

South Wales Farm Vets

Ty Newydd

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Our Team



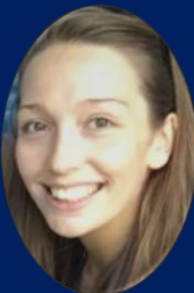
Mary Walters



Rhian Matthews



Clive Moynan



Morgan Richards



Tom Searle

Living And Working In Your Community

April 2019

Hello and welcome to the April Newsletter - quarter of the way through the year already. The weather has been fantastic for lambs in the last 2 weeks, lets hope it continues.

We continue to be busy with lambings, calvings and TB tests—we are now booking for July. Please book your tests early so that we can accommodate your testing preferences.

Another plea to all of you who send us cheques—please address them to ‘South Wales Farm Vets Ltd’, as the bank is becoming very fussy.

Last month we had a celebrity at Tynewydd - Nadia Hussain from the Great British Bake Off came to interview Tom. The programme that they were filming is all about what busy people cook/eat, and they went back to Tom’s house to do some cooking. Watch out for it on BBC 2 in July, we will try and let you know in advance. Tom is available for autographs, selfies and fete openings.....

Happy Easter from us all at the practice.

Mary

Weaning replacement calves

Put simply, weaning calves is the single best opportunity on farm to undo all of the hard work done so far. A check in growth around weaning is all too common, and will also put the calf at risk of other diseases such as coccidiosis or pneumonia.

When should calves be weaned?

Calves can be weaned when they meet the following criteria, in order of preference:

- 1) Starter intake: over 1kg/heifer/day for at least 3 to 4 days
- 2) Weight: once a heifer has doubled it’s birthweight (usually 50 days or so)
- 3) Height: as an alternative to weight – 87cm at the withers for Holsteins, 84cm for Friesians.





Sian Fuller



Russell Fuller



Rachel Davies



Sian Lloyd



Helen Dando



Tracey Huntley

The starter intake is key, as this will determine how much the calf will eat after weaning, allowing continued growth. Programmes such as Calf Tracker can be used to regularly record calf weights, ensuring growth targets are being met.

How should calves be weaned?

The most successful weaning strategy is usually step-down weaning. This process involves reducing the amount of milk fed gradually in the week before weaning, in order to increase calf starter intake. Typically, calves are initially fed once a day for 3 to 4 days, then fed half their usual milk amount once a day for 3 to 4 days before weaning.

After weaning, the diet should be calf starter, ideally ad lib, plus forage – hay or straw seem to work best until the calf has settled on its new diet. After this, the growing ration can slowly be introduced, as the gut should be well enough developed to be able to cope with a forage based diet.

Finally, a very simple way to smooth the weaning process is to rear calves in pairs or groups. At weaning, this makes calves adapt to the new diet much faster. For this to work, the calves do need to live in a pair – being able to see each other through a hurdle does not seem to have the same effect.

The practice will be holding a meeting about rearing milk fed calves in the not so distant future, covering aspects key to both dairy replacements, and feeding bought in bucket reared beef calves, so we hope to see you there.

Nematodirus in lambs

Nematodirus worm can cause a nasty disease in lambs leading to stunted growth and even death. Under certain climatic conditions it can strike very quickly with very little warning. Nematodirus is different to other worms in that the eggs require a period of cold weather followed by temperatures of 10°C or more. If these conditions coincide with lambs at an age where they are starting to graze significantly we see disease outbreaks. However these specific weather requirements mean it is possible to predict the potential risk period.



Both SCOPS and NADIS provide free to use forecasts online: <https://www.scops.org.uk/forecasts/nematodirus-forecast/>

This is a summary of the forecast on 31/3/19

- Low Risk
- Moderate Risk
- High Risk

A more accurate, current forecast with further details are available online.

Fresh cow/pre-breeding checks

We all know that the cow who had a tough time calving will be slower to conceive at the next mating period. Have you considered getting these cows checked and treated before going to the bull to reduce ongoing fertility issues? Any cow that required a caesarean, suffered a uterine prolapse, had a difficult calving or didn't cleanse properly, we recommend examining and treating at least 1 month before going to the bull.