



nantwich
farm vets LTD

AUGUST 2026

The Show's Over...

We've had an amazing time at various show days over the past couple of months, and we've loved seeing so many of you for a drink (or two!) and a chat, along with the rousing rendition of "Happy Birthday" from everyone at our Nantwich Show stand for Steve's 40th. We've been blessed with the weather throughout, and we hope the days have reflected just how much we as a practice value you all as our community of clients.



StopLac

I thought I would draw your attention to this new product that was launched a few months back that you may not yet be aware of. It does exactly what the name suggests, helping to stop milk production at the point of dry off. It is supplied in packs of four oral boluses, all of which should be administered to the cow when she is dried off, with all the normal dry off routine followed as for any other cow. No change in milking frequency or change in diet required.

It is targeted at cows giving 35L plus at the end of lactation. While I appreciate many of you may not have cows giving these sort of yields at dry off there will still be a significant number of cows being dried off who do. At this stage I should warn you the product carries a very strong garlic odour, which I believe the cow will be emitting a few days post-administration. In fly season this has got to be beneficial for the cow!

StopLac works by modifying rumen fermentation to temporarily reduce volatile fatty acid production. This in turn reduces milk production within 24 hours. Trials have been carried out across Europe and the USA. Some of these trials involved relatively small numbers of cows, which



should be borne in mind when interpreting the results, but they appear to show reduced milk production within 24 hours of administration and a significant reduction of milk leakage post-dry off. This reduction in milk leakage lowers the risk of udder infection during the early dry period. There are also claims to improve cow comfort post-dry off as a result of reduced udder engorgement due to this sudden shutdown in milk production. The final positive beneficial claim is an increase in milk production in the following lactation - up to 3kg per day for the first 100 days in milk.

I'm not making a big sales pitch for StopLac but I am quite curious to see if the product stands up to its claims. As the saying goes, "the proof of the pudding..." If you think this might be a helpful product for your herd then do get in touch.



(click me for more info)

CLIENT GOLF DAY

Monday 28th September, from 11:30am
Wychwood Park Golf Club, Weston, Crewe

~ £80pp ~

Bacon bap ~ 18 holes ~ 2-course meal + prizes

Prizes awarded for highest individual and 2-person team score, closest-to-pin and longest drive.
Book as a team or as an individual (you'll be randomly paired up).

Contact NFV on 01270 610349 or office@nantwichfarmvets.co.uk
Full payment required to reserve a place.

TB, NVLs and Badger Vaccination



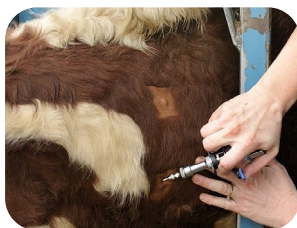
“Non-visible lesions. So it didn’t have TB...they’ve killed my pregnant cow for no reason.”

These words of Jeremy Clarkson’s in the latest series of Clarkson’s Farm, on being dealt the devastating blow of a two times IR cow going as a reactor, reflect the sentiments of many farmers I have chatted to about TB, and highlight how important clear and accurate communication about TB reactors and the ensuing postmortem results are, and how easily misunderstood aspects of the disease and the tests can be.

The program really shows the emotions, stresses and frustrations that come with TB testing. It’s something every vet and tech in our practice can identify with, along with you as clients, even if you might never have had TB. But misinformation such as that on Clarkson’s Farm can add to the stress, so it’s worth dealing with some of these head-on.

MISINFORMATION #1: THE SKIN TEST IS REALLY INACCURATE.

The reality is that in the High Risk and Edge areas where there is a high background level of bovine TB in cattle, true false positives are actually rare, occurring in around 1 in 5000 reactors. In fact, especially in herds with TB, there’s a higher chance of false negatives occurring, and infected animals being missed by the test. Part of the reason for this is the ‘pre-allergic’ period of 3-6 weeks after an animal has been infected when it won’t react to the skin test. This is why two clear skin tests are required before being opened back up, along with targeted use of gamma testing in herds with confirmed TB to pick up infected animals even sooner.



MISINFORMATION #2: NON-VISIBLE LESIONS (NVL) MEANS THE ANIMAL NEVER HAD TB.

Once infected with TB, it can take months for an animal to develop visible lesions. As frustrating as receiving a letter with this result may be after one or even multiple reactors have been taken from the farm, the reality is that it’s far more likely that we are identifying TB-infected animals **before** lesions have had time to develop. At commercial slaughter, postmortem examination of reactor cattle is relatively brief and focuses on the most common sites for lesions. With these factors in mind, it should come as less of a surprise that only around 1 in 3 reactors show up with visible lesions.



MISINFORMATION #3: WE CAN’T DEVELOP A VACCINE FOR TB IN COWS

This was another one of the aspects of TB control Clarkson specifically raised on his program. He contrasted it with the situation in Covid, where a vaccine was developed within months. Why hasn’t the same happened for TB?

The reality is that there is already a vaccine. Studies have been going on for over 25 years into the efficacy of the BCG vaccine in cows (the same as that used in humans and badgers). As with other vaccines (including those developed for Covid), there is a range in the level of protection it will establish in individuals, but it also reduces severity and transmission of the disease. So why can’t we use it?

A primary problem is that the vaccine sensitises animals to the skin test, meaning a large proportion of vaccinated animals would show up as false positives. A test to Detect Infected among Vaccinated Animals (DIVA) was developed over five years ago, and is currently going through field trials to ensure its safety and efficacy. The hope is that the vaccine and companion test will be available in the next few years.

A second problem that needs to be overcome is that of UK and overseas marketing legislation, which currently relies on the skin test as the basis of international trade. Use of the vaccine and DIVA test, once shown to be effective, would require approval by these authorities before it can be widely used.

MISINFORMATION #4: NOTHING’S BEING DONE ABOUT TB IN BADGERS

Badger culling has been overseen in particular areas over the past few years by Natural England. This is being phased out and is transitioning to vaccination in the High Risk and Edge Areas of England. The Badger Vaccination Field Force (BVFF) has been set up to oversee its deployment, currently in three project areas (Shropshire, Oxfordshire and Worcestershire). This will be expanded to include three further project areas in 2027 and another three in 2028. These new areas are yet to be decided by Defra and may be influenced by levels of farmer engagement. You can register interest for your area on the BVFF website or by clicking on the link to the right.



SUMMARY

Clear communication about TB is vital, especially as misinformation can easily add to the stress and frustration that comes with dealing with the disease and tests. If you want to know more, we have TB Advisory Service (TBAS) trained vets in the practice that you can speak to and get advice specific to your farm completely free of charge, or visit [TBHub](#) online, where you will find up to date info on everything mentioned above and more!

Team News

July saw some changes within our NFV Vet Tech team. We said goodbye to Will, who has been a valued team member since 2021 and has moved on to work as youngstock manager on a farm in the area. We wish him all the best in his new role!

But last month also saw the arrival of two new Vet Techs, Eleri Hughes and Bronwen Watkins. They have already been getting stuck in on farm with TB testing (currently still with their 'L plates' on), disbudding, freeze branding, mobility scoring and more, so now's a good time to get to know them a bit.

Hi, I'm Bronwen. I grew up on an upland sheep and beef farm in Powys, mid Wales. My hobbies include travelling, hiking and helping out on the family farm.

I've always had a passion for cattle farming, especially youngstock, having worked on and off dairy farms milking and calf rearing over the past 10 years in the UK and New Zealand. I graduated with a BSc Agriculture in 2018 from Aberystwyth University and since then worked in animal health sales, admin and consultancy within the industry.



I'm Eleri - I'm originally from Ruthin in North Wales, where I grew up on a sheep and beef farm. After studying Agriculture with Farm Business Management at Harper Adams University, I spent a year working on several dairy farms in New Zealand. I have now spent the last six years living and working around Chester swapping the sheep for dairy cows. Outside of work, you'll usually find me at the gym, at a country music concert, or attempting a bit of line dancing from time to time!



We would also like to introduce Sarah McDowell, joining the NFV vet team this month:

Hi I'm Sarah, Nantwich Farm Team's newest vet. I'm a proud Scot from Aberdeen and graduated this year from Harper Keele Vet school. I'm interested in preventative disease management, mastitis and emergency surgeries. Outside of work I spend my time at the gym, baking or out walking in the countryside. I'm a big advocate for mental and physical health awareness - during my studies I was an ambassador for the Oddballs foundation and spent time raising awareness for testicular cancer.



Dates for your diary

Thursday 6th August Medicine Course

Our Red Tractor compliant course covers legislation, responsible use and best practice for administration and handling of veterinary medicines on farm. £70 + VAT.

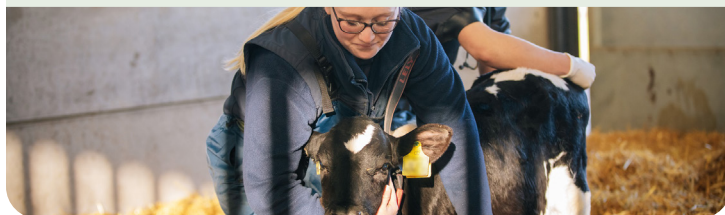


Monday 28th September NFV Client Golf Day, Wychwood Park

See flyer on front page for more details

Friday 11th September Advanced Calf Rearing Course

A one-day course of both theory and practical sessions that will take your calf rearing knowledge to the next level, and equip you with key skills and practical solutions to take back to your farm. £115 + VAT.



Wed 23rd Sept - Wed 4th Nov, 10am-12pm New Herdpersons Course

A comprehensive introduction to all the key areas of modern dairy farming — ideal for anyone new to the industry or those wanting to refresh their skills and knowledge. Delivered in seven bite-sized modules each Wednesday. £350 for the full course or £60 per module. Follow the link for more details and to register.

Get in touch...



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