



Newsletter

May 2021

BVD stamp it out campaign Final meeting

A big thank you to everyone who has taken part in the BVD Stamp It Out campaign over the past 2 years. Whilst the project is still a little shy of its target reach, it has been a great success and has made good inroads into reducing BVD infections.

Here at Orchard, we have now completed all our quota of BVD visits, but the Covid restrictions mean we have been unable to have a final meeting. The project organisers are still very much keen for us to do this via Zoom if possible, and although I know many of us are not a great fan of using the Internet for this kind of thing, I would nevertheless encourage anyone who is able to attend to do so. I shall be sending a link through to any of you who have email addresses in the coming days with the details.

Faecal Egg Counts

Do you worm your young-stock or sheep at the same times every year as a routine? If so, then you could be over-worming. This can be expensive in terms of wasted drug, and can also contribute to drug resistance in parasites, reducing the drug's effectiveness in the future.

We've already had articles in the past as how best to avoid drug resistance (please give us a ring if you want further details) but one of the ways to help target which animals require worming is to perform a faecal egg count. We are able to offer this service in-house with a quick turn around

Faecal egg counts are also useful in predicting the degree of contamination of pastures, which allows decisions to be made on grazing patterns and the need for using wormers later in the season.

If you're worried that you may already have resistant worms in your flock (or herd) we can use faecal egg count reduction tests to measure the effectiveness of drugs in your animals - the protocol is different for the different classes of wormer, so give us a ring for details if you want us to check this for you.

It should be noted that the number of eggs produced doesn't always correlate with the number of adult worms living in the gut, and that weather conditions and the clinical signs shown by animals are also very important in deciding whether to treat animals or not, so do speak to one of us about your own individual circumstances.

Orchard Vets Glastonbury

Tel: 01458 832972

www.ovg.co.uk

Optimising the milking routine

Every dairy farm is aiming for high cow throughputs, excellent milk quality and good teat condition. Striving for high cow throughput whilst maintaining milk quality and teat condition can be difficult. As with many situations, well intentioned compromises have to be made, and the same is often true for the milking routine.

Milking speed versus milk quality

How long does one milking take? Around 60 seconds per cow per person in the parlour is likely to be the minimum time possible, otherwise some corners are likely to be being cut. It can be a useful exercise to look at how exactly time in the parlour is being spent. How long are cows taking to enter/exit, how long for teat preparation, cluster attachment and teat disinfection etc.

Do cows flow readily into the parlour? Or is the person milking the cows spending valuable time leaving the parlour to load cows? Backing gates, if used correctly, can be very useful in decreasing cow loading time. If cows are too tight for space in the collecting yard, their heads will be up which would indicate excessive use of backing gates and cows will not flow into the parlour.

To prevent any excessive delay on cow exit, 10 cows need around 15m² free in the post collection yard, otherwise cows will get backed up and slow overall milking time.

How clean are the cows' teats on entry to the milking parlour? Udder singeing and tail trimming can improve udder hygiene, and reduce mastitis risk. If cows are coming into the parlour with dirty udders, there are likely to be problems in the milking cow accommodation.



What teat preparation is carried out? Typically the better the teat preparation, the fewer bacteria present on the teat skin prior to cluster attachment. If pre-milking disinfection is being performed, ensure a minimum of 30 seconds contact time to allow the product sufficient time to work.

Are all cows getting the same milking routine? The aim is for between 60 - 90 seconds from first touching the cows' udder to cluster attachment. This will reduce bi-modal milk letdown, and so reduce the risk of mastitis and high somatic cell counts.