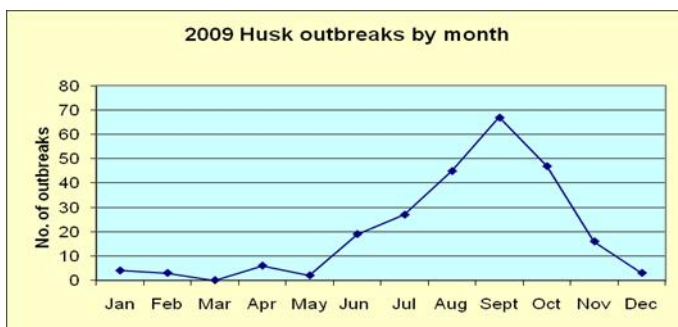
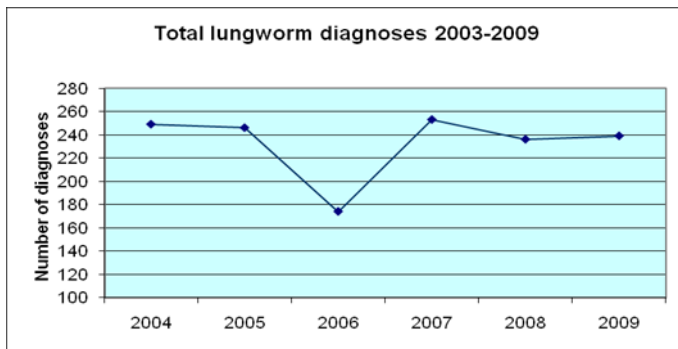


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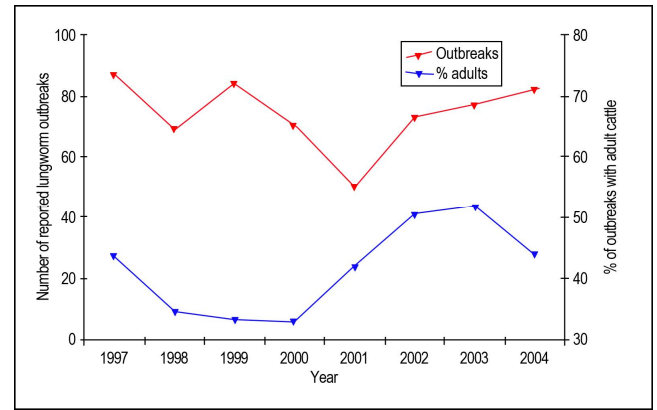
Think now about protecting valuable stock at grass

Traditionally, the time to start considering husk prevention is just before turnout. Given that lungworm remains a constant threat year on year, and turnout will be starting in some parts of the country soon, planning how best to protect stock from the threat of lungworm could pay dividends as the season progresses. Although outbreaks are seen mainly in late summer and autumn, early planning is the key to prevention.



Historically, lungworm problems have been most commonly associated with youngstock, but now around 50% of reported cases are in adult animals which could have a very significant impact on the profitability of a herd (see below).

Planning lungworm control strategies prior to a heifer's first grazing season makes sense and can avoid the all-too-common scenario where an



infestation does occur and treatment has to be given. As well as being costly, lung damage will often have already occurred, leading to the typical signs seen. Even where prevention is the goal, relying on wormers alone often doesn't allow the animal to develop its own natural immunity. Vaccination with a pre-turnout course of Bovilis Huskvac® is the most reliable way of ensuring the development of immunity to lungworm.

Husk occurs as a result of infection with the worm *Dictyocaulus viviparus*. Cattle develop it after eating grass contaminated with infective larvae. Once in the gut, the larvae migrate through its wall and soon they reach the lungs where they begin laying eggs. A spell of mild, wet weather can create a sudden, dramatic increase in lungworm populations, which can be very harmful, even fatal, to any stock that have little or no immunity.

Bovilis Huskvac is a live vaccine, made from irradiated larvae which are incapable of causing disease. For dairy calves, vaccination should be completed at least two weeks before the calves are turned out to grass, for suckled calves it should finish two weeks before the calves begin to eat significant amounts of grass. Sustained-release wormers such as boluses should not be given until two weeks after the final dose of vaccine.

The vaccine produces a very good immune response against disease but it does not prevent all worms from natural infections completing their life cycle. This allows for the continued development of natural immunity, which often fails to occur where there is an over-reliance on wormers.

Please contact the practice to plan your gutworm and lungworm control strategies for this season and to order Bovilis Huskvac.

Leptospirosis –

protect your herd from both strains

Do you buy in cattle? Do your cattle sometimes graze with sheep? Do you use a bull? Do your cattle have access to a watercourse? If you have answered yes to any of these, your stock could be at risk of Leptospirosis infection, one of the most common diseases seen in UK beef and dairy cattle.

Screening shows that around two thirds of dairy herds test positive for Leptospirosis but what is sometimes overlooked is that after exposure an animal can become a carrier for the disease for months or even years. Bacteria settle in the reproductive tract and kidneys of infected animals and infection spreads when cattle are exposed to the urine of infected animals. Infected animals will suffer from sudden milk drop, loss of appetite, abortions (usually 6-12 weeks after infection) and sometimes whole herd abortion storms occur. Studies have shown that infected animals achieve only a 30% conception rate, compared to around 46%. This equates to only 66 out of 100 cows in-calf in an infected herd, compared to 84 in-calf when Leptospirosis is controlled. Just as concerning, Leptospirosis is a zoonotic disease meaning that it spreads to humans, potentially placing farm workers at risk.

Turnout is often the time when heifers who, for whatever reason, have not had their full two-dose primary course are most at risk. Mixing cattle means that the disease spreads easily from infected to uninfected animals and if heifers have not had their two doses 4-6 weeks apart with the final dose two weeks prior to turnout, they will not be fully protected.

And we are pleased to be able to continue to offer Leptavoid-H at very competitive prices, backed up by sound veterinary advice on control of the disease on your farm.

Farm Economics. (From George)

A recent seminar updating specialist farm vets on the economics of milk production confirmed both the difficulty of generating a margin without the SFP, and the need for each farm to understand the true cost per litre of each item of expenditure.

All accountants seem to tell farmers "Vet and Med" is too high, and vets tell their accountants their fees are outrageous. Seldom is either comment the result of critical analysis. The most useful thing is for all the key advisors to sit around the table until detailed cost/benefits for each input have been thoroughly scrutinised.

Two examples we worked through involved the return on adding an £800/ tonne C16 fat supplement to the TMR, and discarding the milk from 8 high SCC cows to recover bonus. The fat supplement showed a negative margin until the price fell to below £500, and because penalties for SCC have been effectively diluted by last years price rise it only made sense to discard milk from the two worst cows.

Power and machinery at 3.96 ppl, and concentrates soaring to near 7.8 ppl dwarf vet and med at 0.9 ppl (Nix's figures not mine). However that 0.9p should be spent wisely and forced to make a return. On nearly every farm with decent costings FERTILITY is always the big cost (or earner if you are good at it). The efficiency of conversion of expensive concentrates and forage (tractors and diesel) to poorly priced milk (26.5ppl) is entirely dependant on having as many cows as possible around peak yield and the very minimum of stale cows, who convert food poorly. In other words calving interval is still the Holy grail.

How often do we see a lame cow (who will be infertile) walk through the yard unmentioned while heated discussions about the price of penstrep roll on for the 10 minutes it would have taken to treat her. I am from a generation that still counts pennies but the seminar made me very aware of where the POUNDS are going.

Any thoughts or comments gratefully received.

The Healthy Livestock Initiative.

Group meetings are now starting for each of the disease strands of the Healthy Livestock Initiative. If you have registered your interest for one or more parts, we will be contacting you shortly. If you have not, and are interested, please contact Caroline or one of the farm team as soon as possible. Below is further information on what is available and some details of the schemes and costs involved.



Johne's Group Meeting: Ash Thomas Village Hall, Tuesday 22nd February: 11.00 a.m. until 2.30 p.m. Lunch included! But please book a place with Caroline at Cullompton

Johne's Group of 10 (Cost may vary slightly if group sizes vary)			Hours
YEAR 1	GROUP	Awareness meeting	2
YEAR 1	One to one	Johne's risks & status using MyHealthyHerd	0.5
YEAR 1	One to one	Visit to take bloods (30 milks can be used for dairy herds) Discuss results and create forward surveillance plan	1.25
YEAR 2	GROUP	Results and discussion of progress and outcomes	2
Your contribution	£105	FOR TOTAL VET TIME	5.75 hours
plus	Up to £25	for £100 inc VAT value of blood / milk tests	
TOTAL	£130 +VAT	There may be a reduction in costs if we manage to negotiate sponsorship from the Johne's vaccine manufacturer (VIRBAC)	

BVD			Hours
YEAR 1	GROUP	Awareness meeting	2
YEAR 1	One to one	BVD risks & status using MyHealthyHerd	1.25
YEAR 1	One to one	Visit to take bloods Discuss results and create forward surveillance plan	0.5
YEAR 2	One to one	Visit to take bloods Discuss results and create forward surveillance plan	0.5
YEAR 2	GROUP	Results and discussion of progress and outcomes	2
Your contribution	£100	FOR TOTAL VET TIME	6.25 hours
plus	Up to £25	for £100 inc VAT value of blood test	
TOTAL	£125 +VAT	We have negotiated sponsorship from Intervet Schering Plough for the group meetings and so they are FOC to you	

Mastitis: There are no initial group meetings for the mastitis strand. Please contact the practice asap for more information

DairyCo Mastitis (Individual farm cost)			Hours
YEAR 1	One to one	Farm visit DCMP questionnaire and environment assessment Parlour routine & teat scoring	3.5 vet 3.5 hours
YEAR 1	One to one	Collation of data and herd diagnosis Action Plan	3.5 vet
YEAR 2	GROUP	Results and discussion of progress and outcomes	* Optional
Your contribution	£250	FOR TOTAL VET TIME	
plus	FOC	Includes 10 milk sample	
TOTAL	£250 +VAT	* The optional group meeting would be funded at 70% EU funded like the rest of the project ó we may get sponsorship. Details to be decided	

Lameness Group of 5 (Cost may vary slightly if group sizes vary)			Hours
YEAR 1	GROUP	Awareness meeting	2
YEAR 1	One to one	Mobility score your herd	1
YEAR 1	One to one	Inspect (lift) feet	1.25
YEAR 1	One to one	Risk checklist	0.5
YEAR 1	One to one	Solutions	0.75
YEAR 1	GROUP	Foot trimming	* Optional
YEAR 1	GROUP	Workshop	* Optional
YEAR 1	GROUP	Group farm visit	* Optional
YEAR 2	One to one	Mobility score your herd	1
Your contribution	£222.50	FOR TOTAL VET TIME	
TOTAL	£222.50 +VAT	We may be able to negotiate sponsorship for the group meeting which might reduce the costs * The optional group meetings would be funded at 70% EU funded like the rest of the project ó we may get sponsorship. Details to be decided	