

TB again. It was exciting meeting Christianne Glossop, the chief vet of Wales, who is very upbeat as to how she will eradicate Tb from Wales. She has agreed with the politicians to split the country into regions dependant on the incidence of TB and to carry out a badger cull in the Brecon region initially but hoping to carry this out elsewhere if it proves affective. She interprets the science in a different way to her English colleagues.

However we are still in England and a badger cull will NOT occur here especially with the present government so we must give badger vaccination a go. We have arranged a meeting at Crown Hotel, Stone at 7.30 for 8.00 prompt on Wednesday 16th September. I thought it was better to leave this until harvest is (hopefully) over. A number of the DEFRA team involved in the vaccination programme will be coming to discuss this. To make arrangements for catering please phone the Eccleshall surgery with the numbers that are attending. I would ask you to encourage non-farming neighbours who have badger setts on their land to come along so that they understand what we are hoping to achieve. Obviously the higher the percentage of badgers that are vaccinated the better the chance of this project working.

Many of you have already phoned the surgery asking to be put on the list for vaccination. We will NOT be compiling the list of farmers wanting to vaccinate. At this meeting in September we will learn how to enrol into the scheme with DEFRA.

Mastitis. We are aware that mastitis and high cell counts are becoming a real problem on some farms. DairyCo (formerly the Milk Development Council) has been involved in a new programme to study mastitis. In essence researchers have looked at a vast number of potential risk factors in mastitis and using a computer programme it is possible to define which are the major problems on your farm. DairyCo believes this will be the biggest step forward in mastitis control since the 5 point plan was launched by NIRD in the 60,s. Kate, Ted and myself have now been trained to use this programme and have successfully carried out some farm visits already. We do need access to your mastitis records and, if possible, your cell count records. We would then come to farm to carry out the evaluation which takes about 3 hours and includes watching you milk. Having collected the data we use the programme to analyse it and then come back to you with a report. If any of you have a mastitis and/or cell count problem please phone the surgery so we can help you.

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