



**CASTLE  
VETERINARY  
GROUP**

# Farm newsletter

Tel: 01566 772371 [www.castleveterinarygroup.co.uk](http://www.castleveterinarygroup.co.uk)



## Dairy Herdperson Course

Keen to retain and train staff, or grow your own skill set?

Castle Vets has six upcoming sessions on Dairy cow and calf health - attend all six to gain your Herdperson certification!

This course will be run in Autumn 2024, with sessions held 10:30am-2:30pm, at two-weekly intervals. All sessions will be on local farms and made up of theory and practical components.



- Mastitis + drying off - Thurs 27<sup>th</sup> Aug
- Fertility and calving tips + tricks - Tues 10<sup>th</sup> Sept
- Calf management, housing + vaccines - Fri 27<sup>th</sup> Sept
- Cow nutrition + deficiencies - Weds 8<sup>th</sup> Oct
- Managing + preventing lameness - Tues 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct
- Triaging + treating the sick cow - Weds 6<sup>th</sup> Nov



Both clients and non-clients welcome!

**£695/full course attendance + certification (ex VAT)**

**50% reimbursement for Cornish YFC members, with funding also available for Devon YFC members, through the Dartington Cattle Breeding Trust.**

If you would like to attend the course, or an individual module(s) call:  
**01566 772 371**

Each module will be delivered on a different farm by a core group of vets. This course is being designed, overseen and run by our vet Lucy, who holds a PG Cert (VetEd) in higher education. This small group experience, with on-farm assessments, will result in superior learning and certification.



## Flock and Beef Club Update

The Animal Health and Welfare Pathway guidance has changed, and we can now include Red Tractor Health planning as part of the funded vet activity on farm. When the clubs were re-designed back in 2021, our annual fee was based on the average hours of vet time it takes to complete health planning, a farm visit to do so, attendance at meetings, and other benefits such as in-house worm egg counts.

As government funding can now be used for your health planning, we are reducing the fees, so no one pays twice! The last few years have seen our club membership steadily grow, and we are always open to any new, interested members.

Club	Monthly Charge ex. VAT
Flock Club	£8
Consultancy Flock Club	£13

Beef Club	£8
Joint Flock + Beef Club	£11

### What you are entitled to:

- Flock club OR Beef club member: 4 x annual meetings, access to the club WhatsApp group and 3 x annual WECs (worth £22.30 ex VAT each)
- Flock AND Beef club member: 8 x annual meetings access to the club WhatsApp group and 5 x annual WECs
- Consultancy Flock club member: 4 x annual meetings, access to the club WhatsApp group, 3 x annual WECs (worth £22.30 ex VAT each), on farm consultancy visits and contact with Tim (additional to the 2-3 hours funded by the Pathway annually)
  - o If you would like to continue your consultancy arrangement with Tim, but leave the flock club, the fee will be £8/month (plus the annual Pathway funding)

## Our Farm Team is Growing!

Castle Vets is proud to have employed two new, experienced farm vets over the past month.



Tessa Pengelly comes from near Falmouth and joins us following almost four years at a purely farm practice in Wiltshire. She graduated from Surrey in 2020 and is interested in all aspects of farm practice. In her spare time she enjoys helping at her family farm, which was originally a dairy/beef enterprise, but has recently successfully diversified. Tessa also loves trail running and is looking forward to returning to her Cornish roots!



James Martyn comes from St Neot and joins us following nearly seven years of clinical farm work in Ireland, having qualified in Warsaw University, Poland. James might be a familiar face to some around the Liskeard area. He has a special interest in calf health and has returned to the west country to continue improving his veterinary expertise and practice, as well as to be closer to the family farm! He enjoys a good coast walk, and anything to do with rugby and cricket.

## Congratulations!

Our very own vet Tim has been shortlisted for the Farmer's Weekly *Livestock Advisor of the Year* award. Tim has been with Castle since his fifth year of qualifying. He continues to support new vets within the practice alongside his clinical work, sheep consultancy and partnership within the business. We hope you'll wish him luck for October!



## Upcoming Meetings:

### Final Red Tractor Medicines Course

Having run many Red Tractor Courses since 2018, Castle Vets will be completing this final training session for anyone who is still in need of the certification. Red Tractor currently has no limit on re-validation (i.e. the certificate has no end date), so if you don't have anyone on your farm with this qualification, we urge you to book on!

After this date, online training will be available through third parties, or one of our vets will be able to come out to your farm to deliver the training one-on-one, at additional cost.

August 1<sup>st</sup>, 10am at the Launceston Practice, Pennygillam Way

Cost: £62 ex VAT

Pasties will of course be provided, along with a helpful box of tricks for medicine administration!



TRACEABLE, SAFE  
&  
FARMED WITH CARE

### Poor weather may affect Ewe and Cow fertility this Summer

Most of us are already aware that the grass quality on many farms this year has been lacking. High levels of persistent rainfall through 'spring' (we're not sure if we had one!) alongside a lack of sunshine, means both energy and micronutrient levels on pasture are lacking.

#### Actions you can take:

Be aware that ewes and cows may take longer to recover from lambing this year!

- **Consider early weaning of lambs**, if ewes are in poor body condition
  - o Lambs can be safely weaned from six weeks of age, but please contact us to discuss further
- **Consider earlier than normal weaning of calves**, if cows are looking pulled down
  - o Cows need sufficient energy to cycle, and 'hold' their pregnancy once mated
  - o This is particularly crucial if you don't have your beef cows PDED, as you may lose time without realizing it
- High rainfall leaches **iodine** from pasture
  - o Cornwall and Devon have some of the highest rates of iodine deficiency in the UK
  - o Even if your stock aren't normally affected, consider having five breeding stock sampled this year!
  - o Causes 'slow' lambs/calves or stillbirths
- Pasture may be lacking in **cobalt** this year
  - o This particularly affects growing lambs, though calves may suffer too
  - o Low cobalt intake leads to immunosuppression, increasing the chances of high worm burden
  - o Low cobalt also directly reduces growth rates, and in severe cases can lead to scabby ears, listlessness, and even death following 'stressful' events, like weaning, feed or weather changes







- **Body condition scoring**
  - This year, more than ever, make sure your breeding stock are in sufficient condition throughout their pregnancies
- **Blood sampling stock**
  - 5-10 blood samples can inform on the energy, protein and some mineral levels in stock, these can be useful at pre-breeding and 4-6weeks pre-delivery date
- **Checking stock is in-calf or in-lamb**
  - If this isn't a normal step on your farm, consider **early pregnancy diagnosis** this year, to minimize the impact any infertility will have on your next growing season
  - Cattle PDs are charged as time on a visit, or £2.50-£3.50 on a TB test, depending on how many animals are presented

## Animal Health and Welfare Pathway

### What do I need to do?

It takes literally a few minutes to sign up, follow this link:

<https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/start>

After applying, contact the surgery and supply us with your unique Agreement Code and SBI number. This will entitle you to 2-3hours of vet time, two fully funded preventive health care visits (including Red Tractor health planning) and statutory testing (looking for BVD in cattle or wormer resistance in sheep).

Once we have these details, we will arrange for a vet to discuss how you wish to proceed with the visit(s) and faecal testing (sheep) or BVD testing (dairy/beef). Now is a great time for sheep clients to get on board, so we can cover the parasite season!

There may also be additional funding for further disease testing available, though we are waiting on DEFRA to clarify all the details before sending out a full update for those who are interested. Please see the original blog post here: <https://defrafarming.blog.gov.uk/2024/05/15/further-funding-to-tackle-endemic-diseases/>

