December 2016

Severn Edge FARM VETS

Cattle Health Schemes

Cattle health schemes are an industry tool that aim to control and eradicate non-statutory diseases within the UK cattle herd. There are multiple licensed schemes and they are all regulated by the Cattle Health Certification Standards (UK) or CHeCS – this ensures that all the schemes are equivalent to one another. Currently the 5 diseases covered are; **IBR, BVD, Johne's, Leptospirosis** and **Neospora.**

So why bother with a health scheme?

- Herd health schemes aim to improve the overall health, welfare and profitability of your herd and, if done well, should provide a noticeable reduction in annual losses due to these diseases
- They are becoming more prevalent within the UK with more producers only wanting to buy from herds with a known health status as they can then be confident they are not buying in disease – having a cattle health certificate can improve trade value
- National disease eradication schemes such as Action Johne's and BVD Free are being pushed more and more as we as a country aim to keep up with the rest of Europe; belonging to a health scheme provides a simple structure for compliance
- There is growing consumer demand for disease control programmes as increased public awareness of farming methods is putting pressure on us to reduce the use of antibiotics and other treatments

You can enrol on a scheme for just one or for multiple diseases – what you choose to do will depend on your personal circumstances. The entry level of schemes requires only routine monitoring (i.e. routine bulk milk testing for dairy herds) – this provides an assessment of the herd's health status. You can then choose to progress through a control programme to achieve eradication and certification. We most commonly use and would recommend the SAC Premium Cattle Health Scheme: http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120112/premium_cattle_health_scheme

CHeC's have a technical document which can be accessed on their website at: http://www.checs.co.uk/
This provides a more detailed explanation of the rules and regulations: the testing requirements and control measures that need to be put in place vary between the different diseases.

Please contact use at the practice for further support and guidance on enrolling on and adhering to a certification scheme.

CATTLE HEALTH CHeCS CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

Call us for more information

Routine opening hours
Mon- Fri 8.30am-6pm
Sat 8.30am-12pm

RCVS ACCREDITED PRACTICE

24hr Emergency Services
Tel: 01746 713911

SAC Consulting have released this warning on low protein levels in recent silages analyses

A summary of silage analysis results to October 2016 are reported below but the headline figures are as follows:

- 49 % are below 10 % Crude Protein
- 37 % are between 10-12 % Crude Protein
- 14 % are above 12 % Crude Protein

Beef & Sheep Pit Silages: 128 Samples			
	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Ash g/kgDM	71.2	50	97
CP g/kgDM	103	58	159
DM g/kg	291.7	154	626
D Value (%)	67.2	50	76.9
ME MJ/kgDM	10.8	8	12.3
pH	4.3	3.8	4.8

Beef and sheep bale silages: 82 samples			
	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Ash g/kgDM	71	30	103
CP g/kgDM	98.3	61	165
DM g/kg	344.2	164	756
D Value (%)	66.4	50	76.5
ME MJ/kgDM	10.6	8	12.2
pH	4.5	4	5

Crude protein levels below 10 % can be production limiting if not supplemented and in the most severe cases can cause rumen impaction. The reasons for this trend are not fully known, but may include faster growing more nitrogen efficient grass varieties, lower levels of fertilizer application and the weather conditions in the late spring.

Some suckler herds don't get their silage analysed so the main message to farmers is analyse what is in your pit and if protein levels are low seek nutritional advice for feeding over the winter period.

All advice needs to be farm specific - we would recommend seeking the advice of an independent nutritionist if you would like any further help and guidance.

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