

Hafren Veterinary Group Large Animal Newsletter July 2019



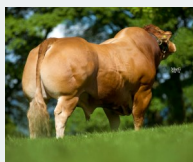
Welcome to the July 2019 edition of our newsletter, bringing you seasonal and topical information and updates.

PRACTICE NEWS

Recently some of our Newtown staff completed the cross wales walk in aid of the DPJ foundation. The DPJ Foundation was set up in July 2016 following the death of Daniel Picton-Jones. The foundation aims to support people in rural communities with poor mental health, especially men in the agricultural sector.

Semen testing

SEMEN AND BULL TESTING Not knowing that a breeding bull is infertile can have huge financial implications for your farm. A cow should have 1 calf per year. It is estimated that for every day a cow is not pregnant over her 365 days calving interval, it is costing you £3 a day. We can carry out specialist examination for beef bulls in order to determine if a bull is likely to have a problem. As part of the bull's genital examination, we search for any structural damage, as well as external or internal abnormalities. Following that and with the use of an electro-ejaculator we collect a semen sample and examine them under the microscope. That allows us to determine whether the bull is sound or infertile. Early detection of a problem can help maintain your breeding management and help prevent any significant losses



Check out your tups

We don't want to scare you, but it's coming round to that time of year again! Time to MOT your rams so they are fit and ready for the breeding season. It is essential to get them in top condition prior to the tupping season to ensure maximum breeding success. The semen production cycle takes approximately 7 weeks, so a breeding soundness exam should be carried out at least 7 weeks pre-breeding to allow time to fix any problems.

A basic on farm MOT check of your ram should include;

- **Teeth** Poor teeth, particularly in older rams, lead to loss of condition due to reduced feed intake and subsequent reduction in breeding performance. Check for a full set of teeth that are in good condition and that incisors meet with the dental pad. Check your ram's molars by running your fingers around the underside of the jaw to check for any thickening, sharpness, gaps or pain that could be caused by infection.
- **Body condition score** Rams need to be in their best body condition at the start of the mating season to allow for a decrease in condition throughout the season (approx 10-15% BW), aim for BCS 3.5. Thin rams will need to be supplemented with concentrates at least 6 weeks before the breeding season to increase body condition and sperm quality. Beware that over fat rams can often be too lazy to breed or they can also have reduced fertility due to excess fat in the scrotum. When buying rams from sales before tupping, they are usually in a fit condition. It is tempting to take them off concentrates before turning them out with ewes. By doing this they will lose fertility – keep them on a level playing field in terms of nutrition.
- **Feet** Foot and lameness problems affect the ram's ability to work and ability to mount ewes. Pick up all feet prior to tupping season to allow time for carrying out any trimming or treatment needed. Additionally any pain will reduce the ram's willingness to work, so check for interdigital growths that may cause problems later on, as well as foot rot and scald.

Drugs in the box

We provide a free, complimentary service to our farmers in order to enable them to pick drugs up outside of office opening hours, by securing them in a locked drugs box. However, we have recently noticed an increase in drugs not being collected on the day of request, and limited notice given for any drugs required. Farmers are reminded that the provision of drugs in the black box on nights and weekends incurs time and diesel for the vet on call. Therefore, please only use this service IF you intend to collect the drugs on the day, and please be flexible on the time that drugs will be made available to you. Thank you for your co-operation!

