

wright & morten

Veterinary Surgeons

Wright and Morten and Fletcher and Co

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Dairy Monitor Farm

Open Day –23rd February 2011

- *best practice management for optimum health, growth and performance of your youngstock*
- *Birth to weaning*
- *Ed Hayes*
 - *Wright and Morten Vets*
 - *XL Vets*
- *Phil Asbury*
 - *Fletcher and Co*

Clive Hall Farm

- Cheshire Dairy Monitor Farm
 - Part of Livestock Northwest RDPE Northwest Livestock Programme
 - Pleased to work on committee steering this interesting and important initiative
 - Adding ideas and techniques to the work Fletcher and Co and Wright and Morten have put in at Clive Hall over recent years
- A 210 cow spring calving herd
 - Calving over 12 weeks
 - Maximising milk from grass and minimising costs
 - Part of group of farms under same overall management and sharing same objectives

Attempts to improve health and production

- **What are we trying to improve**
- Review of last years performance
- Things we are going to measure
- Things we must do

What are we trying to improve and or control?

- What goes wrong on most dairy farms and costs you money?

The common health problems

- Calf scour
- Other issues
- Other diseases
 - Pneumonia
 - Joint ill
 - Navel ill

Health objectives for youngstock at Clive Hall

- Integrate heifers into milking herd so that they have a productive first lactation and get back into calf
- Grow quickly to calve at 2 years or less
- Stay alive to improve culling choices and sales of less desirable cows

Attempts to improve health and production

- What are we trying to improve
- **Review of last years performance**
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What did not go so well?

- Calf scour
- Calf well being
- Dead heifer calves
- Scouring causing labour costs and reduced growth rates



Review of last years performance

- 2010 calving season
- Number of heifer calves born **102**
- Number of heifer calves born alive **97**
 - 95.1% of total born
- Number of calves treated for scour **15**
 - 15.5% of total born alive
- Number of calves weaned **88**
 - 90.7% of total born alive

RVC trial 2003-10 509 heifers from 19 farms

- 8% born dead
 - 10% die before 15 months
 - 4% infertile or die after 15 months
 - **More than 20% die before 1st calving**
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- Brickell et al 2009

Attempts to improve health and production

- What are we trying to improve
- Review of last years performance
- **Things we are going to measure**
- Things we must do

How will we assess performance at Clive Hall?

- Number of calves born
- Number of calves born alive
 - >96% of total born
- Number of calves treated for scour
 - <4% of total born alive
- Number of calves weaned
 - 100% of total born alive

- Further targets up to first calving

Attempts to improve health and production

- What are we trying to improve
- Review of last years performance
- Things we are going to measure
- **Things we must do**

Things we must do in the coming months

- The same things we did last year that worked
- Different things than we did last year that didn't work!

Factors that may be important

- COLOSTRUM AND IMMUNITY
- HOUSING AND VENTILATION
- CLEANLINESS AND HYGIENE
- DISEASES AND TREATMENTS
- VACCINATIONS

COLOSTRUM AND IMMUNITY

- 3 litres in first 6 hours, 3 more litres in next 18 hours
- Vital for immunity
- Also high in fat (energy) and vitamins
- Many of these things cannot cross the placenta
- Calves with inadequate colostrum are 40% more likely to die from disease

Management changes

- Routine for removing calves from calving area
- Routine for stomach tubing calves



BAGGING CALVES



Housing and Ventilation

- Calving area as well as calf pens
- Shared air space and different ages



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Cleanliness and Hygiene

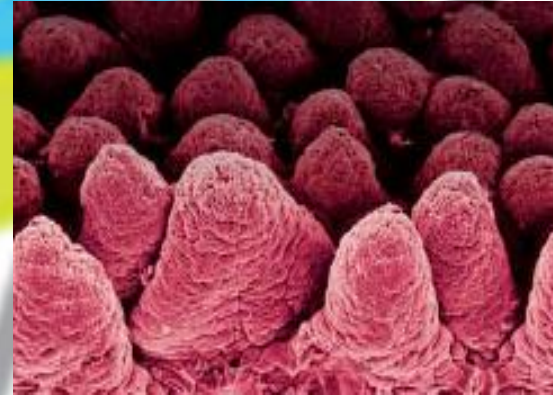
- Calving area and calf pens
- Feeding equipment
- Staff
- Going back on to pen already used for calf rearing

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Diseases and Treatments

- The most important pathogens are mostly viruses and protozoa, therefore not necessarily responsive to antibiotics
- Use of Metacam
- Dehydration and metabolic changes
- Gut damage



Vaccination



- To improve quality of colostrum
- Regime used at Clive Hall
 - Cows vaccinated
 - Management of colostrum

Management up to weaning

- Feeding
 - Milk
 - Water
 - Fibre
- Group sizes
- Bedding up
- Turning out
- Weaning



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FINAL THOUGHTS

- 1.COLOSTRUM
- 2.CLEANLINESS
- 3.COLOSTRUM



Thank you for your attention!

Please feel free to ask any questions

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