

## April 2009 Newsletter

Spring check list.

1. Leptospirosis vaccination. Spring is the most efficient time to vaccinate against leptospirosis. You should vaccinate any animal that is likely to be put in calf this year ie down to about 6 months of age. Don't forget the bull also needs doing.
2. Bluetongue vaccination. I accept that last year we only vaccinated in July and that the vaccine lasts a year but I strongly believe it is much more efficient to do the vaccination now before turnout and most important before the midges really get going.
3. Staggers. Please take all precautions to prevent staggers by increasing the magnesium in the diet. We have all the usual options including magnesium buckets that should be left near the water troughs for cattle to find and use easily. Magnesium chloride in the drinking water is a very convenient method of getting magnesium into cows. Just pierce the bag with a fork and throw the whole bag into the trough. Do not use it if you have fish in the trough.
4. Huskvac should ideally be timed so that the second dose is given about a fortnight before turnout. Do not use bluetongue vaccinations and Huskvac at the same time.
5. Decide on your worming regime for your youngstock. Factors to consider are the age of the animals – are they going to calve during the summer? Are they going to be ready to slaughter during the summer? Ie are withhold times important. During the second season at grass one treatment in the middle of the summer is usually sufficient as the animals should have some resistance but during the first year the animals should have a number of worm treatments depending on stocking densities and the products you are using.  
For simplicity I can strongly recommend Cydectin LA which is a single injection which is given into the base of the ear. This lasts up to 120 days (depending on the worm) so should cover the whole grazing season.  
Autoworm is the pulse release bolus which lasts a similar length of time but because it is not weight/dose related is a lot more expensive than Cydectin LA.  
If you are going to handle and move cattle through the summer then Cydectin (the injection and pour on are the same price and just as efficient as each other) given every 8-10 weeks provides an excellent over.

Finally a warning. At present we are having warm days but very cold frosty nights which are ideal for cold cow syndrome. This is a very real but devastating problem caused by cows ingesting a lot of cold grass. If we continue to have frosty mornings and you have plenty of grass please ensure that the cows fill themselves with silage before going out or wait until the frost is off the grass.

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PS It was not Claire on page 3 of the Guardian!