

# nantwich farm vets



Crewe Road End  
Nantwich  
Cheshire  
CW5 5SF

24hr phone line: 01270 610349

January 2017



## Dates for your diary

28<sup>th</sup> Feb-  
2<sup>nd</sup> March

4 day AI course

Contact Mike to book a place

20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>  
March

Dairyland Foot Trimming  
Course

Contact Steve to book a place

**HAPPY  
NEW  
YEAR!**



## Welcome to our new vet Sarah Williamson

After spending an invaluable 18 months working as a dairy vet in New Zealand, Sarah decided it was time to return back to England to friends and family.

Originally from the Lake District, her parents run the Ingleden herd of Holsteins close to Penrith. Sarah brings a great mix of experience with both high-yielding Holsteins and spring-calving pasture based systems so is well placed to join the Nantwich Farm Vet team! Having been involved in Holstein young breeders from a young age she is looking forward to catching up with old friends whilst also making plenty of new ones! Please look out for her and say hello!



# Parlour routine

**James Patterson** recently attended a mastitis discussion panel and this month he discusses what he learnt about optimising the milking routine.

The primary objective of a milking routine is to get as much 1) **high quality milk** out of the udders as 2) **quickly and gently** as possible.

## 1. High Quality Milk

Many of you reading this spend many hours each week in a milking parlour, and while they may not all look like the one above, I think it is important that we remember that they are the place on the farm where animal husbandry and harvesting of food meet.

Milking should be viewed as a harvest procedure, and any efforts to improve hygiene of both the cows and the equipment will pay dividends in reducing clinical mastitis and improving the quality of the milk.



## Teat preparation

There are many different teat prep routines out there. This ranges from doing nothing, to a full strip - dry wipe - dip - wipe routine. The end goal should always be to reduce the bacterial load on the teats before the unit is attached. Teats (including teat ends and around 2 inches of skin from the base of the teat) should be visibly clean and dry. The desired level of cleanliness means that from a hygiene standpoint you should be willing to drink milk directly from the teat in the parlour. ***\*I am not suggesting that anybody does this at all; it is simply to illustrate my point!***

This is impossible to do without due care during the preparation steps of the milking routine. Doing nothing is not an option, as visibly clean teats could still have very high levels of bacteria on them.

Examples of pre-dip chemicals on the market:

## Disinfection components

Iodine, Lactic Acid, Chlorhexidine or Salicylic Acid.

All of the commercial preparations of these disinfection chemicals will be effective at killing mastitis causing organisms, but they must have complete coverage of the teat and at least 30 seconds contact time to be fully effective.

## Teat Conditioners

Lanolin, Aloe Vera or Glycerine.

These help to moisturise and soften the skin. Chapped skin with cuts will harbour many hundreds of thousands more bacteria than healthy skin.

## 2. Quick milking

Quick milking depends on two key bottlenecks - **Cow flow** and **the milking process** itself. I'm going to focus on the milking process.

Hopefully if the teats have been adequately prepped for milking with suitable pre-stripping and contact time, then the optimal milk let-down time has been reached (**60-180 seconds**)

**Example workflow in a 24:24 (12 up each side) Herringbone/Parallel parlour with two operators.**

- Cow entry 8 seconds per cow = 96 seconds

**(Approx 96 seconds)**

At this point the two milkers should split and take 6 cows each.

- Pre-Stripping + dry hand wiping of teats + Pre-dipping. 6 secs/cow (**Approx 36 seconds**)

Back to first cow... The required 30 seconds for Pre-dip contact time has been achieved.

- Teat wiping with individual laundered cloth/paper towel. 6 secs/cow

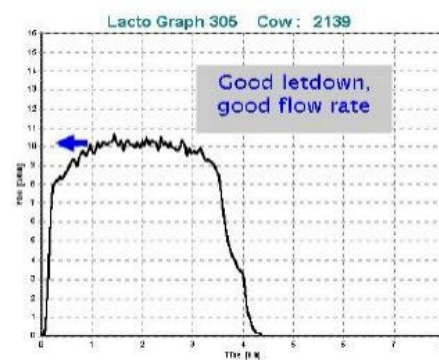
**(Approx 36 seconds)**

Back to first cow... The required 60 seconds for milk letdown has been achieved in the prep stages.

- Unit attachment + alignment check. 8 secs/cow

**(Approx 48 seconds)**

Cows need **12 seconds** of teat contact for adequate stimulation. This is very difficult to achieve by doing a dip step alone. Adding a pre-strip/dry wipe step will help ensure that cows reach this target (see above example). I appreciate that labour is expensive, but it may be worth considering investing in a more complete routine as the benefits may make it very worthwhile!



**What happens if the two middle prep stages are cut out?**

(Reduction of 72 seconds)

- Teat hygiene will be sub-optimal leading to more clinical mastitis
- The cows will not have adequately let down their milk. **See the graphs above....**

### Explanation of graphs

These two graphs show milk flow (vertical axis) against time in minutes (horizontal axis). The graph on the left shows what milk flow looks like when proper milk-let down has been achieved.



Peak milk flow rates are reached very rapidly and then when the udder is almost empty milk flow drops very rapidly.

The graph on the right shows what milk flow looks like when the cow has not received proper stimulation facilitating proper milk let down. Peak milk flow is lower than on the left and it takes much longer to reach. The decrease in milk flow is also much slower; this means that when the ACRs kick in at 300g/min (a very low level) for example, the cow on the right will have much more milk in her udder.

Look out for the **March issue** of the newsletter where James will go on to talk about liners and achieving gentle milking.





### Vets Mobile Numbers

Dave Shaw	07836335185
Rob George	07773384450
John Manson	07813690860
John Yarwood	07814879109
Colin Baxter	07860605079
Stuart Russell	07770448179
Peter Duncalfe	07717780604
Laura Donovan	07800647608
Steven Crowe	07891843694
Liz Davies	07767447281
Mike Wilkinson	07866257014
Jake Lawson	07866257014
Amy Cox	07966833870
James Patterson	07774795700
Sarah Williamson	07812173943

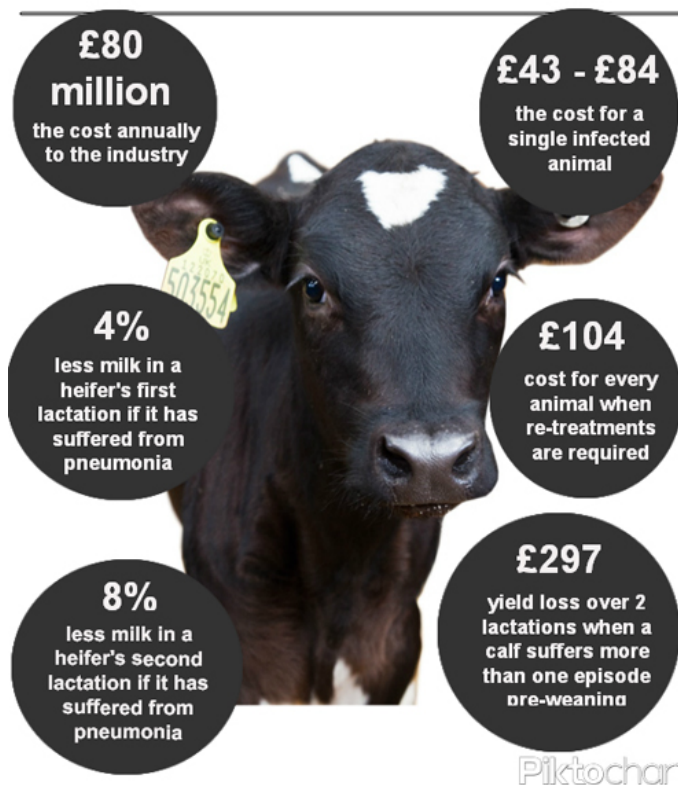
### Vet Technician

Jess Tonks 07921855043



"@NantwichFarmVet"

## The cost of pneumonia



A huge number of our clients have been struggling with pneumonia in the past month. I know it is easy to blame the weather and the huge fluctuations in temperatures but why don't we ask ourselves: Which farms haven't had problems with pneumonia? What are they doing differently to everyone else?

- **HUTCHES!!!** I know they are hard work but they are largely accepted as the best housing for pre-weaned calves
- **Drainage** Fix that leaky roof. Make sure the floor slope is sufficient. Put more drains in. Any moisture in the air will make calves more susceptible. You can get away with a shed with very little ventilation if it is dry
- **Ability to nest in bedding** You shouldn't be able to see a calves legs when lying down: they should be covered by straw
- **Fresh air in** No amount of fresh air is too much provided they have a corner to lie down in which has no drafts
- **Stocking density** Recommended 2m<sup>2</sup> bedded area per calf
- **Small group sizes** Keep calves in groups of no more than 8 until they are a month after weaning. This reduces disease spread between ages.
- **Vaccination** If your calves tend to get pneumonia when they move post-weaning you can vaccinate them to protect them before the move.