



(Image Courtesy of farmsnotfactories.org)

### Herd Health Planning

Is not exactly every farmer's cup of tea, with many people viewing it as a box-ticking exercise. Herd health planning can be incredibly useful - it allows farm staff and vets the opportunity to review the past year, find potential issues and implement a plan to try and improve welfare, productivity and in turn profitability. In November 2021, Red Tractor released various changes to the existing health plan which are summarized below.

### Nominated Vet

To develop a closer working relationship with the farmer and the nominate vet, it is now a requirement for the vet to have visited the farm at least once a year (not a problem in our area due to TB tests). Although beef and dairy herd health plans differ slightly both require an annual collation of calf births and deaths - this will be reviewed during the health and performance review which needs to be signed, dated and reviewed every year.

### Health and Safety

From November 2021, there have been a few changes for staff on farms. **All new staff members must have an induction** covering what tasks they are expected to do, on farm health and safety and management reporting lines. In addition, Red Tractor requires every farm to have a **written Health and Safety policy**. When it is a busy time of year on farm, health and safety is sometimes the furthest concern when trying to get jobs done, however as we are all aware farming can be dangerous (the annual fatal injury rate of agriculture is 20 times the all-industry average!) making this an important area to focus on. As a result, it is now required for all Red Tractor Assured farms to have a written health and safety policy.

Mathew Beale at Whiteavon Farm Consultancy Group and Lucy Tyler from Kingsplay are local advisers offering a service to help you with your Health and Safety, Cross Compliance, Manure Management and Rodent Control requirements if you need. We can put you in touch if you are interested.

## MEETINGS COMING UP

### **Cow Convention**

**Weds 18.5.22, 10.30am -3.30pm**

**@ Marsh Farm Hotel, RWB.**

**SN4 8ER**

### **Medicine Handling**

**Wednesday 11th May, 11am—1pm**

**@ the practice,**

**Cost £75 + VAT**

### Pain Relief

In the interest of animal welfare, human health and safety and animal productivity- analgesia (pain relief) such as Metacam is required for any calf routine husbandry procedure that has pain associated with it. If you are using cauterizing paste this can only be used on animals less than 1 week old and it is now recommended to use pain relief.

### Husbandry procedures, analgesic & anaesthetic

#### CATTLE

PROCEDURE/ METHOD		CONDITIONS OF USE			
		Animal age	Operator	Anaesthetic	Analgesic
Castration	Elastration/Rubber ring	1st week of life only	Competent stock person		
	Clamp/bloodless	Up to 2 months	Competent stock person		With
	Other method	Up to 2 months	Competent stock person	With	With
	When animal is over 2 months of age	Over 2 months	Vet Only	With	With
Disbudding	Chemical cauterisation	1st week of life only	Competent stock person		Recommended with
	Other method than above e.g. hot iron	Up to 2 months	Competent stock person	With	With
Dehorning	Cutting/sawing horn (must not be used routinely)	Up to 5 months	Competent stock person	With	With
		Over 5 months	Vet Only	With	With
Removal of Supernumerary Teats	Using clean, sharp scissors	Up to 3 months	Competent stock person	With	With
		Over 3 months	Vet Only	With	With

Routine tail docking of cattle is not permitted.

**Cattle Handling** As the livestock industry continues to improve health and welfare there have been some changes to both dairy and beef herd health plans in relation to moving cattle.



In light of the recent Panorama programme, the way we move cattle has become a hot topic of conversation. The way farmers handle and move livestock is crucial for both animal welfare,

health and safety as well as the industry's reputation. As a result, electrified backing gates (backing gates that administer an electric shock) are no longer allowed on Red Tractor Dairy farms. Rfor "Appropriate Methods of Handling" outlining what is deemed acceptable.

### APPROPRIATE METHODS OF HANDLING

The best way to move animals is to understand their natural behaviour and to work with that behaviour. For cattle and sheep, use your position, voice, flags and a stick as an extension of the arm. Handlers are not permitted to handle animals in such a way as to cause them pain or suffering.

It is not permitted to..

- Strike or kick any animal
- Apply pressure to any particularly sensitive part of the body in such a way as to cause pain or suffering
- Lift or drag in any way that may cause pain or suffering
- Use prods or other implements with pointed ends
- Twist, crush or break the tails of animals or grasp the eyes of any animal
- Throw or drop animals

Poor handling can result in lower meat quality, as well as bruising and injury.

**Medicine Handling** - As an industry, we have made massive strides in the past few years to reduce our antibiotic usage. It is now required to have an annual collation of total antibiotics used on farm in the past year. In addition, it is now required for beef, sheep and dairy farms to have at least one person that had undergone recent medicine training.

This is to increase awareness, knowledge and encourage consistent best practice across UK farms. We offer these medicine courses monthly at the practice - either in person or online. If you would like any more information, please contact the office.

**BVD - Dairy herd health plans must now contain details on how BVD is managed on farm** - either through a national scheme or doing regular testing. If you are breeding cattle then management options may include vaccination, tag and test, blood sampling to determine status of herd, milk sampling and removal of PI animals. **This will be required for beef herds from October 2022.**

**Breeding and Management** - It is now required for dairy farms to have a written breeding and management policy in place and implemented. This is to ensure the elimination of routine euthanasia of calves by 2023. The policy must cover breeding and management decision processes to include:

#### Breeding

- semen used
- tools used to determine replacement rates (unless true flying herd)

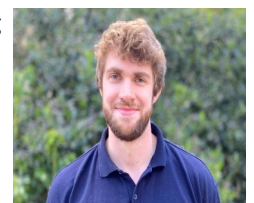
#### Management

- provision of rearing facilities to cover number of youngstock
- identified market for breed of calf produced
- Provision / plan for TB breakdown

**Milk Production** - It is now a recommendation to have wash facilities present for anyone milking or handling raw milk and colostrum.

**Slurry Management** -Slurry management is another area Red Tractor have added new guidelines. It is now a requirement to have an up-to-date documented calculation of your slurry requirement. Existing requirements for temporary field heaps and effluent from manure heaps have also been strengthened.

If you have any questions regarding these changes or would like any more information, please feel free to contact the office (or your nominated vet).



All the best,

Keir

