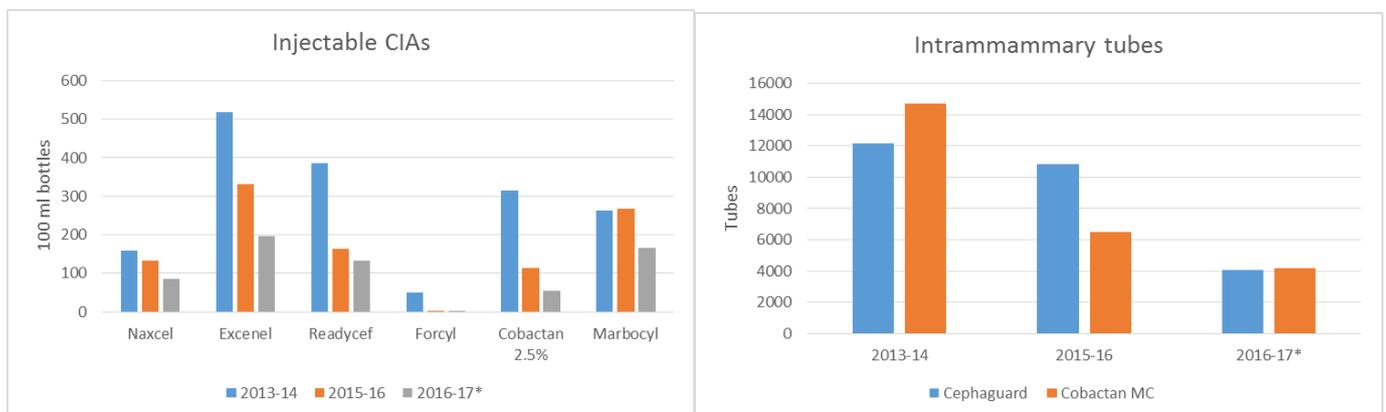


## Changes to Farm Assurance

You may have seen my newsletter a couple of years ago, in which I discussed the importance of responsible use of antimicrobials. We have been working hard as a practice to reduce usage of the classes of antibiotic described as Critically Important by the World Health Organization. These are the products which are used as a last resort in human medicine, so should be avoided in animals as ANY use of a product on a bacterial population is likely to increase the emergence of resistance.

With your co-operation, we have made good strides in the right direction:



Farm assurance policy is catching up with our lead in this direction, with some significant changes in Red Tractor requirements for beef, sheep and dairy with regards to medicines. Please see the attached information sheet for more details, but in summary the following will apply to all farms from June 2018:

1. A written annual livestock health and performance review must be undertaken by the vet. This must include a review of antibiotic usage, including a collation of all the products sold to the farm over the last 12 months. Your inspector may check your records and medicines store to see that your usage matches what has been prescribed. For dairy farms, there must be a review of any antibiotic failures and use of selective dry cow therapy.
2. Critically important antibiotics (including all the products in the graphs above) must no longer be used, except where a veterinary investigation including culture and sensitivity testing in a lab indicates that no other product is suitable. This is an extremely rare scenario, so in the vast majority of cases we will not be able to prescribe these drugs. If there is no evidence of these medicines only being used as a last resort, the farmer will fail their assessment and need to show corrective action for each use within 30 days and may well risk losing a supply contract. This is already happening in the pig sector and the inspectors are looking at medicine use extremely closely. Please discuss alternative products with your regular vet.
3. It is recommended that at least one member of staff on every farm undertakes a medicine handling and administration course. We are running these monthly at the practice at £75 per person, or

£100 per farm if you want to send a couple of staff. Alternatively, we can run a course on your farm. All attendees will receive a certificate which will qualify you for farm assurance purposes.

## Bull Fertility Testing

A good proportion of bulls tested in the UK are infertile or sub-fertile, costing the industry millions in poor fertility. Tom, Ian and Nick are all trained in bull fertility testing and we have all the kit needed to show that your bulls are fit to run with the cows this summer. It won't be long now before spring calvers need to think about putting bulls in, so make sure that your own are up to the job (and if not that you have time to source replacements). If you have 4 bulls or more it's only £96 per bull for full test and report (slightly more if you have fewer bulls).

## Online Shop

We have launched an online shop this month and it is great to see some of you using it already. We have done this so that we can be competitive with agricultural wholesalers on animal health products such as wormers, fluke drenches and fly control. To do this, we have linked up with our veterinary wholesaler Henry Schein. All the products featured are stored at the Henry Schein warehouse and when they are ordered, get packaged, labelled and dispatched from there. This means that we can access large volumes of the POM-VPS products mentioned earlier, without having to buy and store them in bulk ourselves. The process for using the shop is:

- 1) Follow the link for the online shop via the [www.georgevetgroup.co.uk](http://www.georgevetgroup.co.uk) website
- 2) Create an account login before selecting products, then choose the required items for your basket
- 3) If you are buying POM-VPS products you will have to fill in the short questionnaire
- 4) Select your delivery option, either free of charge to the practice (this will take **2 to 3** working days to arrive so check before collection) or directly to your farm (delivery from £3.99, again **2 to 3** working days to arrive)
- 5) Complete payment via credit or debit card

Just to emphasise that we don't keep the stock at the practice, so please order 2 to 3 working days before you need the product.

Thanks



Ed

**For sale:** Automated mechanical brush for teat preparation and disinfection. If you're interested, please call Nick Catchpole on 07990 625374.