

In the first of our new monthly series of 'the vet column' we talk to **Rob Howe**, from the Lancashire branch of Lambert, Leonard and May, about two seasonal health problems; E.coli mastitis and lungworm.



Rob Howe

Stay vigilant against seasonal issues

Toxic mastitis is often referred to as 'coli mastitis' or 'E.coli mastitis' because in many cases the common environmental bacteria, *Escherichia coli*, is the causal bug, says Rob Howe. "It is important to understand other bacteria can cause very similar signs with watery yellowish discolouration of milk and a hard quarter. Toxic mastitis is often very sudden in onset and the cow becomes very ill extremely quickly."

Mr Howe adds, *E.coli* causes the signs of disease when toxins are released from within the bug as the rapidly multiplying bacteria die. For this reason some vets argue antibiotic therapy is not terribly relevant.

"Prompt treatment makes all the difference and should focus on aggressive use of fluids and anti-inflammatory products. Many dairy farmers are now equipped with a cattle pump to

ensure cows can be given large volumes of oral fluids quickly and relatively simply."

He adds, in recent years there has been some research focusing on the use of vaccines for the improved control of toxic mastitis.

The sharp rise in temperatures set the scene for the development of the most important cause of pneumonia in grazed adult cattle - lungworm or 'husk'.

"Once we have a few wet days then lungworm larvae will start to move around on pasture and develop into their infectious larval stages.

At risk

"Cattle which have been turned out for their first grazing season in recent months are especially at risk, as they are likely to have very little immunity to the infectious parasite which causes lungworm in cattle."

Mr Howe warns it is now extremely common to see very mild signs of lungworm in older cattle too. "They may have a fairly decent level of immunity through exposure in previous grazing seasons, but when conditions favour the parasite, the numbers in a single bite can be massive.

"These very large larval challenges can overwhelm the grazing adult cow and she

may start to show the occasional cough, some runny eyes or discharges from the nose. In most cases there is a pretty hefty milk drop too.

"Treatment is now pretty simple, with products available to kill

the worms and which don't involve discarding milk. However, the products are quite expensive and much more importantly the damage does not go away and the impact on long-term yield and future fertility can be profound.

"This is a classic case where prevention is very much better than cure and we would always recommend discussing the use of a lungworm vaccine with your vet to ensure long-term control of lungworm is maintained."

Prompt treatment makes all the difference

ROB HOWE

Aggressive use of fluids can help tackle *E.coli* mastitis.



Cattle out for their first grazing season are at risk from lungworm.

Scholarship

FARM vet Sara Pedersen has been awarded a travel scholarship by Reaseheath College and the Cheshire Agricultural Society.


A dairy vet with the Nantwich Veterinary Group, she will use the scholarship to gain a deeper insight into the prevention and treatment of lameness in dairy cattle and hopes her new knowledge will help Cheshire farmers reduce lameness in their herds.

Advisory hub

A NEW farm advisory service for North Yorkshire and Humberside will be led by Jonathan Grayshon.

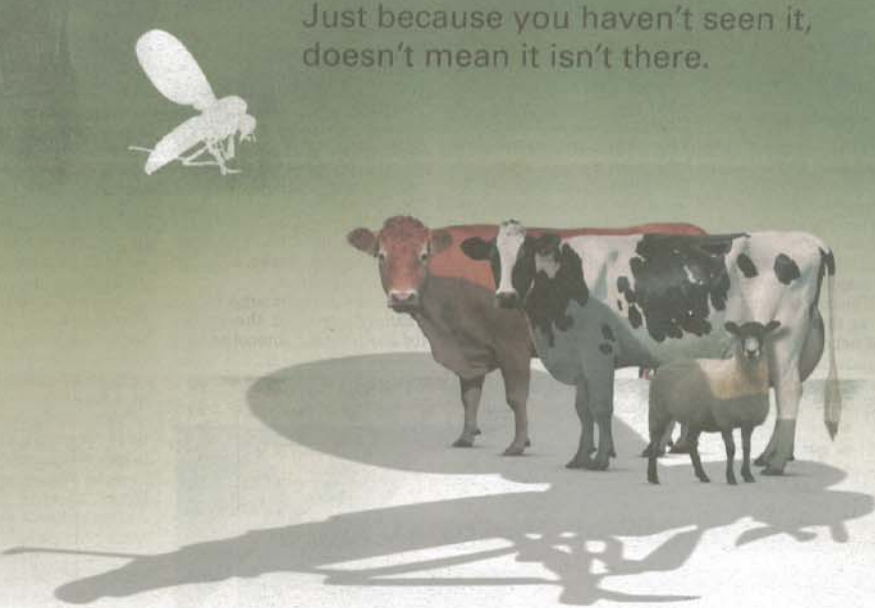
Mr Grayshon will work from the auction mart at Thirsk, where the latest SAC Consulting office is located. This new base is the 27th consultancy office operated by SAC Consulting.

MORE INFORMATION
Details on 07770 978 117 or jonathan.grayshon@sac.co.uk



Schmallenberg Virus

Just because you haven't seen it, doesn't mean it isn't there.



Every county in England and Wales has tested positive. It's in Scotland too.¹

This midge-borne virus causes devastating birth defects in calves and lambs.
And reduces milk yield in dairy herds.²

Can you afford to ignore the risk?

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Bovilis® SBV

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Use Medicines Responsibly.
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References:
1. SBV Information for farmers and vets in GB, AHVLA/AG-SDV-01 May 2013.
2. L. Davies, P. Vollema and P. Rogers, Schmallenberg virus – an emerging novel pathogen. In Practice, 2012 34(10): p. 598-604.

