Ash Farm Organics	01362 683228 www.ashfarmorganics.co.uk
Mrs. Willcox	Mohair Socks, Preserves, Eggs	Erpingham House Farm

If your name is missing just call the office and we will add your details.

Local Produce

**Contact details: Telephone** 01485 609031 **Fax:** 01485 609029. **Emergency:** 07920104174

**e-mail:** norfolkfarmvets@btconnect.com **Website:** www.norfolkfarmvets.co.uk

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