

Happy New Year to all our clients!
We wish you a happy and prosperous 2017,
from the farm department.

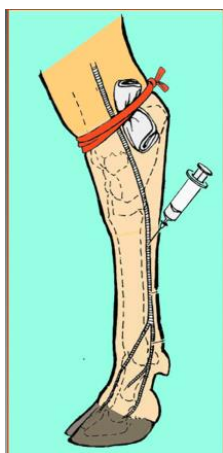
Lameness Case Study

This cow presented as a score three lame cow on the back left foot at a lame cow trimming session.

On lifting the foot up you can see immediately the claws are overgrown, and that there is heel horn erosion above both claws with proliferative tissue that is bleeding above the lateral claw.



There was also a characteristic unpleasant smell of foul. When presented with a score three lame cow the first thing I do, once the foot is up, is apply a nerve block to numb the foot. This involves putting a tourniquet around the leg and infiltrating 20ml of Willcain into one of the lower blood vessels of the limb, this blocks out the foot and allows us to remove horn or tissue without the cow feeling it.



On lifting the foot I trimmed the claws up first using the Dutch 5 step method to address the toe length and check that there were no claw horn lesions.



There were no claw horn lesions; so next I cleaned out the heel bulb tissue- being careful not to take away any horn from the heel of the claw. It is really important to remove loose horn from the heels on every cow you trim. Ridges can quickly appear which trap dirt and muck and this creates an ideal breeding ground for bacteria, especially those causing digital dermatitis.



The medial heel cleaned up well, the lateral heel had rotten or necrotic tissue to be removed. I then had to remove a large flap of under-run tissue (indicated by arrow) that had a lot of dirt trapped beneath it. This opened up the channels of infection and left the area flat so that hopefully no more dirt could be trapped there.



There was evidence of digital dermatitis on the interdigital skin so I treated the affected area with Intra Hoof Gel which is licensed for the treatment of DD.



I then put a bandage on which will come off after 48 hours. There is no point putting a bandage on unless you can guarantee its removal. Soggy dirty bandages still in place after 3 days are doing no good- and are potentially causing harm by trapping slurry and bacteria next to the foot. Spraying stock-marker down the affected leg can be useful to remind members of staff that she has a bandage to be removed.



This cow was also treated with **Ceporex** due to the 'foul in the foot' infection at 1ml/25kg- (between 25-30ml for a dairy cow). She also had **Rimadyl** anti-inflammatory pain relief at 1ml/35kg, (15-20ml for a dairy cow). I would nearly always give a pain-relieving injection to a lame cow I'm asked to look at. Considering there are options available with nil milk withdrawal there really is no reason not to do it.

Treatment of Digital Dermatitis

Footbathing for prevention of digital dermatitis, although undeniably important, is not the complete solution to control.

Individually infected animals act as sources of infection to other cows and need to be treated. The feet need to be lifted, cleaned, dried and then given topical treatment. Both TAF antibiotic spray and Intra Hoof Gel are licensed for treatment of digital dermatitis and you can buy both directly from us. Bandages are not necessary in most cases.

Equally as important, especially as now grazing herds are mostly in for the winter, is scraping management in cubicle sheds. Slurry often congregates around water troughs and feed faces. Have a look around your sheds for pinch points where cows may be standing in slurry. Feet and leg cleanliness is extremely important and you can easily assess this on farm by looking at cows when they come into the parlour.

Score 4-
(photo from
assurewel)



Hoof & leg hygiene scoring chart (score at least 20% of cows in each pen)	
Score 1 – Legs and feet are clean; little or no manure contamination of lower limbs.	
Score 2 – Legs and feet are slightly dirty; lower limbs are lightly splashed with manure.	
Score 3 – Legs and feet are moderately dirty; there are distinct plaques of manure on the foot, progressing up the leg.	
Score 4 – Legs and feet are very dirty; there are confluent plaques of caked-on manure on the foot and higher up the lower leg.	

You should aim to have less than 25% of your cows scoring 3 and 4.

We have two trained mobility scorers working within the George Farm Vets team. If you would like a mobility score done on your herd you can book it by ringing the office on 01666 823 035; we charge £33 per hour. We also offer a per cow rate for severely lame cows if you would like us to come out and look at any you have.

Hope all is well with you all, see you soon. **Bea** (and a rather grumpy Paddy)

