

October 2018

Issue 22

TARFF VALLEY LTD

Trading Together, Growing Together, Since 1903

Newsletter

On Tuesday 2nd October, we celebrated our first anniversary of being in Ayrshire! The store, which is situated at the Olympic Business Park on the outskirts of Dundonald, has been successfully serving the local farming community since it opened its doors last year.



Dates for your diary

Friday 2nd

November – Agri Expo, Carlisle H&H Borderway Mart –
Come and visit our stand!

Wednesday 21st
November – Agri Scot, Ingliston, Edinburgh



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Know the facts – Liver Fluke

Liver fluke, *Fasciola hepatica*, is a highly pathogenic parasite which causes severe liver damage, especially in sheep, and can result in the sudden death of previously healthy animals. Millions of pounds are lost every year by livestock producers due to liver fluke with the cost of disease per affected animal noted as £6 per lamb and £90 per calf.*

Fluke lifecycle

All three stages of liver fluke damage the liver and can cause clinical disease and production losses. The lifecycle of the fluke has a portion outside of the animal and involves a mud snail which thrives in wetter areas.

It is therefore unsurprising after the prolonged above average weather experienced this summer that current guidance from the NADIS August parasite forecast predicts moderate risk in the north and west of Scotland, and low risk in all other regions. However, this doesn't mean that there will be no, or limited fluke across the country in Autumn, so it is important to still remain vigilant.

Consider local factors

Control programmes should always take into account the farm history, topography, geographical location and the prevailing weather.

Even in years where disease challenge may be lower than normal, vigilance is still important, and special consideration should be placed on fixing any leaky water troughs, fencing off wet or boggy areas in fields and maintaining effective drainage to reduce snail habitats.

Sustainable liver fluke control

The four elements of sustainable liver fluke control are:

1. **Pasture protection** – to prevent liver fluke eggs reaching the pasture when snails are active
2. **Pasture management** – to reduce snail habitats and therefore reduce snail numbers
3. **Grazing management** – to avoid grazing high risk pastures with susceptible animals at high risk times of year
4. **Strategic treatments for at risk animals** – controlling the right stage of liver fluke, at the right time, using the right product.

For more information talk to your store SQP, vet or check the NADIS fluke forecasts.

*references available on request

Longtown Open Day

On Thursday 4th October, we had an open day to launch the recently re-developed Longtown store and blending plant. The process started in October 2017 when we increased the number of bays in the blending plant to keep up with the demand for blend orders. Our focus then turned to the store which has been expanded to increase the range of products stocked.

New Staff at Dundonald!

Jennifer Veitch has recently joined Tarff as a Sales Assistant at our Dundonald store. Earlier this year, Jennifer was awarded her degree in Agriculture from SRUC. Her interests are mainly in dairy, specifically in calf rearing, animal welfare and showing the family's own pedigree Holstein cows. Jennifer leads a very busy lifestyle being Assistant Secretary of Mauchline Young Farmers and enjoys the Ayrshire nightlife at the weekend!

In her remaining spare time, she enjoys attending the gym which counteracts her taste for KFC! Jennifer looks forward to learning about the broad range of products available at Tarff giving her the ability to advise customers accurately and confidently about products specific to their needs.



Feed for Growth news

Cattle youngstock rearers now have a quick and easy way of recording and monitoring individual calf growth rates against pre-set targets, thanks to the availability of a new smartphone App from Volac.

"Volac's new 'Feed for Growth' App is designed to help farmers working with youngstock to simplify the process of assessing whether individual animals are on track to meet key performance targets," says Product Manager Samantha Sampson. "The App allows you to set up different holdings and record a calf's unique ear tag number. You then simply record an individual calf's weight as it develops and instantly see if it is on track against your pre-set roadmap graph, allowing you to make changes to its feeding programme as necessary.

"Herds can be congregated into coloured groups to help you keep track of different batches of calves. What's more, each calf record contains useful areas for logging adversities and any notes about its health, for example. The App has been created for farmers to do better by their cows and users can be confident that their data remains confidential – and is not visible, collected or used by anybody," Ms Sampson says.

"How you manage a calf during the vital first few weeks of life and beyond has a significant impact on the lifetime performance of that animal. Consequently, our aim is to provide the best package of calf milk formulas, advice and practical management tools we can to make the whole business of successful calf rearing as profitable as possible," Ms Sampson says. Try the **free** app now!



Price of Blends

Tarff sponsored the Non-Accredited Texels at Kelso Ram Sale on Thursday 13th September.

Congratulations to Alan Smith, Crumhaughhill for winning Champion Tup. The class was judged by Paul Slater.



Each year, Tarff supports the Blueface Leicester Show & Sale at Castle Douglas Mart. The Show and Sale was held on Friday 21st September. Overall Champion was awarded to the first prize Shearling Ram from R McKie, Finniss Reserve Overall awarded to the first prize ram lamb from A Brown, Macqueston. Congratulations!



The Dumfries store held its annual Equine Evening on Wednesday 26th September. Local Eventer, Morven Pringle, was the guest speaker for the evening and spoke about her work and life as an eventer, offering tips and advice on how to work with your own horse. Suppliers were also present to answer questions. It was a very successful evening with over 100 people attending. We hope those who went along had a great evening and managed to grab some bargains!

As most of you will be aware, the feed market has been very volatile over the last 12 – 18 months. Uncertainty over Brexit and trade talks between the US and China have had a major influence on this, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Political effects on pricing have been compounded by poor weather across the globe, starting early in the year with a drought stricken Argentine Soya crop yielding almost 40% less than 2017. The theme continued this summer throughout Northern Europe with Oilseed Rape and sugar beet crops particularly badly affected, resulting in domestic sugar beet pulp production expected to be just 80% of that produced last year. Despite difficult planting conditions in autumn 2017, a smaller acreage of winter cereal yielded surprisingly well in the UK, with the spring sown crops failing to meet early expectations.

Supply issues on many of the key by-products are the most recent challenge. The recent and abrupt closure of the Vivergo ethanol plant has put huge strain on the supply of distillers dark grains for winter 2018/19, and the forage shortage in the Southern half of the country has seen significant volumes of wheat feed moved for the production of added value moist feeds, rendering it difficult to source. Throw into the mix that we are now competing for traditional livestock feed materials due to their use in power production through anaerobic digesters and biomass plants, and we face a challenging winter ahead.

Dairy cows will receive a very diverse range of feed types following the summer of 2018. Stabilising the rumen is key to performance this winter and there are several ways in which the acid loading could be severely tested.

- 1) Early first cut silages, which although dry, have a significant rumen acid loading because of high levels of rapidly fermentable carbohydrates from very young leafy grass being cut with low fibre and high sugar content.
- 2) 3rd cut silages are typically very wet with more lactic acid but low in structural fibre.
- 3) Because of grass shortages, some farms have been forced to use a range of alternatives leading to diets with low levels of long fibre.
- 4) The usual autumn problem of multiple dietary changes in quick succession.

Using high digestible fibre concentrates can help but sometimes this is not enough on its own and cutting back on starch supply too far could significantly reduce yields and milk protein content. At Tarff, we can supply compounds containing two ingredients, TechTonic and Actisaf, which have been proven to improve rumen function and stability, leading to higher performance and better feed conversion efficiency (FCE).

TechTonic is a rumen stabiliser which has been researched and trialled for over 5 years in more than 40 dairy farms as well as in independent research conducted by AFBI Northern Ireland. We have used it commercially for three years now and many

The culmination of the above factors has necessitated an adjustment to some of the blend formulations, with our Bull Finisher product being the biggest digression from the previous formulation. In this product we have incorporated ground maize and rolled wheat in place of barley to some extent, to offer a high-quality finishing feed in a more cost effective form.

As an industry we should be prepared to see winter 2018/19 feed prices increase £25 - £35 per tonne on early summer 2018 values and as much as £40 - £60 per tonne on those seen 12 months ago. Under difficult conditions, Tarff is pleased to say that, as long as there are no unexpected supply issues along the way, we have secured a strong book of quality raw materials at competitive prices for the forthcoming winter which should allow our members and customers to feed livestock as economically as possible.

Looking ahead, the North American soya crop is looking in good shape and planting expectations in South America are encouraging. Lets keep our fingers crossed for stabilised growing conditions over the next 6 months and the spring sunshine brightens the prospects for our summer 2019 feeding season.



Stabilising the Rumen

farmers have seen significant performance benefits from TechTonic. It has been proven to reduce by 60% the time which the rumen spends below critical pH levels at which cow performance and health suffer.

Actisaf live yeast also promotes better rumen efficiency but works in a different way. It increases the growth of micro-organisms digesting both fibre and starch by reducing the oxygen content in the rumen. Removing oxygen leads to an increase in propionate production leading to higher milk yields.

In practice, we find that Actisaf is an excellent product for helping cows through the many changes in diet that can happen during the autumn and reducing their impact on rumen digestion.

Both products are proven to achieve improvements in performance on their own but complement each other very well when used together. Buttergold 18 dairy cake contains TechTonic and Actisaf and has many benefits for milk yield, milk quality and rumen health.

For more information on the compound feeds Tarff offers, please get in touch by phoning 01557 820247.

