

“If you didn’t make money as a farmer last year you don’t deserve to be in farming...”

quote from Bedfordshire mixed livestock & arable farmer I met last weekend. Fair? Perhaps not, it definitely depends upon what you are having to buy in terms of inputs – hard feed, diesel, fertilizer etc. however, it cannot be denied that beef, sheep and pig prices are relatively good with beef prices 56p/kg/dw higher than last year (that’s approx £125 extra per animal). So now is the time to ensure that you are maximising productivity to maximise your financial returns.

So have you checked that:

- Your cows are in calf and you are not pouring food into barren animals that could be earning you money on the hook? Remember animals up to 72 months old can now go into the human food chain and presently even cows are making 292p/kg/dw. Pregnancy diagnosis is quick and easy and takes approx 1 min per animal to scan.
- Are you rams definitely not firing blanks? Ram fertility checks are from £34 ex VAT per ram and as the average lamb presently sells for 390p/kg/dw that's less than the cost of a lamb!
- Are you sure you are not damaging your chances of good fertility with endemic infectious disease e.g. BVD, Leptospirosis etc in cattle or enzootic abortion or toxoplasmosis in sheep?
- Are you over supplementing minerals and damaging fertility that way? Yes I said OVER supplementing minerals – both selenium and copper in excess will damage the body and reduce fertility!

If you want to book in PD’s, talk about minerals, or ram fertility testing then give the practice a call and talk to one of the vets.

Are you starving your dairy calves?

The latest research by Dr.Dai Grove White (Liverpool University) shows that many dairy calves in this country are starved ...
Do you bucket feed your calves twice daily?

50kg calves need,
Maintenance ME of 8 MJ/day
Growth (0.7kg/day) of 10 MJ/day
Total ME = 18 MJ/day

What they actually get,
4 litres milk replacer = 9 MJ/day
Therefore 50% of dairy calves LOSE body weight in the first 7 days of life

So at best you are feeding for maintenance and not for growth.

So what can you do?

- Encourage early transition to solid feed-stuffs from 2-3 days as it encourages rumen development – course mix is best.
- Feed milk for longer to 10-12 weeks ad lib – acidified milk or machine feeding
- The feed conversion ratio for milk is 3:1 where it is much worse for hard feed at 10:1.
- Don’t wean until calves are eating at least 1kg per day, when weighing at least 65kg and at least 8 weeks old.

* Remember fluids should be available to calves at all times whether in the form of water

Basic Rules of Treatment for Scouring Calves

Start oral fluid treatment as soon as scouring starts.

Don’t delay.

Give at least 2 litres twice daily via bottle or calf feeding bag

Continue milk feeding & don’t stop as the calf needs milk for energy; for the calf to reduce the weight loss and for the gut lining to heal.

Starving the gut lining of milk stops healing.

Feed milk 3 – 4 litres daily (little & often)

Don’t worry if calf carries on scouring as long as it is bright & happy ☺

For Sale/Wanted

Selection of Beef Shorthorn Bulls

High Health Accredited and EBVs, visitors welcome, contact Nick or Andrew at Glenariff Pedigree Livestock 01485 601282 or 01553 672440

For sale

Red Poll heifers & breeding bulls. Please contact Tony Barratt on 07545394821

Goats— 2x Proven adult male goats. Call Mrs. Parker on: 01263 710245

Ewes— Draft breeding ewes for sale. Please contact Lorraine Logan on 07884036510 or thrift-sheep@hotmail.co.uk

Grazing wanted for sheep— please contact Mr Fletcher, also looking for sheep work please call 07977040358

Full size cast iron bath - free of charge and will happily deliver within reason. Please call John Bray either at the office or 01485 600986

People/Equipment

Stockman—Self employed stockman (Beef, Dairy and Sheep) Trained in DIY AI & qualified foot trimmer (Dutch Method) available from March onwards, all positions considered, no accommodation needed, Norfolk area only - Lee Oakes 01553 672440

For Hire—**Mobile Cattle Handling** including pen, race and crush with weigh scales. **Cow Catcher** with operator. Call Will Hancock on: 07979641597.

Molecatcher—for hire. Tracey Palmer: 01485 600717.

Pauline Buxton—Sheep dog training: 07979500879.

If you would like to advertise in our newsletter, please contact the office on 01485 609031.

Pregnancy Scanning

So, you tested the bulls in the spring before they went out, you've seen them working, and now it's time to think about housing. Yes, the time of year for suckler herd pregnancy diagnosis is has arrived. It is essential that the bull has been out for at least 5 weeks as this allows

accurate and rapid diagnosis. Pregnancy testing costs approx £2 per animal, which is a minimal expense compared to the continued feeding of barren cows and the delayed sale of progeny.

Teenage Pregnancies

Unfortunately, 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 is to ensure steers are actually steers, and to treat, with prostaglandins (Enzaprost), any heifers that are over 5 months old that have run with a bull or a rig.

This treatment is only effective within 100 days of service; time is of the essence, so get in touch with the practice to prevent these unwanted pregnancies.



Christmas Hampers



Its that time of year, when two of our clients get an extra Christmas surprise this year, a Norfolk Farm Vets Christmas Hamper full of seasonal goodies from a number of our farmers and smallholders. The two lucky winners will be drawn from a hat at our Christmas Quiz on Thursday 15th December (Please see quiz details on enclosed leaflet). So please take a reminder of your client number and we will look forward to seeing you at our Christmas Quiz...

Please remember to contact Rach to book your place and NOT the vets as they will forget!

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 4th Saturday of the month or directly from the producers listed below:

Mrs Temple	Cheese	01328 820224
Pointen Bros.	Dairy Produce	01263 860338
John Garner	Game, lamb, turkeys	01328 700277
Sandringham Beef and Lamb	West Newton Shop	01485 542219
Perfick Pork	Pork, Lamb, Chicken & Beef	01328 829317
Mr Day	Pork, Lamb, Veg, Knitting wool	Hindolveston. 01263 860578
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
Linda Cletheroe	Seasonal Fresh Vegetable	01263 587466 / 07780930903
		www.lindasfreshveg.co.uk
		Farmers Market
Moore's Livestock, Oak Farm	Beef, Pork, Free Range Eggs	01553 630772/07900 491679
Rudi Jennings	Free range goat meat	01945 585467

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

Local Produce