

February 2010

IBR causes problems on farm this month!

Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis, caused by a Herpes virus, is a highly contagious disease of the upper respiratory tract that can lead to pneumonia.

In the UK 72% of dairy herds test positive to the disease.

The symptoms associated with IBR are:

- Raised temperature and milk drop.
- Nasal discharge and conjunctivitis.
- Coughing.
- Reduction in feed intake.
- Abortion, Infertility and early embryonic death.
- Scouring



Once animals are exposed to the virus they remain disease carriers for life. The disease remains dormant in the animal until stress factors such as calving, housing, stock movements or extremes of weather trigger recurrence of clinical signs of the disease.

Diagnosis:

Diagnosis of IBR can often be made on clinical signs and history of the affected animals.

Blood sampling, post mortems and swabs taken from the eyes or nose, to look for the IBR virus, can also be used.

Bulk milk samples are very useful to monitor the level of IBR in the herd as long as you have not vaccinated in the previous few years or bought previously vaccinated stock.

A Bulk Milk sample can be tested for IBR free of charge to determine whether the virus is present in your herd.

Treatment:

As IBR is caused by a virus, there is no direct cure, but treatment consists of the following

- Isolate affected animals from the rest of the herd.
- Supportive therapy—fluids, anti-inflammatory drugs.
- Antibiotics—to treat/ prevent secondary bacterial infections.

Prevention:

Operate a closed herd policy and separate your cattle with at least a 3m barrier from neighbouring cattle.



In most herds vaccination is the only practical way to control the effects of IBR.

Vaccination can be used in the face of an outbreak and will dampen the virus down even in carrier cows.

There are several excellent IBR vaccines available and most require boosters every six months which can be timed to coincide with the greatest risk period such as housing and turnout.

It is important that any bought-in animals, including breeding bulls, and home reared heifers entering the herd are vaccinated before they mix with the endemically infected adult herd.

Forthcoming client meetings:

Sheep Clients:

Wednesday 17th February – Lambing Hints and Tips and an update on Coccidiosis in sheep.

Dairy Clients:

Thursday 11th March – Lameness in the Dairy Herd.

Both of these meetings will be held at the Bank House Hotel, Uttoxeter, starting at 8pm and will be followed by a hot buffet meal.

Please let the Farm office know if you will be attending to assist with the catering arrangements.

FarmSkills Foot Trimming Course

We recently held a three day Foot Trimming course at Lower Castle Hayes Farm where the participants were trained in the Dutch method of foot trimming.

Andrew Tyler, a qualified instructor in foot trimming, and John Dawson, a vet from a fellow XL vets practice the Willows Veterinary Group in Northwich, led the course.

We would like to thank the Smith family for hosting this course and as the accompanying photograph shows, everyone appeared to enjoy themselves!



If you would like to take part in another Foot trimming course in the future, or have ideas of other FarmSkills courses you would like us to run, then please let the Farm office know.