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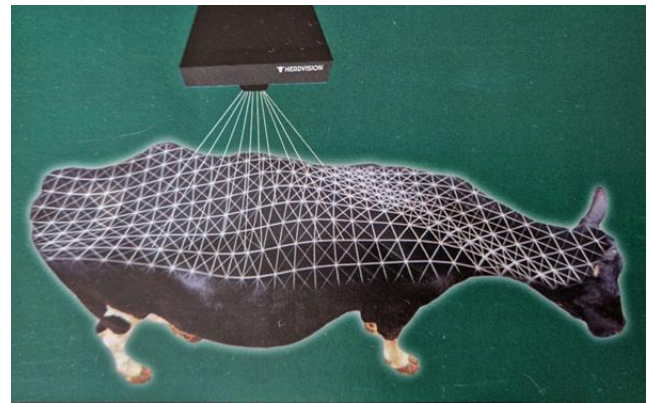
SEPTEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

MOBILITY AND BODY CONDITION SCORING

A cow's performance is dependent on being of a suitable Body Condition Score (BCS) for her phase of lactation. BCS is a 5 point scale to represent cows that are too thin to overly fat. Too thin (low BCS) makes it likely that the cow does not have enough reserves to meet her demands can lead to **excessive negative energy balance and ketosis**. If her BCS is too high, along with higher incidence of difficult calvings, she will have energy and ketosis problems due to reduced feed intake and higher levels of fat to metabolise. Ketosis is linked to **poor fertility and lower milk yields, also increased incidence of lameness, LDAs, fatty liver disease, retained cleansings, metritis, and mastitis**. Regular BCS scoring (2-4 times per year) can spot problem cows earlier, so that they can be put on the right track before they get too close to calving (BCS should not be altered in the 6 weeks pre-calving).

Emphasis on the level of **lameness** in herd has been growing in importance to **milk contracts and Red Tractor** schemes. To be realistic about setting goals, we should first assess the lameness prevalence. One way to do this is Mobility Scoring. Certified mobility scorers including our vet Harm can watch cows walk past at a steady pace and quickly make reliable judgements on the degree of lameness.

There are also **technologies** available to score lameness and BCS through single-cow walkways (e.g. on leaving the parlour) everyday. **HerdVision** is a 3D camera system that assesses every cow's BCS and mobility as they pass and stores the data for comparison. The sooner you know about it, the faster you can get on top of it. **Come and learn more** about these topics and the equipment discussed **at next months farm walk, courtesy of the Courtier family at Gooseford – details over the page.**



GRANT FOR CALF HOUSING

You can apply for a Calf-Housing-for-Health-and-Welfare grant to **build new, upgrade, or replace** existing calf housing buildings to deliver health and welfare benefits for your calves (up to 6 months old). Grant funded calf housing must agree to **several requirements**, such as a good ambient environment and social contact through pair or group housing. If your project meets all the requirements, it's more likely to be accepted.

Grants cover up to a **maximum rate of 40%** of the eligible costs of a project. The minimum grant you can apply for is £15,000 (40% of £37,500). You should read the full grant specifications and "How To Apply" guidance before writing an application. Speak to one of our vets if you would like to know how we can help.

MASTITIS (Part 2 of 2): UNDERSTANDING THE BUGS AND CHOOSING TREATMENT

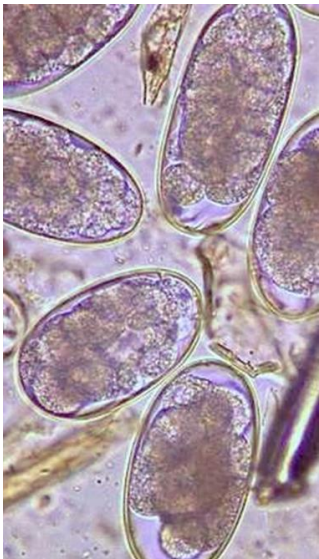
... Continued from August Newsletter. Mastitis bugs can be largely grouped into Gram positive and Gram negative. Gram positive include **Staphs and Streps** that are cow adapted and are **contagious**. Gram negative may be **E. coli** or other **environmental** pathogens that are opportunistic and, in most cases, easily defeated by the cow's immune system without antibiotic treatment.

"Mastitis" means **udder inflammation- not udder infection**. Mastitis is actually a sign that the cow's immune system is fighting a possible infection. This immune response can be an overreaction and can cause more harm than good. Anti-inflammatory medicines (including no milk withdrawal NSAIDs) down-regulate the cow's immune system to reduce this excessive response and resulting tissue damage. They also relieve pain, helping the cow be more comfortable so she can get around and eat well.

Andy Biggs spoke clearly about "**treatment unworthy cows**" - cows that have a **high SCC (over 700,000) for the last 3 consecutive months, OR 3 cases of clinical mastitis in one lactation**. These cows are likely to have a **persistent infection** that outlasts the signs of inflammation and is very **likely to reoccur despite antibiotic treatment**. There can be many factors making the cow "treatment unworthy", some of them are hereditary so her offspring are possibly not the best replacement candidates.

NEW VETS ARRIVING SOON Please welcome our 2 new graduate Veterinary Surgeons Emma Jewell and Rosie Bull. They are both mixed vets, covering farm and small animals. Emma enjoys running, pub quizzes and travelling. Rosie likes long walks, playing the guitar and houseplants!

DISEASE OF THE MONTH: WORMS



Enjoying the weather? The worms are! We have had very high worm egg counts (WECs) this month. Cases of **Haemonchus contortus (barber's pole worm) and gutworms in sheep and lungworm in cattle** have been seen across the practice. Worms need warmth and rain to become infectious so numbers have boomed and we should be vigilant.

WECs allow us to determine the need for treatment often ahead of clinical signs (weight loss, diarrhoea, etc) become obvious, but it is crucial that a good sample is gathered for the WEC results to be meaningful. Speak to a vet for guidance on how to take and store a sample. **Pre- and post-treatment WECs** also give a huge amount of information regarding the effectiveness of the wormer used on your farm and we strongly encourage our clients to always do this.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS – Courtesy of the Courtier family at Gooseford Farm, Whiddon Down, we will be running a **transition dairy cow event at Gooseford on 11th October, 10:30 – 14:00ish**. This will be a collaborative event, with multiple external speakers together with Jonathan, alongside a demonstration of the HerdVision software and real-world data. More details will follow next month, but please save the date and book your place by contacting the practice.



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