



Ark Vet Centre

FARM NEWSLETTER NEW YEAR 2025



TWO NEW IMPORTANT FARM VACCINES

Cryptosporidium Vaccine

If the management of calf cryptosporidiosis has been challenging recently, speak to us about a new vaccine that can help. Vaccinating pregnant heifers and cows with the new Bovilis Cryptium® vaccine from MSD Animal Health can provide protection for calves from birth at the start of colostrum feeding – when they are most vulnerable. Active immunisation raises antibodies in colostrum against the protozoan parasite *Cryptosporidium parvum*, which will help to reduce clinical signs (e.g. scour/diarrhoea) when calves are fed this fortified colostrum. Bovilis Cryptium® should be administered to cattle during late pregnancy. The primary vaccination course is two doses (4 to 5 weeks apart, in the third trimester of pregnancy. To be completed at least 3 weeks before calving). Cattle that have had the primary vaccination course only need a single booster dose during subsequent pregnancies. The protection of calves depends on adequate ingestion of colostrum and transition milk from vaccinated cows. It is recommended that all calves are fed colostrum and transition milk during the first five days of life. At least three litres of colostrum should be fed.



Mycoplasma Bovis Vaccine

Mycoplasma Bovis is a widespread bacterial disease that most commonly causes caseo-necrotic pneumonia in calves and occasionally other chronic health issues such as otitis, severe and non-responsive mastitis, and septic arthritis. It can lead to high morbidity from bovine respiratory disease (BRD) in group reared calves due to rapid spread, increased antibiotic usage and long term growth and production losses due to chronic lung damage and increased mortality. Hailed as a game-changer in the fight against costly *M. bovis*, Protivity from Zoetis induces a serological response offering protection to calves by six weeks of age. For further information on this vaccine please ask one of our vets.



HAPPY NEW YEAR

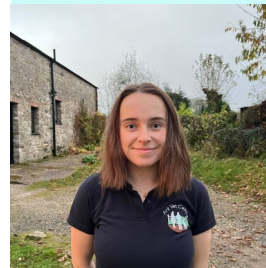
In this issue we have two new vets to introduce to you, two new farm vaccines and some top tips for keeping calves warm in cold conditions.

Please let us know if you have any questions or suggestions for further topics!

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE TEAM

We welcomed two new vets to the team recently.

Ciara Mellor, who joined us from Edinburgh Vet



School in Autumn last year. Ciara is originally from Aberdeen she enjoys getting out into the local countryside with her dog.

Recently we have welcomed Julie Keith from Nottingham Vet School who has joined us this year.

Julie enjoys playing and watching both badminton and football and loves spending time with her animals, including four cows, two cats and one dog.



For Your Information—Our Lockerbie branch will close at 6pm Monday to Friday and 4pm on a Saturday from 1st February 2025.

Remember to like our Ark Vet Centre – Farm Facebook page to keep updated on meetings, information and all things farm.



CARING FOR CALVES IN COLD WEATHER

- ESSENTIAL TIPS



With the recent cold spell in terms of weather, calves are at risk from cold stress. Cold stress can significantly impact their health and growth, especially for younger calves. Here are actionable strategies to ensure your calves stay healthy and thrive, even in the chilliest conditions. Cold stress occurs when calves need to expend extra energy to maintain their body temperature. Young calves under three weeks old are particularly vulnerable, experiencing cold stress when temperatures fall below 10°C. For calves < 3 weeks, the threshold is 5°C. Cold stress affects growth rates and can also compromise the immune system, making calves more susceptible to illness.

Strategies for Minimising the Effects of Cold Stress:

- **Bedding and Shelter** -Providing proper bedding and shelter is one of the most effective ways to protect calves from cold stress.
- **Deep Straw Bedding:** Calves should be able to "nest" in the bedding, with straw deep enough to cover their legs when lying down. This helps trap heat and insulate their bodies. Sand and sawdust are inappropriate bedding choices during the winter.
- **Dry Conditions:** Wet bedding increases heat loss dramatically. Regularly replace damp or soiled bedding to ensure it remains dry and comfortable, and ensure calf accommodation is well-drained.
- **Draft-Free Housing:** Use windbreaks, curtains, or solid barriers to block drafts at calf height. Check for gaps in walls, doorways, and windows that could allow cold air to enter.
- **Additional Insulation:** Consider using insulated panels or curtains to retain heat in calf housing.

Adjusting Feeding Practices -Calves require additional energy during cold weather to maintain their body temperature and continue growing. Here are some feeding adjustments to consider:

- **Milk Feeding** - Feed an extra 50 g of milk replacer, or 0.33 litres of whole milk, per day for each 5°C drop below the lower critical temperature depending on calf age. Do not go above 160g powder/litre water, beyond this ratio can lead to digestive upset. Increase frequency of feeding
- **Calf Starter Feed:**

Introduce high-quality calf starter feed early to supplement energy needs.

Ensure the feed is fresh and easily accessible, replenishing it regularly to maintain intake.

- **Fresh Water** - Make sure water is available at all times and prevent freezing by using insulated buckets or heated waterers. Warm water (around 15°C) encourages calves to drink more and supports digestion.

ADDITIONAL COLD WEATHER HINTS

To further safeguard your calves during winter, consider the following measures:

· Calf Jackets:

- o Provide lightweight, water-proof, and insulated jackets to newborns and young calves.
- o Ensure jackets fit snugly but do not restrict movement or breathing.
- o Wash jackets regularly to maintain hygiene. Dirty jackets can become a pathogen source.

· Grouping Calves:

- o Housing calves in small groups can help them share body warmth, but ensure there is adequate space to prevent overcrowding.

· Ventilation Management:

- o Maintain proper airflow to reduce humidity and ammonia buildup while avoiding drafts.
- o Adjustable vents or fans allow control of air exchange based on weather conditions.

· Heating Options:

- o Consider supplemental heating sources, such as radiant heaters.