The GEORGE Farm Vets

BIOSECURITY ON FARM

SEPTEMBER 2022

Biosecurity isn't all Hazmat suits and yellow boots, it is a vital aspect of profitable livestock farming in which we all have a role to play. In the light of the recent confirmed NEGATIVE foot and mouth scare, it has highlighted the topic once again.

One way to minimise the likelihood of disease in your animals is to prevent it getting on farm in the first place. Some of the diseases which we are most concerned about are:

- ***TB***
- ***BVD***
- ***IBR***
- ***Johnes***
- ***Neospora***
- ***Staph aureus***
- ***Leptospirosis***
- ***Digital dermatitis***

The list is not exclusive and biosecurity plans / measures will impact any disease on farm.

Biosecurity for entry of disease onto the farm

Whether you are disease free or not, preventing new infections is beneficial to health, welfare and production. Here are some of the key areas and measures to think about for each.

Purchasing new stock is one of the biggest ways to introduce new disease onto your farm. It's not just buying in seemingly 'sick' animals that brings in these diseases. Many of those listed above have few clinical signs in their early stages and can act as carriers to the rest of the herd. When buying new cattle, collecting as much information about the farm from where they have come from is a vital step in biosecurity. Finding out history of grazing, parasite treatments, vaccinations and herd disease status from the farm or even getting in contact with the vet for that farm are a way to protect from buying in infected stock. Please do contact us prior to purchasing new stock for advice and testing.

Meetings coming up...

TUESDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER @ 7PM,
FREE ZOOM MEETING
PRE HOUSING PARASITE CONTROL

MEDICINE HANDLING COURSE
@ THE PRACTICE ON
FRIDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER
11AM TO 1PM
(SUITABLE FOR BEEF AND SHEEP)

Please contact the office to reserve your place

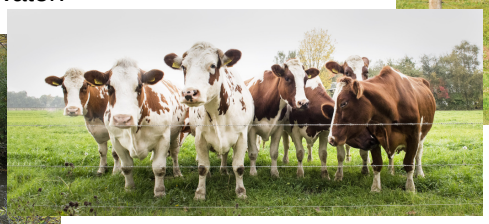
It is strongly recommended that all animals brought onto the farm are isolated, in a separate air space to all other stock, for 28 days. This allows for close inspection of the cows for any early signs of disease and keeps them away from your herd. Unless the herd you are buying from is accredited for the diseases of concern, in this time it is advisable to blood test bought in animals for presence of infectious disease. Often the stress of transport can cause animals to exhibit clinical signs and become an infection risk once more.

These guidelines also apply for your own cattle when they return to your herd, for example, following a show. Or they may have had contact with infectious disease while they were on another holding, so should be isolated for 28 days.

Many of the diseases on farm can survive for relatively long periods in the environment, in faeces and bedding. This is where shared equipment, vehicles and visitors can become the path of entry into the farm. Ideally no equipment should be shared between holdings, but if it is, it should be clean and disinfected between premises. Disinfection should be provided for all farm visitors to use on entry and exit of the farm.

The disinfectant we use is FAM30, an iodine based disinfectant that at a concentration of 1:25 is enough to kill most infectious diseases, including TB.

Contact with neighbour's across watercourses and boundaries can spread disease. If any of your grazing borders onto ground where other herds of cattle are grazed, then barriers should be double fenced with a gap of at least 2 metres. Youngstock are particularly susceptible to diseases carried in slurry and contaminated water.



Preventing disease spread on farm

If a disease is present on farm, biosecurity still plays an important role in preventing further spread to other animals.

Animals showing signs of ill health should be examined and treated appropriately by you or a vet. Sick animals should also be isolated to prevent further spread in case the disease is infectious. Equipment used to treat sick animals should be well maintained and disinfected between animals. Calf scour can spread particularly quickly between animals if drenching and feeding equipment is not appropriately between animals.

Youngstock are very vulnerable to infectious disease. Their immune system is not yet used to many of the diseases to which adult cattle have been exposed. Because of this, care should be taken when mixing adults and immature cattle. Adult cattle will still shed levels of disease that can be harmful to younger animals, of particular importance are Johnes and pneumonia pathogens. So its very important to disinfect between adult and young stock!

Vaccinating cattle and young stock can be an excellent way to be able to add a level of protection to their health, for both disease free and infected herds. They work by priming the animals immune system to the disease, readying them for when they may come in to contact with them in the future. Key diseases we vaccinate for are IBR, BVD, Leptospirosis and some the pneumonia causal agents in youngstock.

If you would like advice on biosecurity and vaccines please speak to your vet or give the office a ring on 01666 823035.

All the best,

Joe Reskelly

VET TECH - UPDATE

Rosie, Zoe and Toby have been busy disbudding, carrying out vaccinations, ring castrating and calf weigh banding.

Freeze branding is continuing successfully with lots of brands coming through and looking very smart!