

Our Team



Mary Walters



Rhian Matthews



Morgan Richards



Tom Searle



Russell Fuller

Living And Working In Your Community

December 2021

Hello and welcome to the December Newsletter – almost unbelievable that we are at the end of the year, and what a challenging year it has been. If last Christmas taught us anything then it is that family and friends are the most important thing and I hope that you will all enjoy a Christmas with loved ones.

Some good news from SWFV – Rachel has welcomed the safe arrival of a baby girl. Mother and baby are doing well and we all wish Rachel and her family well— they are looking forward to teaching her how to lamb sheep.

We are hoping to start some face to face meetings in the New Year. Tom will be doing a lambing course in January and watch this space for a medicines course – prompted by the new Red Tractor standards.

We are of course available 24 hours and day, 7 days a week over the Christmas period. It is likely that the office will close early on 24th and 31st December, and emergencies only on all the bank holiday and weekend days.

All that remains is to say that we all wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mary

Top 10 TB facts

Many of our clients have looked into the CHecs Accreditation scheme previously and found the requirements too onerous. The scheme has been relaunched this year with the emphasis on treating TB like any infectious disease. You can now join on the TB entry level membership – with a focus on an achievable first step by improving biosecurity – many measures help other infectious diseases too. There is more information on the website www.checs.co.uk

Here are a few interesting facts that popped up when I was reviewing the information:

1. TB is far more likely to arrive in a new area on a trailer than in a badger (how can this happen when cattle have been pre movement tested? See 2)
2. The TB test that we perform is 80% sensitive – ie, 4 in 5 truly positive animals are identified – meaning 1 in 5 truly positive animals test negative
3. The TB test is 99.98% specific – ie, if an animal tests positive, it is 99.98% likely to be truly positive – therefore incredibly unlikely (1 in 5000 chance) that it is a false positive. This is the case even when post mortem results reveal no signs of TB infection – the gap between an animal testing positive on the skin test and having lumps and bumps visible to the naked eye is months.
4. Spread from badgers to cows (or cows to badgers) is unlikely to be direct – nose to nose, but rather via contaminated feed or water
5. Badgers primary food source is earthworms, with berries seeds and nuts being more seasonal. It is for this reason that badger egress into buildings is more likely to occur in hot dry spells – in the summer, when the ground is too hard for earthworms and berries seeds and nuts are not in plentiful supply
6. Preventing badgers having access to feed and water reduces risk – this can be a challenge as badgers can reach up to 90cms and squeeze under a gap of 7.5cm
7. Preventing cows having access to badger areas outside reduces risk – fencing cows away from sets



Sian Fuller



Dom Day



Jimmy Jackson



Sian Lloyd



Helen Dando



Tracey Huntley

- and badger latrines
8. Resolved inconclusive reactors (IRs). An animal that was an IR at one test, and then tested negative at the next TB test (resolved IR) has a greater risk of becoming a reactor in future – to reduce possible cow to cow transmission, these animals should be managed out of the herd.
 9. The TB bacteria can survive in slurry for 6 months, and on pasture for 2 months. Spreading slurry and manure can spread the disease and grazing management should take this into account.
 10. Lots more information on the ibTB website – which gives a geographical map of TB incidents – including current ongoing breakdowns and historical breakdowns which are closed but happened within the last ten years.

As always if you would like to discuss these further please contact the practice—we are happy to help

Red Tractor/Farm Assurance standards

Red Tractor have recently updated their assessment standards meaning for all our dairy farms there are new levels required. Most of our beef and sheep farms are assured with FAWL rather than Red Tractor but these 2 schemes are usually aligned so we can expect some updates from FAWL in the spring.

For the full Red Tractor updates visit: <https://redtractor.org.uk/our-standards/>

Some of the major points for dairy farms are:

- A written breeding and management policy must be in place and implemented that focuses on eliminating the routine euthanasia of calves.
- Annual collation of calf births/deaths must be maintained.
- The health plan must include a BVD control & management plan.
- The farm must have a nominated vet/vet practice that must have visited the farm at least once in the past year. The nominated vet must review, sign and date the Health Plan yearly.
- No electric goads or electrified backing gates are to be used.
- There are increased regulations regarding appropriate medicines use, including antibiotic use and the necessity to give analgesia with many routine procedures.



The Red Tractor beef and sheep standards main differences are with regard to medicines use. These include a collation of antibiotic use on the farm and the requirement for at least 1 person involved in the day to day running of the farm to have completed a recent medicines training course (since October 2016) . As with the dairy standards a BVD management plan must be in place and the nominated vet must visit at least yearly, review, sign and date the Health Plan.

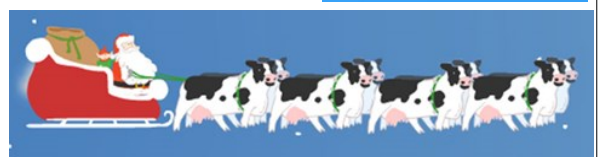


Rest assured, we will communicate with you all when we have the updated FAWL standards and when they come into play. We have previously run medicines courses for the dairy standards and will look to run similar courses for beef and sheep clients if they are required or if people are interested—please let us know if so. I think it is safe to say the health & welfare reviews are going to take a little longer in future.

Christmas Opening hours

The practice will be open as usual over the festive period apart from:

- Dec 24th: Early closing
- Dec 25th— Dec 28th: Emergencies only (practice closed)
- Dec 29th: Open as usual
- Dec 30th: Open as usual
- Dec 31st: Early closing
- Jan 1st—Jan 3rd: Emergencies only (practice closed)
- Jan 4th: Back to normal



Office opening hours

Monday – Friday
8.30am - 5.30pm

Emergency out of hours service

Weeknights 5.30pm - 8.30am
Saturday & Sunday all day