

# FarmBusiness

FOR FARMING, FOOD AND RURAL ENTERPRISE

23rd October 2009

**7.8%**

**UK UNEMPLOYMENT IN JUNE 2009, UP 0.1% ON THE MONTH AND 2.4% ON JUNE 2008**

**\$120m**

**BILL GATES PLEDGES TO HELP DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN AFRICA AND INDIA**

**3-5%**

**STRATEGIE GRAINS FORECAST FALL IN 2010-11 EU BARLEY AND WHEAT AREA**

## LIVESTOCK MELTDOWN

EU farm commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel claims prejudice is jeopardising the future of Europe's livestock sector, reports **Richard Saunders**

### GM OPPOSITION

A fresh warning that unless EU member governments begin embracing GM technology for food use, the community's livestock industry is likely to face meltdown, came from the industry's highest authority: Agriculture Commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel.

Others have given similar warnings but this time there were no vested interests pulling the speaker's strings or any possible claim of financial bias – just a stark, factual warning that the EU livestock industry is losing its ability to compete on the world stage because of political opposition to feed imports containing traces of GM maize and soya varieties.

### GREEN LOBBY GROUPS

An example of how politicians, strongly influenced by green lobby groups, are threatening the industry came only this week when applications for a number of GM varieties to be approved for use in the EU were effectively blocked by a majority of agriculture ministers, with the result that no feed ingredients containing them can be imported into the community, despite it being cleared as safe to



Prejudice and politics, not science, are the basis for the EU's current policy on GM crops

humans, animals and the environment by the European Food Safety Authority.

Mrs Fischer Boel warned that this policy, which had no scientific grounds whatsoever, was beginning to threaten the €150 billion (£136bn) livestock industry because of a real shortage of feed protein in the EU.

"Europe's farm animals need a lot of protein," said Mrs Fischer Boel. "We have to import most of it because we don't have the capacity or the right farming conditions to produce the protein feedstuff needed on our own. If you hear anyone suggest that we should become self-sufficient in protein

crops, forget it: this is pure fantasy."

Over the past nine years, on average the EU has imported the equivalent of 32 million tonnes of soya beans a year.

### RELIANCE ON IMPORTS

Now a drought which cut soya production in Argentina by 30% in 2008-09 when stocks in South America were unusually low and increasing demand for feed from China is likely to mean heavy reliance on imports from the USA.

Mrs Fischer Boel warned, however, that with soya cargoes sitting on docks because of minute contamination by "unauthorised" GM

varieties, traders were now talking of halting imports from the US altogether. Mrs Fischer Boel also accused some EU state ministers of blocking cheaper feed imports while demanding market intervention, as in Monday's (19th October) milk-dominated EU agriculture meeting.

- The Institute for Independent Impact Assessment in Biotechnology, which says it seeks to mediate between anti and pro GM lobbies, claims in its first report that there are substantial flaws and loopholes in the EU GM approval process, particularly the European Food Safety Authority's own concept of risk assessment.



Focusing on Fruit  
See page 41

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Reference: 1. Internal Merial Animal Health Document. MOO Test Data Results 2008. \*2008 MOO Test results demonstrated 91% of herds tested resulted in a high level of worm challenge. This means a moderate to high exposure of the herd to gutworms with a significant probability of sub-clinical effects on health and production. Merial Animal Health Ltd. CM19 5TG, UK. EPRINEX® and the steerhead® logo are registered trademarks of Merial Ltd. ©Merial 2009. All rights reserved. Advice on the use of this or alternative medicines must be sought from the medicine prescriber. Legal Category: POM-VPS. Read packaging before use. EPRINEX contains eprinomectin. Further information can be obtained by calling the Merial Customer Support Centre on 0800 592699.



CONTRIBUTORS



Andrew Watts,  
Editor



Richard Saunders,  
News & Politics



Caroline Whibley,  
Food Chain/Marketing



Iona Walton,  
Innovation



Chris Lyddon,  
Arable



Richard Wright,  
Finance



Oliver Dale,  
Human Resources

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  - driving closer links within the food chain
  - identifying and analysing international drivers and challenges

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# RELAX – WE’LL NOT ALL BE STARRING IN THE GOOD LIFE

Improved food security, rather than food self-sufficiency is on the Government’s agenda, says editor **Andrew Watts**

## FOOD SECURITY

There’s no need to worry, UK food security is in safe hands. Perhaps a little simplistic, but that’s the general conclusion of DEFRA’s response to a committee of MPs that earlier this year published a report calling on the Government to take a greater interest in safeguarding domestic food productivity.

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) select committee sought to push food security up the list of political priorities by raising the spectre of empty supermarket shelves and riots in the street, although not necessarily in a rich country such as the UK.

Instead, the MPs were highlighting the important role of the UK in ensuring political stability in countries that are less well off than ours by investing in science to counter the threat posed by a warming climate and the spread of plant and animal diseases (see *Farm Business*, 24th July 2009).

Rightly, the committee stopped short of calling for national production targets, because their value is arbitrary and would lead to market distortions.

## ANNUAL REPORT

It did, however, call for DEFRA to publish an annual report on what the department is doing to ensure the future security of our food supplies, both domestically and internationally.

All of this was, of course, greeted warmly by DEFRA which published its response on Monday as *Farm Business* went to press. It welcomed the praise lavished on it in making steady progress to ensuring our food supplies up to 2050 are secured and the request to do little more than publish another report to update observers.

While the suggestion to re-introduce direct payments was not ruled out, should the situation warrant it, their disruptive impact

on the market and the over-supply that resulted were presented as reason not to resort to the solutions of the past. Those who consider their place necessary were duly reminded that food security does not mean self-sufficiency, but rather the access to food of a safe and affordable nature.

The UK is currently 73% self-sufficient in all indigenous foods, a higher proportion than in the 1950s. It is also a significant exporter of wheat, lamb, dairy products and breakfast cereals. Even if it were possible, total self-sufficiency would not insulate us against disruptions (such as weather) to our domestic supply chain and retail distribution system, said the DEFRA response.

## THOUGHT AND RESEARCH

While the Government response seeks to reassure those concerned and, to be fair, it does demonstrate substantial thought and research has been devoted to considering the UK’s position over the short to medium term, it does overlook some of the more pressing matters that threaten the industry and its capacity to respond to global events.

Cutting food waste in the home, for example, is cited as a means to improving sustainability and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but no mention is given to the need to devise and implement a comprehensive policy on bovine tuberculosis or of how the environment and wildlife can be managed in harmony with the right of farmers to run a profitable business free from the burden of excessive regulation or interference.

With the window dressing complete, perhaps greater thought can now be given to ensuring that farming and food businesses can develop the synergies needed to ensure the continued provision of food, while also allowing for commercial ventures to succeed.

# PEER PUTS A DAMPENER ON UK BOOMTIME HOPES

Lord Cameron upbeat about prospects of feeding the world but doubts farmers will reap the benefits, reports **Richard Saunders**

## MARKET OUTLOOK

Predictions that soaring global demand for food will mean a bonanza for UK farmers might be wide of the mark, a prominent peer has warned.

Northern Europe is likely to be the region best suited to raising production significantly, but Lord Ewen Cameron has predicted that politicians will act to prevent commodity prices soaring.

The former chairman of the Countryside Agency and past president of the CLA even went so far as to suggest that the desperate food shortages predicted will not materialise.

“Over the past 30 years, the number of people in the world who are starving has dramatically reduced, and it will continue to reduce,” he said. “But the world’s

ability to feed itself is getting better – and our ability to transport food is helping in that.”

Lord Cameron said there will be areas which will have serious problems as productive land turns to dust, and Northern Europe will be best placed to produce the food that the soaring global population requires.

“There will undoubtedly be blips, but there is no reason why there should be massive starvation,” he stated. “We live in a world marketplace and our scientific ability to increase food production will keep pace with the population growth and changes in food consumption.”

Pointing out that British consumers waste 40% of their food, he said there is a lot to be gained

by better apportionment of supplies. “All we’ve got to do is farm and consume a bit more efficiently.”

But while the economics are in our favour, Lord Cameron pointed out that, apart from 2008, when food prices blipped, profitability of farming “has been pretty bad and most farmers are getting quite desperate”.

## FOOD PRICES

“It is unlikely that a world shortage of food will produce a major hike in returns for British farmers – and even if food prices do rise from time to time, there is a very strong possibility that politicians will step in and prevent us from benefiting,” he said.

“There are more voters and consumers than there are farmers, and low food prices are more beneficial for politicians, so don’t get too excited,” he concluded.

## US farmers must face costs of climate change

Farmers in the US have been warned that climate change will cost them far more than the legislation aimed at curtailing it.

An Environmental Working Group report singles out US senator John Thune as one of the “leaders in the agricultural community” who are “shouting that the wolf is at the door”. “Instead of wringing our hands about the negligible costs of a climate bill, Congress should be worried about how much climate change will cost farmers, our food supply and the environment,” the report said.

The South Dakota Republican senator had said the potential costs imposed on polluters by the climate-change legislation would be passed on to consumers in increased prices for electricity, gasoline, diesel and fertiliser, and farmers would be hard-hit if that happened.

The EWG said projected cost increases caused by the climate bill were so small they would be lost among the annual swings in farm income from yield variation, crop prices and the cost of seed and chemicals, but the cost of climate change for agriculture would be devastating.

## Questions posed as inquiry aims to safeguard EU milk production

A hurriedly set-up inquiry into ways of ensuring the long-term future of the European dairy industry has got underway with its first meeting. The inquiry is a result of measures introduced after angry protests at a meeting of EU farm ministers last month that was convened to tackle the community-wide milk crisis.

The main topic of discussion at the meeting was the state of contractual relations and bargaining power in the dairy market – a subject likely to find favour in the UK where retail chains are seen as holding the industry to ransom.

The work runs in parallel to the measures the Commission is introducing to stabilise the dairy market in the short term and further meetings are scheduled to take place once a month, with a view to reporting back by the end of June 2010.

Issues examined at the first meeting centred on a number of questions:

- Is there a need for formalised contracts between dairy farmers

and dairy purchasers or processors to cover the supply of raw milk and would they help to reduce volatility? Should they be obligatory for all deliveries or be at the choice of the parties?

- What should be the essential elements of such contracts? Price? How could this be freely negotiated between the parties while ensuring equivalent treatment for similar transactions? Volume – fixed in advance? How should under-deliveries or additional volumes be provided for?

- How should breaches of contract be handled?

- How can the bargaining power of farmers be increased? What role could farmers’ (producer) organisations play in this context?

From next month, hearings will take place with industry stakeholders, including organisations representing producers and processors, national competition authorities, academics, consumers, and distributors.

A conference is planned for March 2010.



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## WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

Premier Foods, maker of Oxo stock cubes and Branston pickle, said Hovis bread sales were up 22% in the 13 weeks to 26th September, while sales at its grocery division were up 2% on a year ago.

*The Times*

The Norfolk Dumpling, an apple that was last recorded in 1920, has been brought back to life in the garden of a former rectory. The fruit was thought to have died out almost 90 years ago.

*Daily Telegraph*

Farmers are calling on supermarkets to back the introduction of an independent ombudsman to ensure fair prices at the farm gate. Peter Kendall, NFU president, said the idea already had the support of politicians and the public and it was time for supermarkets to sign up.

*Daily Telegraph*

Taxpayers are to be landed with a £622m bill for bungled payments made to farmers after reform of the Common Agriculture Policy four years ago, according to the National Audit Office. The scale of chaos and administrative failure at the Rural Payments Agency, which

distributes £16bn a year to farmers, and lack of oversight by ministers is outlined in one of the most damning audits produced by a public spending watchdog.

*The Times*

A farmer was fined £150 by Huddersfield magistrates for failing to "meet the psychological needs" of a cow because his barn was too dark. Ronald Northcliffe, 65, kept the cow and its calf in a barn but had not provided adequate lighting, breaching the Animal Welfare Act.

*Daily Telegraph*

Children should be taught about where food comes from at school, according to a new report. The Farm Animal Welfare Council recommended education about food and farming "from childhood", as well as a new meat product labelling system telling consumers about the welfare of animals.

*Daily Telegraph*

The Advertising Standards Authority is to ban an Actimel television advertisement that claims its yoghurt helped to protect youngsters against common childhood illnesses.

*The Times*

## EU SQUEALS AS GB PIG SALES BOOM

Britain's earlier welfare investment finally starts to pay off, reports **Richard Saunders**

### PIG MARKETS

Pigmeat consumption in Britain is booming, bucking the trend of the other red meats which are suffering falling sales.

In mainland Europe, however, producers are pleading with the European Commission for action before more of them are pushed out of business.

Latest figures from TNS for September show that in Britain bacon sales were up 7.9%, fresh pork by 5.3% and sausages by 2%.

"This continues the trend of people looking for high quality, value-for-money pork," stated BPEX head of marketing Chris Lamb. "This growth for pork and poultry comes at a time when beef and lamb are under pressure and are losing volume – even such staples as beef mince."

Days before, Europe's farm and co-op unions called on Brussels to help out its beleaguered pig industry by introducing export refunds on pigmeat immediately.

"The pigmeat sector is undergoing a crisis for the third consecutive year and perspectives for 2010 are not any better," said president of Copa-Cogeca Antonio

Tavares. "If nothing is done immediately, millions of pigmeat producers will go out of business."

Copa-Cogeca said a sharp drop of 15% in EU exports compared with 2008, combined with the fall in prices, poses serious problems for pigmeat producers.

"Furthermore, pigmeat producers already have to invest huge amounts of money to meet new EU requirements for sow stalls by the deadline of 2013," it added.

• Significant reductions in pigmeat imports from Denmark and Germany meant a fall in total imports into the UK in the first half of this year of 12%.

The reductions were sufficient to offset an increase in pork sendings from Holland and Belgium.

The National Pig Association said imports of pork from Denmark were at their lowest January-June level for seven years, but imports of Danish bacon were up 25% compared with the first six months of last year.

There was also a significant growth in imports of processed pigmeat, the largest increase being from the Netherlands.

## Europe plans action to tackle declining sheepmeat sales

European farmers are now beginning to realise what marketers in the UK have been saying for years: the sheepmeat market must come up with new products to meet the demands of new customers, or the industry will continue its slow decline.

A Brussels Sheepmeat Forum concluded that the industry must embrace the demand for convenience food and that it needs to work better together to carry out the research and development required to do so.

The forum was set up to tackle the slowdown in lamb consumption, while costs have risen and profits declined.

Chairman Pekka Pesonen, secretary general of the European farm

union Copa-Cogeca, warned that if no action was taken now, consumption and production would drop even further, causing a further mass exodus from the rural areas of the EU.

The meeting agreed on the need to capture, in particular, the tastes of the younger generation as there is a widespread perception, especially among the young, that lamb is too difficult to prepare and cook. More boneless meal solutions are seen as a way of attracting younger consumers.

EU agriculture commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel pointed out at the meeting that the Commission "simply doesn't get many requests for funding to promote lamb" and that could be explored.



## Good enough to eat?

Following on from the *Mona Lisa* coffee cup painting (see *Farm Business*, 4th September), this one is made from hamburger grease by artist Phil Hanson. A definite contender for the Turner prize next year, surely? And so green, so carbon-friendly. Do we think this will catch on?



## Parliament in perspective

With feet under the desks again at Westminster, supermarkets are back on the agenda

The frustration felt by many, following 10 years of reviews, referrals and enquiries into the dominant role of the supermarket, was voiced in a debate last week by Andrew George (Lib Dem, St Ives and chairman of the Grocery Market Action Group).

Many, he said, were wondering what the Government was going to do to curb supermarkets' excessive power in the supply chain. He cited the supermarket-led banana price war and its detrimental impact on the developing world as justification for the immediate need of an ombudsman.

But even being reminded that the Government has just three weeks left to decide whether to accept the Competition Commission's recommendation to set up an ombudsman to oversee the sector didn't addle the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development Michael Foster. More research was needed, he said, to assess the impact of such a move on developing countries.

Away from the bananas on the debating floor, Tim Farron (Lib Dem, Westmorland and Lonsdale) wanted to know how many people in each county were employed in agriculture in each of the past 10 years. Not the average pub quiz question, but Minister for Food, Farming and Environment Jim Fitzpatrick's comprehensive written answer showed overall numbers were down 20% (1999-2008) in England, except in a handful of lucky places including Liverpool, Herefordshire, Birmingham, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Isle of Wight, Medway, Bristol and Torbay.

### NOT THE SEXIEST

Described by Alistair Carmichael (Lib Dem, Orkney and Shetland) as not the sexiest issue, the phasing out of the long-standing Agricultural Building Allowance (ABA) nevertheless came under discussion in a Commons debate last week. Mr Carmichael waxed lyrical on his own farming heritage and the significant impact the removal of ABAs would have on many farmers. But Financial Secretary to The Treasury Stephen Timms remained unmoved: the allowances were a selective and outdated subsidy.

There was a written statement in the Lords on bovine TB from DEFRA secretary Hilary Benn on a report from the TB Eradication Group for England. He reported on the latest action plan submitted to the European Commission, and the provision by DEFRA of an additional £5m of funding for increased testing, compensation of TB reactor animals and for advisory services.

Finally, in a written response to a question from Laurence Robertson (Con, Tewkesbury) about what steps were being taken to protect our dwindling bee population, Jim Fitzpatrick outlined a number of measures under the Healthy Bees plan. There is to be £2.5m additional funding for research, an education and surveillance programme, research on bee health and plans for additional projects up to March 2010, he reported.

Perhaps a Healthy Farmer plan next?

## ARCHBISHOP SPARKS FORBIDDEN FRUIT ROW

A call for a reduction in imports leads to questions in the House, reports **Richard Saunders**

### SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The Archbishop of Canterbury sparked a row when he called for the UK to become more self-sufficient in fruit and vegetables and reduce long-distance, out-of-season imports to reduce climate change and protect the environment.

His remarks, made in an interview which appeared in *The Times* newspaper, even led to questions in the House of Commons and an accusation that the Primate was guilty of double standards.

The Archbishop, Rowan Williams, was accused of living in cloud cuckoo land by the Fresh Produce Consortium, which said there was no way that self-sufficiency could be achieved and still allow consumers to enjoy the wide variety of fruit and vegetables they wanted.

The Fresh Produce Consortium said that 60% of fruit and vegetables were imported into the UK, providing produce outside the UK season as well as varieties which simply could not be grown in the UK.

"Research shows that some imported fruit and vegetables are grown in less greenhouse gas

intensive ways than the same products in the UK, with savings from greater efficiency outweighing the potential negative impacts of additional transport," it said.

"There's no need to restrict choice by excluding imported produce on the basis of its carbon footprint."

### AGRICULTURAL LAND

In the House of Commons the Archbishop's suggestions were contrasted with a proposal by the Church Commissioners to develop 121 hectares of prime agricultural land in West Sussex.

Tory MP for Littlehampton Nick Gibb suggested that, with the Archbishop wanting to see more food grown locally and attacking organisations driven solely by the desire to make money, the development proposal was paradoxical.

"When challenged, the Commissioners say that they want to build on that land because they are obliged to maximise the amount of money they make.

"If the Archbishop of Canterbury was a politician, wouldn't it be fair to say he says one thing but does another?" asked Mr Gibb.

## Bluetongue code lined up

Scottish livestock producers who insist on importing sheep and cattle from bluetongue-infected areas of the Continent will have a newly drawn up code of practice under which to do so from November, when midge activity drops off.

It has been drawn up by a consortium made up of NFU Scotland, the National Beef Association, Scottish region of the

National Sheep Association, Quality Meat Scotland and the Scottish Beef Cattle Association.

The code comes as a result of an improved disease situation, high compliance with the Scottish compulsory vaccination campaign, a more effective vaccination and certification regime in Europe and the start of the so-called Transmission Free Period (from November to April).

## Milk quotas superlevy

Five European Union member states will have to face paying a superlevy totalling €97 million for exceeding their milk quotas last year, even though the EU as a whole was under quota.

Perhaps, not surprisingly, the UK is not among them.

Austria, Cyprus, Italy, Luxem-

bourg and the Netherlands collectively over-produced by 348,400 tonnes.

Commenting on the over-run, EU agriculture commissioner Marian Fischer Boel said that despite the increase in quotas in 2008-09, production was almost unchanged from the year before.

**▶ Behind the headlines** by **Richard Saunders, News Editor**

Considering that it could make a major contribution towards reducing climate change, a technique which both produces green energy, locks up carbon and reduces the need for artificial fertiliser, has received little publicity on these shores.

The environmental press around the world has, on occasions, become extremely excited over suggestions for the use of "biochar" to achieve all these goals.

But despite the fact that a major research project is under way in Scotland, it is not a word you are likely to find in the headlines or, for that matter, behind the headlines of the British press.

**HEAT PRODUCTION**

In a nutshell, biochar is what is left after heating farm or food waste to produce gas, and can be used for energy or heat production. It can be added to the soil where it traps the carbon dioxide it contains and, say some, contributes to the fertil-

ity and water-retention of the soil.

At East Linton, Scotland, University of Edinburgh scientists are studying the technique and seeking to perfect its use as a tool in



tackling climate change.

"The farmer can use his agricultural residues to produce clean energy, said PhD student Jason Cook, who is involved in the project and is linked to the UK Biochar Research Centre

"He is off-setting the fossil fuel usage that he would ordinarily have.

"By applying the char to the land he would mitigate the need for oil-derived fertilisers and lock away the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide.

"We don't understand every-

thing – but it does have huge potential," he said.

The biochar field trials are taking place at Stonelaws Farm in East Lothian, which is farmed by Colin Hunter, who remembers a similar technique being used when he was a child.

"The farm I was brought up on used to take the ash from the local village and put it on the soil and what we found was that we always got a higher yield on that area of the ground that had the ash put on it," he said.

**FOSSIL FUELS**

According to a Reuters report, one scientist estimates that turning 27% of global crop waste into biochar and ploughing it into the soil could store 0.2 billion tonnes of carbon annually, compared with more than eight billion tonnes of annual global emissions from burning fossil fuels.

Some scientists, however, question the potential contribution that biochar could provide as a

fertiliser or soil conditioner, while others are doubtful as to the length of time that the carbon ploughed into the soil will stay there before escaping and negating the whole exercise.

Some environmentalists are also concerned that it could spur deforestation.

At East Linton, Mr Cook's project is mainly concerned with ensuring that the technique is economically attractive to farmers and others.

"Climate change is real, it is happening and things need to be done here and now about it and this seems a remarkable way of actually doing something about it," he commented.

Whether biochar becomes a household word for tackling climate change remains to be seen, but there would seem to be little harm in lobbying a little research cash at investigating the potential of the technique.

Less likely alternatives have already had their share.

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**15%**

**DECLINE IN US WHEAT PRICES SINCE MARCH 2009**

**33.75m t**

**WHEAT PRODUCTION IN NORTH AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST THIS YEAR**

**30.6%**

**REDUCTION IN EU WHEAT EXPORTS 2009-10**

# AGRICULTURAL ASPIRATIONS AND AIMS OF USA ANNOUNCED

But the agriculture secretary's focus for USDA science is something of a letdown, reports **Richard Saunders**

**USA**

The need to invest in science to help solve some of the problems facing the world and its population is being increasingly recognised. Not least in the United States where agriculture secretary Tom Vilsack has just launched the National Institute of Food and Agriculture with a call for renewed efforts by politicians to build on the incredible advances recently achieved in the science of agriculture.

However, Mr Vilsack succeeded in announcing a package of aspirations and a set of aims which seek to be all things to all men, rather than a serious attempt at charting a new course for scientific research.

**GREAT OPPORTUNITY**

"The opportunity to truly transform a field of science happens at best once a generation," said the secretary. "Right now, I am convinced, is USDA's opportunity to work with the Congress, the other science agencies, and with our partners in industry, academia, and the nonprofit sector, to bring about transformative change.

"We can build on recent scientific discoveries – incredible advances in sequencing plant and animal genomes, for example. We have new and powerful tools – biotechnology, nanotechnology,

and large-scale computer simulations – applicable to all types of agriculture."

Such discoveries and tools, he said, had come not a moment too soon, with food production needing to double by 2050 to meet demand in an environment where the production system was already under threat from climate change.

Mr Vilsack's focus for USDA science, however, was something of a letdown. It pledged that state-funded science would aim to keep American agriculture competitive while ending world hunger, would seek to improve nutrition and end child obesity and improve food safety. It would also, he said, secure America's energy future along the lines set of President Obama's policies to promote production of biofuels

"USDA science will make us better stewards of America's environment and natural resources," said the secretary. "We believe that research in this priority area will identify agricultural operations in the United States that, within 10 years, will be net carbon sinks.

Cynics might suggest that the research aims expressed by Mr Vilsack and encapsulated in his "package" are, rather like the award of President Obama's Nobel Peace Prize, the result more of anticipation than reality.

**"USDA science will make us better stewards of America's environment and natural resources"**

**DRIVERS**

**FOOD AND FOOTPRINT**

Questions have been raised in Sydney, Australia as to the wisdom of using land on the urban fringes for crop production to make the city more self-sufficient in food and to reduce its carbon footprint.

Developers have been complaining that land is short and that the farmed area on the outskirts of the city should be utilised, while the NSW Department of Industry and Investment says agriculture is shrinking in the Sydney basin and just 1,050 vegetable farms remain.

Now a study by the department suggests that retaining existing agricultural land might not, in fact, improve the carbon footprint of the city's vegetable consumers and using giant warehouses and large trucks to bring produce from outside Sydney could be more carbon efficient.

**RISING ENERGY PRICE**

Vegetable producers in Iceland are concerned about the rising price of energy required to heat their glasshouses.

Managing director of the Icelandic Association of Horticulture Producers Bjarni Jónsson said that while no vegetable producers had given up yet, many were in a tight situation. Some, he said, had temporarily turned off lights in their glasshouses, which has meant 17% fewer tomatoes reaching the market compared with the same period in 2008.

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# SIMPLER ANIMAL WELFARE LABELLING CONSIDERED

Proper and transparent information requested, reports **Richard Saunders**

## PACKAGING

Simpler, more effective animal welfare information for consumers on food products is under consideration in Brussels.

EU health commissioner Androulla Vassiliou told a conference in Sweden that many EU consumers expressed a preference for food produced in line with good animal welfare standards – and the trend was not just limited to Europe.

But she said surveys indicated that while many Europeans were willing to make a concerted effort to seek out and buy animal welfare-friendly products,

and were even willing to pay a little more for such products, she believed this trend could be undermined by a lack of proper and transparent information.

“Clearly, if consumers cannot readily distinguish and identify high animal welfare standard products from other products, they cannot make an informed judgement about whether to buy them,” said Ms Vassiliou.

“Addressing these issues is essential if we are to ensure increased awareness and transparency of welfare-friendly production,” she said. “When consider-

**“We must ensure that animal welfare labelling is applied in a clear and authentic way”**



ing how best to get better information to consumers, however, a degree of caution is required.

“We must ensure that animal welfare labelling is applied in a clear and authentic way,” Ms Vassiliou stated.

That, she added, must not undermine the integrity and marketing potential of existing welfare labels.

# WHO asked to rule on health risk

## IMPORTED POULTRY

The dispute between the EU and the US over the disinfection of uncooked poultry products is still rumbling on.

The US is now asking the World Trade Organisation to rule on the issue which has halted imports of poultry into the EU from the US since 1997.

The chemical with which poultry is washed to remove pathogens include chlorine dioxide, acidified sodium chlorite, trisodium phosphate, and peroxyacids, all of which the US says have been approved by both its regulators and those of the EU. The EU, however, disputes this.

According to Washington, EU member states voted against a proposal to approve the chemicals but failed to provide a scientific basis.

“The US poultry subject to the EU ban is safe,” said Nefeterius McPherson, a US Trade Representative spokeswoman. “There is no scientific evidence that the use of pathogen reduction treatments pose any health risk to consumers.”

Earlier attempts to get the dispute settled at WTO level have failed and Ms McPherson said: “We feel that we must move forward with WTO dispute settlement panel proceedings at this time.”

But the EU says that is not the way to settle things.

“We feel that litigation is not the most appropriate way to deal with complex issues such as this one,” said European Commission trade spokesman Lutz Gullner. “Since the US has chosen this path, however, we will defend our food safety legislation, which does not discriminate against imported products.”

## AGAINST THE GRAIN

Lack of rain has meant that only just over half the area of winter cereal crops planted in Ukraine so far have yet germinated.

Deputy agriculture minister Ivan Demchak said crops on only 55% of the planted area had reached the stage they should have.



Ironically he was speaking at a series of discussions on the efficient use of grain crops from the 2009 harvest held by the parliamentary committee for agriculture policy and land relations in Kyiv.

Mr Demchak said only one million hectares or 30% of winter crops were in a good state, with 43% of them in only a satisfactory state, while 27% of them were weak.

He said the information was based on data from the regions as of 8th October, 2009 and while it had rained recently, the situation had only changed slightly.

The deputy minister added that as of 13th October, 2009, farmers had sown around 6.6 million hectares, or 85% of the expected volume of crops.



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**1-IN-5**

**EAT BEFORE THEY BUY – A FIFTH OF CONSUMERS START EATING THEIR SHOPPING BEFORE REACHING THE TILLS. TNS**

**1bn**

**MONEY OFF COUPONS – SAINSBURY'S ARE TO HAND OUT MONEY OFF COUPONS ACROSS THEIR STORES IN THE LATEST PRICE WAR**

**DOWN 19%**

**SUBWAY CUTS 19% OF SALT FROM ITS SANDWICHES**

**WAITROSE STUMBLES ON A GOOD MARKETING CONCEPT**



Writes **Caroline Whibley**

Food retailer Waitrose is launching an advertising campaign promoting its essential Waitrose range, in response to a comment made by Arsenal football club manager Arsène Wenger.

The tactical campaign (see the poster, right) was created by integrated agency Kitcatt Nohr Alexander Shaw and was inspired by Wenger's comment, "Can you buy players at Waitrose?" made when talking about football's international transfer market.

The adverts feature Wenger's quote and a number of products from the essential Waitrose range that football supporters might enjoy on a match-day, including essential Waitrose scotch eggs, crisps and pork pies.

It's an excellent idea, I think. It offers a simple message: food for footballers – high carbohydrate, energy foods. It immediately classes these foods in a different category – scotch eggs, pork pies, not as high in fat as we're all supposed to think – but it's making them 'fit the purpose' – selling food in this way is far more compelling and I think will increase sales.

One advert carries the strapline: "The essential home team," and the copy: "Sorry Mr Wenger, we don't sell footballers at Waitrose. But you will find all the other essentials for a match at home."

Sarah Fuller, head of marketing communications at Waitrose, said, "We were impressed by Kitcatt Nohr's quick and inspired reaction to Arsène Wenger's comments. It's created a campaign that is funny and light-hearted, but also demonstrates the affordability and great quality of Waitrose food."

The essential home team.

4 Pork pies £1.85 Burgers £2.29 Custard creams 47p 2 Scotch eggs 98p  
Apple Juice 95p Pizza £2.75 Diet Cola 83p Oven chips £1.25  
Salt and Vinegar sticks 62p Oranges £1.89

"Can you buy players at Waitrose?"  
Arsène Wenger, Arsenal manager.  
Sorry Mr Wenger, we don't sell footballers at Waitrose.  
But you will find all the other essentials for a match at home.

**essential**  
Waitrose®  
Quality you'd expect at prices you wouldn't.

**"It's an excellent idea, I think. It offers a simple message: food for footballers – high carbohydrate, energy foods – it immediately classes these foods in a different category"**

**Kellogg's to laser-brand individual Corn Flakes in fight against fakes, apparently...**

**BRANDING**



The food giant Kellogg's plans to burn its signature on to individual corn flakes using a laser

and then put a proportion of these branded flakes into each cereal box.

If the system proves successful, it could be used on Kellogg's other cereal products, including Frosties, Special K and Crunchy Nut Corn Flakes.

Helen Lyons, lead food technologist at the company, said: "In recent years there has been an increase in the number of own brands trying to capitalise on the popularity of Kellogg's Corn Flakes.

"We want shoppers to be under absolutely no illusion that Kellogg's does not make cereal for anyone else.

"We're constantly looking at new ways to reaffirm this and giving our golden flakes of corn an official stamp of approval could be the answer."

Separately, hair-appliance brand GHD has launched an anti-counterfeit advertising campaign this week across print, online and social media channels.

The campaign shows that consumers can easily be led into buying fakes, which are practically impossible to spot just by looking at them.

**M&S plans to go on-line**

Marks & Spencer is planning an online food shopping service. Previously its limited range of 3,000 own-label products made setting up a distribution network too costly, but it is now looking at adding other brands, such as Kellogg's, Heinz and Coca-Cola, to allow customers to complete their full weekly shop using the M&S service, reveals company director of retail Steve Rowe.



**INTERESTING FACT Lunch with a friend...**

**According to research we spend 13 minutes having lunch in a work canteen, but double the time if we eat with a friend or colleague. If we want staff to truly be effective in their working day we need to ensure they get adequate breaks and time off, and take the time to eat meals properly... or the cynical among you might think – isolate them all and don't allow any interaction among staff and you'll save a packet – tuttt.**

**Thought provoking...**

“Part of the secret of success in life is to eat what you like and let the food fight it out inside.”

Mark Twain

“If people let government decide what foods they eat and what medicines they take, their bodies will soon be in as sorry a state as are the souls of those who live under tyranny.”

Thomas Jefferson

# £10m MARKETING FOR LEADING CHEESE BRAND

**CAMPAIGNS**

Worth more than £190m, Dairy Crest's Cathedral City brand has announced a £10m marketing campaign. The relaunch includes new TV adverts, packaging and a revamped logo, and aims to reconfirm Cathedral's dominant position in supermarkets. The cheese market in the UK is worth £2.2bn.



# McCurry wins in Malaysia, reports Daily Mail

**LEGAL DISPUTE**

McDonald's has lost an eight-year trademark battle to stop a restaurant in Malaysia calling itself McCurry.

The country's federal court said the fast food giant could not



appeal against another court's verdict that had allowed the restaurant to use the 'Mc' prefix.

The owner said that McCurry, which serves Indian food, is an abbreviation for Malaysian Chicken Curry.

# EDIBLE FILM WRAPS TO BOOST MEAT SAFETY REPORTS

FOODNAVIGATOR.COM

**INNOVATION**

Apple-based edible films containing plant antimicrobials could protect red meat and poultry against harmful bacteria including *E. coli* and *Listeria*, according to a study published in the *Journal of Food Science*.

Tests showed that the two plant-

derived antimicrobials, carvacrol and cinnamaldehyde, inactivated pathogenic bacteria on contaminated chicken breast and cooked ham.

The films could also be used for other contaminated food products such as seafood, say the researchers.

# Hear, hear! Cocktails are served!

**NEW DRINK**

A new English cocktail, the Turberfield Royale, has been created by Ledbury's town crier, William Turberfield (right).

Mr Turberfield believes foreign wines should be superfluous when entertaining at official events: "Why buy drinks from thousands of miles away, when delicious natural ingredients are often within three miles of your door?"

For that reason, he arranged for his friend Andy Ward of the Talbot Inn, who organises the Local to Ledbury Festival, to assemble a group of local food lovers to choose a new cocktail. Six were

tasted using local sparkling wine, apple ciders, perrys, blackcurrant cordial and strawberry bitters.

The result was the birth of the Turberfield Royale, a 100% locally produced recipe made from Pixley Berries Blackcurrant Cordial, Weston's Original Perry and local strawberry 'bitters'.



**INNOVATION**

# EATING FIG ROLLS, AGAIN

Fig rolls are apparently having a resurgence – they are firmly back in fashion as Manchester United footballers are adopting the high carbohydrate and sugary food to give them an energy boost. Oasis frontman Liam Gallagher swears by them. Apparently they were invented in 1891 in the US, and were originally called Fig Newton's after the town near Boston where they were made. Last year they were almost extinct as the drought in Turkey almost wiped out the wasp that pollinates the fig, but now they are back, with a vengeance.



# NATIONAL TRUST FOOD BRAND LAUNCH

The National Trust is launching a range of branded food and drink products and is aiming to source as much primary produce as possible from Trust farms. Among the first products to go on sale will be Pembrokeshire Potatoes, grown by local tenants Peter and Gina Smithies, on the National Trust Trehill Farm. The range – which will also include beer, breads, biscuits, meat products and prepared foods – will go on sale in a phased launch from October 2009. The products take their inspiration from the National Trust itself, both from the Trust's own produce and from traditional recipes in the Trust's extensive archive.



# FOOD SHAREWATCH

Company	Price (pence)	Weekly change	52-week	
			High	Low
Assoc Brit Foods	848.50	+3	870	600
Barr (AG)	847	+1.50	889	517.50
Cadbury	786	-4	808	463
Carr's Milling	425	-4	545	395
Cranswick	695.50	-5	747	535
Dairy Crest	405.80	-11.70	420.60	164.25
Diageo	not quoted	-	£10.68	727
Genus	685	-7.50	782	467
Glanbia €	261.30	+1.63	269.88	148.85
Greencore €	140.06	-1.21	146.68	59.83
Hilton Food	202	-1.25	209	135
Kerry €	£18.28	+0.06	£18.89	£12.02
Marks & Spencer	350.30	-4.10	388.40	194.30
Morrison	273.10	-4.80	289.70	210.75
Northern	65.20	+0.15	75.45	35.75
Premier Foods	41.50	-1.30	66.25	16.25
Robert Wiseman	453.90	-0.20	470	282
Sainsbury	342.50	-31.40	373	240
Tate & Lyle	469.10	-9	481.40	225.75
Tesco	380.20	-6.20	401.70	283.80
Unilever	£18.26	-0.18	£18.77	£12.26
Uniq	42.75	-	47.25	2.40
Wynnstey (AIM Listed)	223	+1	235	161
<b>FTSE 100</b>	<b>5,222.9</b>	<b>(3,861.4 a year ago)</b>		

Source: FT, Trade Date: 16th October 2009

**FoodService**

# WE NEED A CHAMPION FOR FOOD PRODUCERS...



... and food for champions, says **Wilfred Emmanuel Jones**

The campaign to bring about a supermarket ombudsman is hotting up and has my full support. I don't begrudge the success of the major retailers one bit, so long as it has been achieved through fair play to each and every one of its suppliers.

As I write this, *Sky News* is reporting that campaigners "dressed as supermarket big-wigs and bound-and-gagged farmers are lobbying the Government for an independent ombudsman to curb exploitation of food suppliers".

The 'big four' supermarkets are resisting this course of action and I'm less surprised by this than I am by the fact that yet again, in my view, food service has slipped through the net.

I believe a major enquiry should be held into food service and that the ombudsman's brief should cover the whole, multi-billion pound food service arena as well.

I offer no apology for banging on about food service, as I have another gripe. It's as though the responsibility for the nation's poor diet and the obesity 'epidemic' is laid solely at the feet of the retailers and their suppliers. When an increasingly high percentage of our food is eaten out of the home, food service outlets should bear an equal, if not greater, share of the responsibility to lead the way and help



**"We must lobby for an Olympic food village that celebrates the diversity of our city and its cuisine"**

consumers to make better choices. Yet, with the approach of the 2012 Olympics in London, what is the food and drink contract boast? McDonald's and Coca-Cola – both of whom are major sponsors, but have also been linked as the official branded food outlets at this event with the suggestion that other food brands will be excluded from the Olympic Park.

Have we gone mad? Not only is London the most ethnically diverse capital in the world, but we will be hosting athletes and visitors from all over the world. How often do we as a nation have the opportunity to show off the cuisine of that ethnic diversity? Are these visitors going to be prevented from enjoying and sharing some of the culinary delights enjoyed by these diverse communities?

We must lobby for an Olympic food village that celebrates the diversity of our city and its cuisine – British, Indian, Caribbean, Chinese, South American and more.

As for the health message – what does this juxtaposition communicate to our youngsters? The biggest sporting event, featuring athletes at the peak of their performance and the best we can offer is McDonald's and Coca-Cola. Give me strength.



## Compass is helping pupils to see the point

### SCHOOL MEALS

Compass Group, the foodservice provider that came in for criticism from Jamie Oliver for selling the high-fat children's food Turkey Twizzlers, has revamped its school meal offering to promote healthier foods that encourage children to eat a more balanced diet.

Salad-filled rolls with fresh cuts of meat are part of the firm's intention of taking a bigger slice of the £4bn market for meals at schools and colleges. Sandwiches are sold in schools by Mondo Subs, the group's own sandwich brand and an initiative pioneered in America. Sales have leapt 12% since the sandwiches were introduced.

America is making much of the running in improving school menus where several states have banned high-caloric foods, such as those that are deep-fried, and sugar-filled soft drinks. Devising healthier menus that have appeal is occupying the minds of those at a federal level as well as those at a local level.

Building on its American experience, Compass has developed a programme to promote better understanding of healthier foods while improving their appeal. It is this campaign that is seen as key to improving eating habits, as well-intended rules have had little effect: America has had state-sanctioned nutritional guidelines for school meals since 1946, yet obesity is endemic.

In a scheme branded Eat, Learn, Live, chefs stage demonstrations to overcome resistance to healthy food. Compass also has a Smoothie Bike, which students pedal to power a blender that makes fruit smoothies. No doubt more initiatives will follow.

### FOOD FACTS

- Every household in the UK wastes between £250 and £400 worth of food per year
- Avoidable waste of cereal-based food in the UK and USA could lift 224 million people out of hunger
- About 7m tonnes of food ends up in landfill in the UK every year
- Producing and distributing edible food that goes to waste accounts for about 5% of all UK greenhouse gas emissions
- An estimated £858m could be saved a year by no-cost or low-cost efficiencies in waste reduction in UK food and drink manufacturing

## Investment reaps rewards for crate firm

### STORAGE

Substantial investment in crate washing facilities at PHS Teacrate, a crate rental company for those needing to transport and store goods of all types, has paid off, with the attraction of several new clients.

Among the new customers are major logistics integrators in the global automotive industry and a major supplier to the food industry.

**The washer also boasts a drying section...**

The new business easily provides the required capacity of 100,000 units per month and further scope for several other sizeable Returnable Transit Packaging (RTP) customers.

The washer also boasts a drying section, ensuring that when they are returned to the customer all crates, pallets and trays are thoroughly dry, thus preventing water damage to products.

**Grocery price inflation continues to slow compared with last year, with TNS Worldpanel, the market analyst, reporting the rate for October to be 3.5%. This is the seventh successive drop in grocery price inflation this year.**

1. SPAH Study V-0049-II-IN-DEV-0045.

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Further information is available from Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health, Walton Manor, Walton, Milton Keynes, MK7 7AJ, UK. September 2008 POM-V

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# PORK AND MOZARELLA IS RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Iona Walton reports on farmer Paul Jackson's thriving mail order enterprise

**BUSINESS PROFILE**

Adamant that his son should enjoy a less stressful profession than the farming industry offered, Paul Jackson's father refused to involve him in the family dairy farm. But after graduating as a mechanical engineer and enjoying a successful career as a marketing director of a blue chip company, Mr Jackson's yearning to farm got the better of him.

Together with his wife, Dawn, he started with two pigs in his back garden in 2006 and today has 900 pigs and 30 buffalo. The past three years have seen phenomenal success for Mr and Mrs Jackson and an equally big learning curve.

**LUCKY BREAK**

The near-death of the pig industry allowed them to buy land and pigs at much lower prices, and although the Jackson's business nearly went under when the cost of feed continued to soar and the bank's support plummeted, income from elsewhere enabled them to grow and eventually stabilise the business. Turnover increased from £150,000 in 2008 to £350,000 in 2009, but the 15% profit will be ploughed straight back into the business.

**"Despite a complete language barrier, a day I spent with an elderly lady in a village north of Naples taught me everything I needed to know"**

"We have three farms today; 325 hectares in Dorset, 65ha in Oxfordshire and 10ha in Buckinghamshire," explains Mr Jackson.

"We specialise in rare breed free-range pigs and mainly have Berkshires and British Lops. With farming in my blood I've not found it difficult to get to grips with rearing pigs on a large scale, and whenever I face problems I post a query on the River Cottage website."

From the abattoir, the pork is sent to the Jacksons' processing facility where it is cut, vacuum-packed and posted to customers by an experienced butcher – one of nine members of staff.

Each farm is run by a full-time employee who looks after the pigs, allowing Mr and Mrs Jackson to visit the farms, processing unit and cheese-making facility on a daily basis, process orders, deal with the abattoir and focus on administrative tasks. All sales are handled by mail order through the Golden River Farms website.

"Of our database of 400 customers, 200 are regulars and 22 are restaurants,"

Mr Jackson says.

"The demographic tends to be relatively high-earning 30 to 50-year-olds from all over the UK who have families of young or teenage children.

The geographic range is widespread with no particular hotspots."

Not content with his thriving mail order pork enterprise, Mr Jackson wanted a second string to his bow, and set his sights on mozzarella.

"I realised that nobody in the UK was producing hand-made mozzarella, and the consumer demand for lower food miles meant there was a niche to exploit," he says.

"The buffalo industry in the UK is well known as being fragmented and with herd owners generally unwilling to sell animals, I had to import my herd of 30 buffalo from Italy and Romania."

Having established his herd, Mr Jackson began experimenting with recipes. His research had led him to believe that making mozzarella would be relatively straightforward, but after months of

trial and error, he conceded defeat.

"Facing a major hurdle, a trip to Italy – something I should have done at the beginning – gave me the insight I needed," he says.

"Despite a complete language barrier, a day I spent with an elderly lady in a village north of Naples taught me everything I needed to know. I'm certainly not sharing my recipe with anyone.

"We're extremely proud of Golden River Farms buffalo mozzarella, which is, to the best of our knowledge, the sole hand-made buffalo mozzarella produced in the UK and has only been available for the past three months."

Two part-time employees make 300 125g balls each week, all of which are again sold through mail order.

Business looks set to boom. Interest is growing from highbrow retail outlets and cheese wholesalers, so 30 more buffalo arrived in the past week and a further 30 animals by the end of the year.

Buffalo meat will be available within a couple of years, but Mr Jackson anticipates the market for the steak he expects to produce will be further afield.

"Demand for buffalo meat products within the UK is being met by current producers, but that from Asia is not, so I plan to export my future meat products East," he says.

**MARKETING DRIVE**

As a former marketing director, Mr Jackson realises that savvy marketing can make or break a business and as a first step he is planning a major overhaul of the company's somewhat functional website by Christmas. A great deal of press interest has been generated by PR agency 10Yetis, which he recently employed, and next on the agenda is TV and radio.

"We also plan to target upmarket restaurants with all our products as well as cheese suppliers and tasting competitions," Mr Jackson outlines. "It's all about raising awareness of our fabulous products.

"I would advise others considering setting up a completely new venture to apply a little more trial than error to avoid the knife-edge situation we've found ourselves in at times, but it's certainly been exciting and we look forward to what the future holds."

• For more information visit the website ([www.goldenriverfarms.co.uk](http://www.goldenriverfarms.co.uk)).





# PRECISION PAYS DIVIDEND IN THE QUEST FOR QUALITY

Latest application control technology matches inputs to crop and soil requirements

## PRECISION FARMING

Investment in a top-of-the-range self-propelled sprayer equipped with GPS, Autosteer and the latest application control technology has brought a range of benefits to an Oxfordshire arable enterprise specialising in the production of high quality milling wheat.

Purchased last autumn, the Challenger RoGator fitted with a Topcon X20 precision control unit and a Yara N Sensor system has improved the effectiveness of inputs, eliminated overlapping and improved operator efficiency at 1,500ha Crowmarsh Battle Farms, Wallingford. The farm was an early user of precision farming techniques, being one of the first to exploit aerial photography and GPS monitored soil sampling surveys to identify and map variations in soil fertility and nutrients.

The wide variations found across the large, mainly chalk down-land fields on the edge of the Chilterns has driven investment in the latest control technology to achieve a more accurate match of inputs to crop and soil requirements.

"It's not just a cost-cutting exercise. The primary aim is to make sure money's spent in the right places and at the correct dose – the main payback is in consistent and possibly higher yields and quality," says arable manager Chris Limb.

Cropping is dominated this year by 730ha of wheat, most of which is Group 1 and 2 milling varieties grown to cash in on the farm's historic ability to produce high quality grain, which two years ago achieved a higher milling specification than the Canadian hard red wheat imported by the local mill. The quality theme continues with winter barley grown for malting, while the break crops include peas and

beans, which have replaced oats to reduce the nitrogen bill, and oilseed rape.

Last autumn the wheat and barley were drilled through a full set of coulters to achieve maximum ground coverage and eliminate the risk of soil run-off down bare tramlines on sloping fields. The tramlines were subsequently laid down by the sprayer at the post-emergence herbicide stage by utilising the precision control unit and Autosteer.

"It's getting towards a controlled traffic system – even after the fields are cultivated we can revert to the previous tramlines when we get to the pre-emergence spraying and drilling of next year's crop," says Mr Limb.

Fine-tuning of liquid nitrogen rates within each field is given high priority in the wheat and barley to iron out crop variation and maximise quality. The degree of control is shown by the fact that the spot rate of each application could vary by up to +/- 50% of the target rate of 40, 70 and 70kg/ha of N on first, second and third applications respectively in a first wheat, but always within RB209 guidelines.

## FIRST GENERATION SEED

"We use first generation seed to ensure good germination and optimum plant numbers in all areas of the fields, even at low seed rates. Any subsequent variations in crop density and yield potential are assessed by the N sensor, which triggers adjustments to the N rate via the control unit," says Mr Limb. "This is important because yield mapping from the combine shows that areas with the thickest, best-looking crop growth rarely produce the highest yield, so we ease off on these," he explains.



The RoGator at work

"It's the same with the oilseed rape. The plant growth index can vary surprisingly widely across a field on this type of soil, and I defy any sprayer operator to pick all this up by eye."

Mr Limb does all the fertiliser and agro-chemical spraying, so spends a lot of time in the cab of the RoGator, a 618S model with a 5,000-litre tank. He says the Autosteer function has reduced fatigue and increased his concentration since replacing a 3,500-litre sprayer that "stretched both man and machine" to achieve his target outputs of 50ha a load at a volume of 100l/h with time to spare.

"It used to be a case of juggling one hand on the steering wheel and the other on the hand-set, but now I have time to look around and assess how the job is going."

"From a health point of view it's much better to be able to sit square in the seat when spending long hours in the cab."

Mr Limb is impressed that the precision of the Autosteer is maintained even when spraying over rough ground.

## New FZ Loader Look Forward To Work

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**BusinessMachinery**

# CLAAS LAUNCHES RANGE OF LIGHTWEIGHT MACHINES

The company's new Arion 400 range replaces what was the Ares 500, reports **Nick Fone**

**TRACTOR DEVELOPMENT**

There has been a significant strengthening in sales of tractors in the 100-130hp sector this year and it's an area where Claas is keen to prove itself, having launched a range of lightweight four-cylinder machines.

Although the average power of a new tractor sold in the UK stands at 137hp, sales have grown in the 100-130hp power band this year.

In fact, registrations in this segment now account for almost a third of all prime-movers sold in the UK. Convenient then that Claas should have a new range of tractors that almost perfectly fills that slot.

The German firm – a relative newcomer to the tractor market, having bought out Renault Agriculture in 2003 – has had much of its success in this area over recent years. Some 20% of its sales come from the 100-130hp bracket.

"A fifth of our tractors fall into this band and we see it as a good opportunity for growth," explains Jeremy Wiggins, sales manager for Claas UK.

Claas says its overall share of the UK tractor market stands at 6.5%, putting it fifth in the manufacturer league table. Mr Wiggins aims to grow that figure to 10% within the next five years – a target he believes to be realistically achievable.

"Our sales network has traditionally sold a lot of tractors from other manufacturers. We're just replacing that volume with our own machines."

As for the overall sales picture for the UK machinery market, Mr Wiggins isn't making any hasty predictions. He reports a steady demand for Claas products throughout 2009 without the significant slow down that some analysts had predicted this autumn.

"Our dealers are placing stock orders for 2010 and things don't look as bleak as some would have you believe," he explains. "The tractor market probably won't reach 15,000 units again next year, but I'm confident it will come in over 12,500."

**NEW MACHINES**

Claas' new Arion 400 range replaces what was the Ares 500 and is sandwiched between the firm's smallest agricultural offering – the 75-100hp Axos – and the larger 117-160hp Arion 500 range.

Rated at 95hp, 105hp and 115hp respectively, the Arion 410, 420 and 430 use many of the same components as their predecessors but have cleaner



**Claas expects its Arion 400 range to boost sales by 25% in the 100-130hp sector. It anticipates that up to 40% will be ordered with factory-fitted, Claas-badged MX loaders**

**"Our sales network has traditionally sold a lot of tractors from other manufacturers. We're just replacing that volume with our own machines"**

different levels of specification. Both boast the same engine and transmission but the CIS-spec version adds a little extra sophistication.

It gains its name from the dash-mounted Claas Information System (CIS) computer which can be used to monitor a range of tractor performance settings and is accessed via a rotary dial much like BMW's iDrive system.

On the engine front the CIS offers a 10hp power-boost function that kicks in when the PTO is engaged, when the hydraulic system is under heavy load or when the tractor is travelling at speeds in excess of 7kph. The extra muscle is not available at lower speeds for draft applications as the torque loading that such work can exert could be potentially damaging for a driveline that is designed for less demanding applications.

**TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGY**

CIS-spec tractors also gain a bit of extra transmission technology. Standard models have a four-range, four-speed powershift box which provides 16 ratios in forwards or reverse – all changed at the flick of a button. Higher-spec variants gain an automated shift function that will up- or down-shift gears and ranges according to load.

An option on base-spec machines, high-output 98-litre/min hydraulics and three spool-valves feature as standard on CIS machines. Buyers can then choose an armrest-mounted electro-hydraulic cross-lever for easy proportional control of a loader or other implements.

Auto engagement and dis-engagement of the 540/1000/Eco PTO also features on the CIS spec list, while electronic linkage control is standard for both and there is a choice of 5.2t or 6.5t capacity linkages and 60-litre/min or 98-litre/min hydraulic systems.

burning engines to meet the latest round of emissions rules and have a new low-profile version of the cab used on larger Claas tractors.

As before 4.5-litre John Deere four-cylinder power-plants are employed but electronic injection control has enabled performance characteristics to be altered so that maximum torque is available right through from 900rpm to 1,650rpm.

Things remain much the same as before in the transmission department with the same four-range, four-speed semi-powershift sourced from AGCO joint venture GIMA. Claas says although the hardware may be much the same as Massey Ferguson's Dyna-4 gearbox, the software that controls it is a very different set-up.

All Axion 400s are available with two

CLAAS ARION 400 RANGE			
Model	Rated Power	Boosted Max	Price
410	95hp	–	£51,720
410 CIS	95hp	110hp	£56,140
420	105hp	–	£55,590
420 CIS	105hp	120hp	£60,040
430	115hp	–	£60,590
430 CIS	115hp	130hp	£65,050



**Massey Ferguson's new Delta combine harvesters feature cutting widths from 6.8-9.2m and are the first to incorporate selective catalytic reduction technology to reduce carbon emissions**

# FENDT UPBEAT ABOUT FUTURE

AGCO firm sees the outlook as excellent, but must weather storm of short-term volatility

## COMPANY UPDATE

Carried along during the boom in commodity prices, farmers around the world took the opportunity to invest in new machinery, leading to record profits for many manufacturers. After every period of rapid economic growth, however, comes a time of contraction, and the world of agricultural machinery is no different. Fendt, the German tractor manufacturer owned by AGCO, enjoyed its best ever year in 2008, but the fall in commodity prices has delivered a sobering year in 2009.

Speaking at the firm's annual press conference, on 6th October, Peter-Josef Paffen, spokesman for the management board, said 2008 had been an exceptional year for the firm breaking all previous records as revenues increased 25% to €1.33bn (£1.24bn) as unit sales soared by 2,115 to 15,428.

"Looking back, the business year 2008 was exceptional. Due to the current extreme price pressure, though, European farmers are investing considerably less," stated Mr Paffen.

The reality is evidenced by the recent publication of data for UK tractor registrations by the Agricultural Engineers Association (AEA) which reveals registrations (for tractors over 50hp) were down 11.3% in the year to September 2009 to 13,056 units.

Worryingly for manufacturers, sales of spare or replacement parts has plummeted, too.

"The hope that [commodity] prices would to some extent reach

a reasonable level in late summer was never fulfilled. On the contrary: the extreme price pressure continues. As a result, agricultural equipment markets have been declining even faster since mid-year and parts sales have collapsed," said Mr Paffen, regarding the current situation.

For the Fendt brand, the first half of 2009 was the best half-year in the company's history. "We saw gains in key figures for revenues, sales and market share," said Mr Paffen. "In the second half of the year we were not able to escape the general downward trend on the markets, but despite this trend reversal, 2009 will be a good business year for Fendt."

## LOOKING AHEAD

"We continue to forecast an excellent outlook for agriculture and the agricultural equipment industry worldwide for the medium and long term. The current development, though, has shown we must be prepared for stronger short-term market fluctuations," added Mr Paffen.

Although the market has plummeted, Fendt still expects to record its second-best year in 20 years with production forecasts for the year of 14,000 units. Outside the company, Mr Paffen expects the European market to contract by roughly 10% on last year to about 175,000 units, equivalent to that of 2004, but is confident that the company will continue to grow its share of the market.

# Ask the dealer...

In the 10th of our series, Iona Walton talks to **Simon Miller** of Lloyd Ltd

## LLOYD

Northern dealership Lloyd Ltd has expanded its customer base – and notches on the order book – through bringing clients together at machinery events. Interest in the company's increasing number of functions is at an all-time high, boosting sales of agricultural equipment and machinery and supporting the less popular sector of construction in which the company has an additional interest.

Turnover in 2007 and 2008 was £65m and looks set to be up this year thanks to more sales of large machines.

With seven branches positioned from East to West of the North of England and the Scottish Borders, the company was established by Ralph Lloyd in the 1960s and today is run by his son Barry. Mr Lloyd has a hands-on managerial style, citing that his 220 employees are integral to the success of the company. It's not surprising, therefore, that he wants to get closer to his customers, ensuring they walk away with the machine best suited to their individual needs, and that he clinches the deal over his competitors.

"Earlier this year we held a combine evening during which 12 different combine harvesters were on display," says Simon Miller, dealer principal at Lloyd for over two years. "About 250 of our combine customers attended, along with our sales and managerial teams and 12 experts from New Holland. As well as enjoying demonstrations of the machines on offer, farmers and operators could ask questions and discuss individual specifics, as well as enjoy the hog roast on offer. It was an opportunity for farmers to meet and network with each other, manufacturers and the dealer."

Following the event, farmers who had expressed particular interest were able to try the relevant combine out for themselves, on their own farm.

"The event generated about six sales at the time, and since the evening in February we've had 10 times more interest in our combines," says Mr Miller.

Previously, members of the sales team would travel around the territory area visiting farmers to discuss current and future machinery needs. Now, not only is

the new strategy of bringing people together cheaper for the dealership, but the figures indicate it is more gratefully received by the farming community, which can perhaps be a lonely profession.

"Tractor Arrive and Drive is another event that we've hosted for a decade and placed greater emphasis on over the past two years," Mr Miller says. "Twice a year we bring together the 20 demonstration tractors we have across our branches in an event that 500 to 1,000 people attend. Customers choose and test the machine they are most interested in. Roughly 10 times more business is generated than through mail shots or farm visits."

## COMMUNICATION

Central to the success of the events is telling people about them, and Lloyds ticks all the boxes.

"We advertise through local press and within correspondence in invoices or statements," explains Mr Miller. "Each month we post customers a monthly 'stuffer' which updates them with every product we have available, both new or second-hand, as well as events we're running. Those for whom we have an email address are kept up-to-date electronically, and we're making advances into a complete database of email addresses and mobile 'phone numbers so we can text alerts as well."

"The most encouraging aspect of our regular events has been the way they strengthen our rapport with our customers; it's as though a whole new relationship has begun," Mr Miller concludes.

• For more information visit [www.lloydagricatalogue.co.uk](http://www.lloydagricatalogue.co.uk)



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**BusinessHealth & Safety**

# MAKE NEW FIRST AID RULES YOUR FARM'S FIRST PRIORITY

NSF-CMi highlights the biggest changes made by the HSE to first aid regulations for 25 years and gives guidance on seeking help and advice

**FIRST AID**

Sound health and safety practice is important in all industries and of no greater importance than on farms because agriculture is the most dangerous major industry in the UK, with the highest rate of fatal injuries to workers.

It is not hard to see why farms are classed as high risk working environments and reasonable precautions must be taken. Apart from sound risk management practices, this includes having sufficient numbers of adequately trained first aiders on site to deal with any accidents or injuries and, in the event of a serious injury, they may even be called on to save lives.

The guidance on first aid provision has recently been updated and the biggest changes to health and safety (first aid) regulations for 25 years are now in force, following an announcement by the Health and Safety Executive on 1st October.

**WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHANGES?**

The principal change, in line with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, is a requirement for employers to carry out a first aid needs assessment based on the business, workplace and employee criteria.

The duration of the HSE recognised and approved First Aider at Work (four-day) Certificate course, which provides comprehensive first aid knowledge required for most workplaces, is reduced from four to three days. By using modern teaching techniques this course will be taught more succinctly, which will benefit businesses as employees are off work for less time.

A new HSE recognised and approved Emergency First Aider (one-day) course has also been introduced. This provides basic emergency workplace first aid knowledge and, depending on the result of the employer first aid needs assessment, is suitable for small businesses and low-risk work places.

With recognised and approved First Aider at Work qualifications valid for three years only, the HSE strongly recommends that an annual skills refresher course is attended by first aiders to help reduce 'critical skills fade' and ensure first aiders are kept up to date with the latest protocols. HSE sees the annual first aider update as important in ensuring first aiders remain conversant with the most up-to-date techniques while

remaining competent and confident in their ability to treat casualties in an emergency.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?**

It is essential that businesses maintain the required level of first aiders to ensure that they are covered should there be an accident or illness at work. Without adequate first aid provision, firms could find themselves in breach of health and safety legislation or facing litigation claims.

The good news is that, despite the changes, employees holding current HSE recognised and approved First Aid at Work certificates issued prior to 1st October 2009 will remain valid until their expiry date.

**BENEFITS OF SOUND HEALTH AND SAFETY PREPARATION INCLUDE:**

- Promotes workforce, customer and contractor confidence;
- Reduces the impact of work-related injury or illness;
- More informed employees leading to safer workplace culture;
- Reduces injury and illness related absenteeism;
- Provides increased employer legal protection.

**WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?**

Your business should conduct a thorough first aid needs assessment to determine your precise requirements and obligations. The HSE places the responsibility with company directors to ensure there is adequate workplace



**“It is essential that businesses maintain the required level of first aiders”**

first aid provision.

Now is an ideal time to ensure you are meeting your responsibilities and that your business is complying with the new first aid changes.

St John can help you by providing help and advice on how you should carry out your first aid needs assessment to satisfy your health and safety requirements – for more information visit [www.stjohnwales.co.uk/hse](http://www.stjohnwales.co.uk/hse) or use the regional contacts below:

- St John Wales Training Company (Wales): 0845 678 5646;
- St John Ambulance (England): 08700 10 49 50;
- St Andrews Ambulance Association (Scotland): 0141 332 4031.

● If you require any further help or information about managing your health and safety risks on farm, please call John Parslow at NSF-CMi on 01993 885 688.

**RISKS OF IGNORING THE CHANGES**

Failure to include health and safety training can have catastrophic results for the individuals concerned as well as the businesses they represent. Many high-profile safety cases over the years have been rooted in failures of leadership. This does not mean failing to give a rousing speech reminiscent of Shakespeare's *Henry V*,



but failure to provide suitable training and equipment that befitted the job and encouraging employees to act in a manner that ensures their safety

and that of their colleagues. HSE figures reveal the human and financial cost of failing to address health and safety responsibly:

- More than 200 people are killed at work in the United Kingdom each year. This does not include work-related road deaths;
- In the UK in 2006, 30 million working days were lost due to occupational ill health and injury, imposing an annual cost to society of £30bn;
- Many thousands of deaths each year can be attributed to occupational illnesses, including some cancers and respiratory diseases.

Source: Institute of Directors

**993m litres**

**MILK PRODUCTION FOR SEPTEMBER, UP 20m LITRES COMPARED WITH SEPT 2008**

**4.00%**

**SEPTEMBER BUTTERFAT, 11 POINTS BELOW LAST YEAR'S LEVEL**

**12.843bn L**

**SEPTEMBER 2009 PRODUCTION, 1,852m LITRES UNDER QUOTA**

## ADJUST CUTTING HEIGHT FOR BEST MAIZE SILAGE

Shorter cuts help avoid over-filled clamp losses

### DAIRY DIETS

Dairy farmers and contractors are being advised to consider raising the cutting height for large maize crops to 30-45cm this year to increase silage quality and safeguard against potential losses.

According to KW nutritionist Dave Collett, big crops often mean over filled clamps, making consolidation much harder and clamp losses of 10-20% likely.

"There are some big crops of maize about this year and many farms already have a lot of grass silage filling clamps," says Mr Collett. "There's a real danger that unless cutting heights are raised, silage will end up well above clamp walls, and that can lead to excessive wastage from poor consolidation and safety issues.

"Raising the cutting height will also help silages hit the target of 30% dry matter plus 30% starch, potentially raising starch content by 2-3%," he continues. "The cob content is certainly there, but a lot of crops are still very green because of the good early season growing conditions. So cut higher and make the best quality silage you can, always use an additive and consider reusable silage covers such as Secure Covers to protect silage sheeting and more effectively exclude air."

For those who are still looking for additional forage volume for the winter, Mr Collett recommends ensiling surplus maize into Ag-Bags or temporary clamps, rather than over-filling existing capacity.

## Feeding moist rations may prove a false economy

Dairy farmers can increase milk production by challenging the current trend of using moist feeds in their cows' diet, according to Steve Brown, ruminant feeds product manager for Wynnstay. He believes there is evidence to suggest dairy farmers should question the nutritional and financial wisdom of including too much moist feed in the diet of highly productive dairy cows.

"An £80/t wet feed with a 35% dry matter content, energy content of 14MJ/kg DM, crude protein of 350g/kg DM (35%) and oil content of 100g/kg DM (10%) seems at first sight to be good value," Mr Brown explains. "But on an as fed basis, each kilo will only deliver 4.9MJ/kg of energy, 12.25% crude protein and 3.5% oil. Therefore, for each cow to receive the quoted nutrient values, the cost per tonne must be divided by the dry matter content (eg £80 divided by 0.35). Then, the £80/t price tag rises to a considerably less attractive £228.57/t of dry matter."

Evidence of the benefit of switching from a moist feed to a dry blend has been seen on a high yielding dairy herd

in South Wales. "The herd was originally receiving 10kgs/head/day of a 50% dry matter moist feed as part of the daily ration," Mr Brown explains.

"When the herd was moved onto a Wynnstay dry blend with an equivalent nutrient specification, milk output increased within a week by 1.2 litres per cow across the entire herd."

The change in diet was achieved at a similar cost per tonne of dry matter, giving the equivalent of an extra £11,000 of milk per year for every 100 cows at a milk price of 25 pence per litre. The herd's fertility status and milk quality also improved as a result of a less acidic rumen environment.

"This isn't a new theory," Mr Brown says. "Professor Boutflower proved in the 1930s that animals should 'drink water, not eat it', when Cirencester Beauty of the Steadings herd produced 58,300 litres of milk in five lactations from a high dry matter ration. That's equivalent to an average of 11,660 litres per lactation – a significant yield by any standards, especially when you consider the cow in question wasn't a pedigree Holstein."

## Additive turns walkable slurry crust into an injectable mix

"You could have walked over the top of the crust in our slurry tower," sounds like a boast, but dairy farmer Ian Evans, of Penkiln Farm, Newton Stewart, is glad to be talking in the past tense.

"When I used to mix it up, the dirty water would come out, but floor solids were left behind," he adds.

To tackle the problem, Mr Evans tried Epizym Cattle, a slurry additive from Harbro. The powder contains naturally occurring bacteria that are activated when mixed with water and added to the liquid fraction of stored slurry. Using the slurry as

food, the bacteria produce a more liquid and homogeneous mix, capture ammonia and reduce odours.

"When I applied the product the smell was greatly reduced when spreading and the slurry was far more consistent, leaving much less solid material on the leaves of the grass.

"I saved time and money on pumps. I used to hire in specialist mixing equipment, but I haven't had to hire it since using Epizym. I expect to get more grass due to less leaf contamination and aim to inject from now on as the slurry is more consistent."

### DAIRYCO DATUM LEAGUE TABLE (August)

	Price (ppl)	Monthly change (%)
Dairy Crest Waitrose	27.29	-
Wiseman Tesco	26.79	-
Arla Asda	24.56	-
Dairy Crest Sainsbury – Level	25.65	-
Lactalis/Caledonian Cheese – Profile	23.84	-
Dairy Crest Cheese Davidstow – Level	24.00	-
Barber AJ & RG	24.56	-
Parkham Farms	24.00	-
DC Liquid – Level	23.95	-
Arla non-aligned	23.86	-
Belton Cheese	22.69	-2.16
Wiseman Partnership	24.18	+1.26
Wyke Farms	23.04	-3.36
Milk Link London Liquid	23.25	-2.11
Meadow Foods Level	23.46	-0.26
Milk Link Manufacturing – Seasonal	22.82	-2.19
Glanbia Llangefni	22.52	-
South Caemarfon Creameries	21.89	-
First Milk Compositional – Profile	21.34	-

• The milk prices listed above will vary according to the amount of milk that is required by each retailer. The milk price above assumes that all litres produced are sold into the dedicated milk pools. Farmers signed up with the Promar costings survey get an additional 0.50ppl.  
 • This is a condensed version of the DairyCo milk price league table. The full table can be seen at [www.dairycodatum.org.uk](http://www.dairycodatum.org.uk)

Advertorial



## The safe, cost-effective way to healthy hooves

**Healthy Hooves – a low-pH buffered product – works by extending the life of the footbath solution, rendering it more effective for longer. Formulated for use with copper sulphate (CuSO<sub>4</sub>) or acidulated copper footbaths, Healthy Hooves is now available from Yelverton-based Lubricants South West.**

The family-owned company, run by Phil Greeno, has been appointed by Coventry-based PreTreatment Solutions as the stockist and supplier for Healthy Hooves in Devon and Cornwall.

“Based in West Devon, Lubricants South West is well placed, with its strong supply chain connections and agricultural expertise, to supply the product to producers throughout the South West of England,” says PreTreatment Solutions’ Barry Clements. “The company has a long history of dealing with farmers and understanding their requirements.”

Formalin is still the foot bath solution of choice for many producers, despite the health and safety implications, closely followed by copper sulphate.

Healthy Hooves works by extending the life of the footbath solution, rendering it more effective for longer.

As well as extending footbath solution life, Healthy Hooves also offers other major benefits for producers – and their herds – according to Barry.

“Healthy Hooves maximises the available copper to effectively treat a herd, while at the same time reducing the amount of copper sulphate used by as much as 80% and significantly extending the ‘life’ of the footbath solution,” he says. “The product also eliminates the need for formaldehyde in footbaths.”

Using Healthy Hooves means that more than 500 cows can use a footbath before it needs changing.

“As well as cutting footbathing costs by up to 50%, using Healthy Hooves also offers environmental benefits – the overuse of copper sulphate and the use of formaldehyde are known toxic environmental hazards,” says Mr Clements. “It is also safe and contact with human and animal skin is not a problem.”

● **For more information about Healthy Hooves, contact Barry on 02476 452 299, email [sales@healthyhooves.eu](mailto:sales@healthyhooves.eu) or Phil and his team at Lubricants South West on 01822 855 885, email [healthyhooves@chessmail.co.uk](mailto:healthyhooves@chessmail.co.uk)**

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**BusinessLivestock**

# AMINOPYRALID REAPPROVED FOR GRASSLAND

Vital pasture herbicide gains reapproval

## WEED CONTROL

Livestock farmers who previously relied on the herbicide aminopyralid to control problem weeds will be relieved to learn that it has been reinstated by ministers on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Pesticides.

The move lifts a voluntary suspension of approval for sales and use which the company sought in July 2008 after sensitive crops on some allotments and gardens were affected by manure containing traces of the herbicide.

Aminopyralid is a highly effective weed killer for professional users. It is valued by farmers seeking to control pernicious and poisonous weeds such as ragwort, thistles and docks in pasture. In specific formulations it also has the potential to control invasive weeds, such as Japanese knotweed, in amenity areas and industrial sites.

## LONG-LASTING CONTROL

Since sales and use were suspended, farmers have campaigned for the product’s return because of the high levels of long-lasting weed control aminopyralid-based products offer. Those who have used the product since its launch in 2006 have seen improved pasture and enjoyed increased output from their fields, compared with that offered by other products on sale to control weeds in grassland.

Dow AgroSciences, however, has always insisted that it would not seek to reintroduce aminopyralid before ways were found that minimised the risk of any repeat of the unfortunate incidents of the past two seasons.

The active ingredient will be reintroduced with new recommendations and a stringent stewardship programme devised to prevent inadvertent movement of manure from farms.

Central to this is the requirement that products containing aminopyralid are only applied to land that will be grazed by cattle or sheep; not land where forage will be conserved.

This requirement aims to ensure

that manure generated from treated grassland remains on the pasture because problems have arisen when conserved forage from treated pasture has been fed to housed livestock and manure created in large quantities.

## ENHANCED STEWARDSHIP

Supporting these new recommendations is an enhanced stewardship package which will require anyone supplying or advising on the use of aminopyralid to be re-trained in the details of product use. Those applying, or using, products containing aminopyralid are required to confirm in writing that they have been instructed on product use and manure management issues. These records form part of a user traceability system.

“The new stewardship requirements are stringent,” says Andy Bailey, Dow AgroSciences’ principal biologist for grassland herbicides.

“We believe they will mitigate against manure leaving farms where aminopyralid has been used and so help to safeguard against sensitive crops being affected.”

The changes to how aminopyralid products will be used and the associated stewardship plan should allay concerns among gardeners and allotment holders over using manure. It remains good practice, however, to know the provenance of any manure as other materials can contaminate manure.

Speaking for farmers, NFU deputy president Meurig Raymond comments: “We are pleased to see the suspension on the use of aminopyralid lifted. Many grassland farmers have found this a particularly valuable product in improving grassland and controlling pernicious weeds, such as ragwort and thistle.

“It is clear, however, that those recommending and using the products have a duty to follow the stringent new label instructions. Not only is it a legal obligation, but important for the reputation of the industry.”

# SCOPS ISSUES WAKE-UP CALL OVER WORM RISK

Anthelmintic resistant worms are a growing threat, but there is still time for action

## FLOCK HEALTH

The UK's farmers still have time to take action to slow down the worldwide spread of anthelmintic resistant (AR) worms that has devastated sheep farming in several countries and is already causing problems in the UK.

"AR is the biggest single health threat to British sheep farming at the moment and farmers need to wake up to the fact that they need to act now to protect the industry," says Lesley Stubbings, founder member of the campaign Sustainable Control Of Parasites in Sheep (SCOPS).

"We have three groups of broad spectrum anthelmintics in the UK, which are the main chemical means of controlling worms in sheep. Resistance to at least one of them, however, is already widespread and there's a grave danger of some areas becoming resistant to all three in the near future – a death sentence for sheep farming," she explains.

"Resistance is not a black-and-white process; it's insidious and happens over a period of time – usually years," adds Mrs Stubbings. "During that time, the proportion of resistant worms increases while the performance of sheep falls as the number of worms killed when the sheep are treated reduces.

"Unfortunately, during the build-up phase, farmers tend not to notice there is a mounting problem."

### TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM

Using a 'traffic light' system to explain the threat more clearly, Mrs Stubbings says many UK farmers have already moved from the green (all clear zone) to amber (where worms are showing resistance) and are now in danger of slipping into the red zone (growing resistance to all three) – see graph.

"While I think most British sheep farmers know about AR, they don't think it's happening on their farms, but AR will start to develop without them realising it, unless they test that their drenches are working fully on a regular basis. We suspect most of our farmers are already in the amber zone and there are already pockets of triple resistance (red zone) in Scotland and the South-West of England.

"When you realise sheep farmers could be losing 50% growth rate in lambs with worms before they see any clinical signs, you can start adding up the huge cost of AR," adds Mrs Stubbings. "If farmers are going to slow the progress of AR, they can't carry on as



**"Resistance is not a black-and-white process; it's insidious and happens over a period of time"**

they used to, drenching sheep with the same anthelmintic at the same time every year. They need to target their use better and reduce their reliance on anthelmintics where possible."

Urging all sheep farmers to test for AR on their farms and to check where they are on her traffic lights graph, Mrs Stubbings says they need to look at alternative ways of controlling the worm burden in their flocks, such as better grazing management, and consider quarantine dosing for all new stock. This includes:

- Drenching all in-coming sheep with a levamisole (yellow) drench and giving them a group 3ml drench to minimise

the risk of resistant worms surviving;

- Keeping the sheep off pasture for 24-48 hours so that all worm eggs have been passed;

- Turning the animals out onto dirty pasture to make sure any eggs from worms that have survived the treatment are diluted by worm eggs that are already on the pasture.

"This is a serious problem. AR has already put an end to sheep farming in parts of South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, as well as South America," Mrs Stubbings warns.

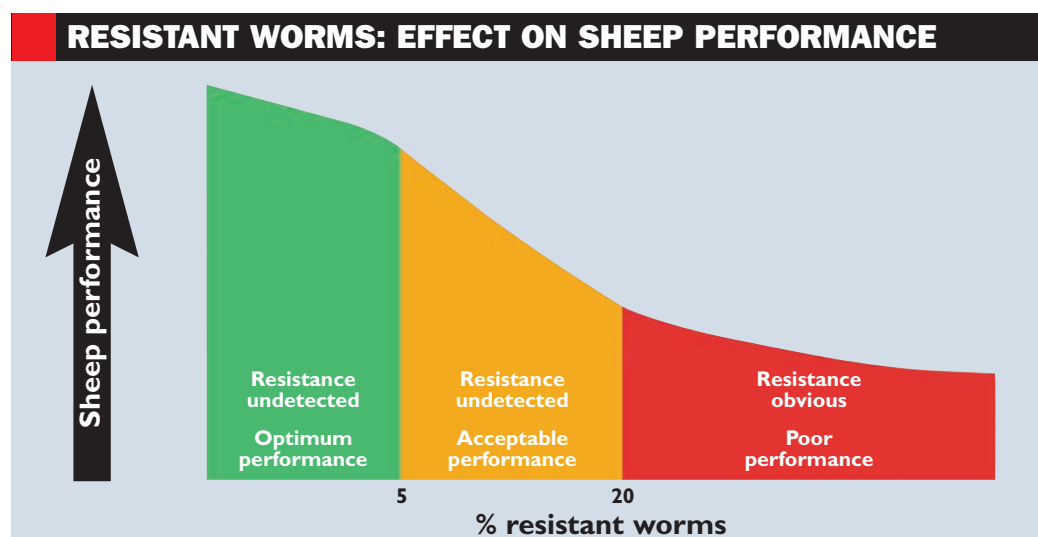
"Even if we get a fourth anthelmintic to control worms here, we'll need to change our practices to ensure we can extend its life as long as possible."

Simon Harris, veterinary adviser for Novartis Animal Health, agrees that AR is a risk that must be considered by all sheep farmers.

"Roundworms in the UK and across the globe have shown they have the ability to become resistant to all classes of wormer, including newer actives such as moxidectin," he says. "Using the right drenching practices and rotating through all the current available classes of wormer, will help to slow the onset of resistance."

Mr Harris adds that drench testing after the use of any class of wormer to make sure it was effective is a vital tool in the fight against AR.

He also warns that very frequent dosing and using wormers with prolonged activity or persistency has been shown to increase the rate of resistance development in field studies.





Difficult Calvings and Caesarians



Mastitis and high cell counts associated with *Staph* and *Strep* bacteria



Foot infections

# Stop lameness in cows from costing you money

A single case of lameness in a dairy cow costs £170.<sup>1</sup> Although correct hoof management, well-maintained walkways and good feeding can all help prevent the foot infections that lead to lameness, some cows will need treatment.

## Tylan 200 is the ideal choice:

- Nearly 90% of Tylan 200 gets to the site of infection where you want it
- This helps to improve your success rate and reduce prolonged production impact
- This means no prolonged hassle for you!

## Ask your Vet about Tylan 200



**[POM-V]** Tylan 200 contains tylosin Vm 00006/4098.

As with all prescription only medicines, consult your veterinary surgeon before use.

1. Esslemont, D. Daisy Research report no.5.

Further information is available from Elanco Animal Health, Lilly House, Priestley Road, Basingstoke RG24 9NL.

**Elanco**

**Tylan<sup>®</sup> 200**

The dairy antibiotic from Elanco. Accept no substitutes.

EL324 Farm Business



# ▶ Which Medicines

## ANIMAL HEALTH PRODUCT GUIDE PART TWO: M - Z



Treatments for the major diseases affecting cattle and sheep

### ANIMAL HEALTH

#### MASTITIS (BOVINE)

Inflammation of the udder. The infection enters the teat and can be spread by human hand, the cups of milking machines, udder cloths, sores, the floor and partitions.

About one-third of UK cows have sub-clinical mastitis. Summer mastitis is caused by *Actinomyces pyogenes* often in association with other pathogenic bacteria.

Bacterial mastitis is caused by a number of bacteria. Environmental mastitis is a form of bacterial mastitis that is common during the winter; infection is long-lasting.

Over 25 species of fungi have been implicated in mycotic mastitis, which can lead to slaughter.

#### Symptoms:

Signs of acute clinical mastitis include shivering, a rise in temperature, fast pulse and breathing and refusal of food. The cow is loath to lie down because of the pain in the udder. Examination shows at least a quarter of the udder is swollen, tense, red and painful to the touch. Summer mastitis can result in the production of pus.

Sub-acute symptoms appear more slowly and include difficulty in milking, the presence of small clots and large numbers of epithelial cells. Pain and swelling increases and milk discolours.

Pain is absent in chronic mastitis, but milk yields decrease.

Mycoplasma mastitis has rapid onset in which cows show little sign of illness. Sub-clinical mastitis reduces milk yields by 10%.

#### Treatment:

- Advocin 180 (ai danofloxacin) from Pfizer treats acute mastitis through subcutaneous or intravenous injection. Withdrawal period for meat is eight days and for milk is four days.
- Baytril 10% (ai enrofloxacin) from Bayer is a synthetic, broad-spectrum antimicrobial substance for *E coli* mastitis administered by slow intravenous injection. Withdrawal period for meat is four days and for milk is 72 hours.
- Binixin 5% (ai flunixin) from Bayer is for slow intravenous injection and is an adjunctive therapy in the treatment of acute mastitis. Withdrawal period for meat is eight days and for milk is 12 hours.

- Bovaclox Dry Cow Intramammary Suspension (ai cloxacillin and ampicillin) from Norbrook is not for use in cows that have a very short dry period or within 49 days of calving. Withdrawal period is 156 hours after calving for milk, but should a cow calve earlier than 49 days after the last treatment, milk for human consumption may only be taken from 49 days plus 156 hours after the last treatment. Cattle may be slaughtered for human consumption 28 days after the last treatment.

- Cephaguard DC 150mg Intramammary Ointment (ai cefquinome) from Virbac is for the treatment of subclinical mastitis at drying off and the prevention of new bacterial infections of the udder during the dry period in the dairy cow. Not for cows with clinical mastitis or for those during lactation, in erroneous use during lactation the milk should be discarded for 35 days. Withdrawal period for meat is two days.

- Ceporex Injection (ai sodium cefalexin) from Intervet/Schering-Plough is used to treat septicaemic mastitis as a supplement to intramammary therapy. Administered through subcutaneous or intramuscular route, the withdrawal period is 19 days for meat, but there is no withdrawal period for milk.

- Cepravin Dry Cow (ai cefalonium) from Intervet/Schering-Plough is an intramammary infusion used in clinical mastitis. Post calving withdrawal period is 96 hours and in meat is 21 days.

- Clamoxyl LA (ai amoxicillin) from Pfizer is an adjunct to intramammary therapy that is injected via the subcutaneous or intramuscular route. Withdrawal period for meat is 21 days and for milk is 96 hours.

- Cobactan 2.5% (ai cefquinome) from Intervet/Schering-Plough treats *E coli* mastitis through intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period for meat is five days and for milk is 24 hours.

- Cobactan MC (ai cefquinome) from Intervet/Schering-Plough treats clinical mastitis and is administered through intramammary infusion. Withdrawal period is 48 hours for meat a 96 hours for milk.

- Comforion Vet (ai ketoprofen) from Janssen Animal Health is an NSAID administered by intravenous or intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period is four days for meat and no days for milk.

- Cow Intramammary Suspension from Norbrook contains amoxicillin, clavulanic acid and prednisolone. With cows milked twice daily, milk for human consumption may only be taken 60 hours after the last treatment. Withdrawal period for meat is seven days. When using Combiclav Lactating Cow Intramammary and Combiclav Injection in combination, withdrawal period for meat is 42 days.

- Cronyxin Injection (ai flunixin) from Bimeda is for slow intravenous injection as an adjunctive therapy in the treatment of acute mastitis. Withdrawal period is eight days for meat and 12 hours for milk.

- Duofast Intramammary Suspension (ai trimethoprim and sulfadiazine) from Norbrook treats clinical mastitis. Withdrawal period is seven days for meat and 48 hours for milk.

- Duphacycline LA (ai oxytetracycline dehydrate) from Fort Dodge is a bacteriostatic antibiotic for intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period is 31 days for meat and 10 days for milk.

- Duphatrim Injectable Solution (ai trimethoprim and sulfadiazine) from Fort Dodge is an antibacterial for severe mastitis administered via intramuscular or slow intravenous injection. Withdrawal period is 12 days for meat and 48 hours for milk.

- Engemycin LA 200 mg/ml Solution for Injection (ai oxytetracycline dihydrate) from Intervet/Schering-Plough is administered via deep intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period is 31 days for meat and 10 days for milk.

- Enviracor (contains inactivated *Escherichia coli*) from Pfizer is for subcutaneous injection and has no withdrawal period.

- Framomycin (ai framycetin) from Novartis Animal Health is an intramuscular injection used as an adjunct to intramammary therapy in the treatment of acute bacterial mastitis with systemic involvement. Withdrawal period for meat is 122 days and for milk is 60 hours.

- Ketofen 10% is an NSAID (ai ketoprofen) from Merial that treats acute clinical mastitis in conjunction with an antimicrobial. Administered by intramuscular injection, withdrawal period is four days for meat, no days for milk.

- Kloxerate Dry Cow (ai benzathine cloxacillin) →

• Continued on page 26

# ▶ Which Medicines – M–Z



• Continued from page 25

from Fort Dodge is an intramammary suspension that treats existing mastitis and provides protection against further infections during the dry period. Withdrawal period for meat is 28 days.

• **Kloxerate Plus Milking Cow** (ai ampicillin and cloxacillin) from Fort Dodge is an intramammary suspension for the treatment of clinical mastitis under the guidance of a veterinarian. For cows milked twice daily, milk for human consumption may only be taken from 60 hours. Withdrawal period for meat is four days.

• **Lactaclox Intramammary Suspension** (ai ampicillin and cloxacillin) from Norbrook is for the treatment of clinical mastitis. Withdrawal period for cows milked twice daily is 60 hours and for meat is four days.

• **Lactatrim MC** (ai trimethoprim and sulfadiazine) from Elanco Animal Health is an intramammary suspension for clinical mastitis. Withdrawal period is seven days for meat and 48 hours for milk.

• **Lincocin Forte S** (ai lincomycin) from Pfizer is an intramammary infusion. Withdrawal period is three days for meat and 84 hours for milk.

• **Mamyzin** (ai penethamate hydriodide) from Boehringer Ingelheim treats mastitis caused by penicillin-sensitive organisms and is administered as an intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period is seven days for meat and 108 hours for milk.

• **Marbocyl 10%** (ai marbofloxacin) from Vétquinol UK is indicated in the treatment of acute *E coli* mastitis and is injected via the intramuscular, subcutaneous or intravenous route. Withdrawal period is six days for meat and 36 hours for milk.

• **Mastiplan LC** (ai cefapirin and prednisolone) from Intervet/Schering-Plough treats clinical mastitis and is administered through intramammary infusion with withdrawal periods of

96 hours for meat and 132 hours for milk.

• **Meflosyl 5% Solution for Injection** (ai flunixin) from Fort Dodge is an adjunctive therapy in the treatment of acute mastitis. Administered via intravenous injection, withdrawal period is seven days for meat and 36 hours for milk.

• **Metacam Cattle** (ai meloxicam) from Boehringer Ingelheim is an adjunctive treatment of acute mastitis in combination with antibiotics. Given as a subcutaneous or intravenous injection, withdrawal period is 15 days for meat and five days for milk.

• **Multiject IMM Intramammary Infusion** from Norbrook is an intramammary suspension that contains procaine penicillin, streptomycin sulphate, neomycin sulphate and prednisolone. Used to treat acute and subacute bovine mastitis in milking cows. Withdrawal period is seven days for meat and 108 hours for milk.

• **Nisamox Lactating Cow** (ai amoxicillin) from Fort Dodge should be administered at a dose rate of three syringes per infected quarter with a single syringe given every 12 hours. With cows milked twice daily, milk for human consumption may only be taken from 60 hours. Withdrawal period for meat is seven days.

• **Noroclav Lactating Cow Intramammary Suspension** from Norbrook contains amoxicillin, clavulanic acid and prednisolone. Withdrawal period in cows milked twice daily is 60 hours for milk and seven days for meat.

• **Noroclox Dry Cow 500mg Intramammary Suspension** (ai cloxacillin) from Norbrook is not for use in lactating cows or within 28 days of calving and milk for human consumption may only be taken from 96 hours after calving. If calving occurs before 28 days after the last treatment, milk for human consumption may only be taken from 28 days plus 96 hours after the last treatment. Withdrawal period for meat is 28 days.

• **Orbenin Extra Dry cow** (ai benzathine

cloxacillin) from Pfizer is for use in cows at drying off to treat existing intramammary infections and provides protection against further infections during the dry period. Not intended for use in cows with dry periods of 42 days or less. Milk for human consumption may only be taken from 96 hours after calving. If calving occurs before 42 days after last treatment, milk for human consumption may only be taken from 42 days plus 96 hours after the last treatment. Withdrawal for meat is 28 days. Orbenin Dry Cow is another product in the range.

• **Orbenin LA** (ai cloxacillin sodium) from Pfizer is for intramammary use in the treatment of mastitis caused by Gram-positive organisms. With cows milked twice daily, milk for human consumption may be taken only from 84 hours after the last treatment. Withdrawal period for meat is seven days.

• **OrbeSeal** (ai bismuth subnitrate) from Pfizer is an intramammary infusion for prevention of new intramammary infections throughout the dry period and in cows considered free of sub-clinical mastitis. No withdrawal period.

• **Oxycare 20 LA** (ai oxytetracycline dihydrate) from Animalcare is administered by deep muscular injection. Withdrawal period for milk is 10 days and meat is 31 days.

• **Oxycomplex NS** (ai oxytetracycline and flunixin) from Bimeda is for use in acute mastitis in conjunction with intramammary therapy. For intravenous and intramuscular use, the product is not for use in cows producing milk for human consumption. Withdrawal period for meat is 31 days.

• **Pathocef 250mg Intramammary Suspension** (ai cefoperazone) from Pfizer is a single dose treatment of clinical mastitis that is injected into the infected quarter immediately after milking. Withdrawal period is two days for meat and 72 hours for milk.

• **Pirsue** (ai pirlimycin) from Pfizer is an intramammary infusion for sub-clinical mastitis. Withdrawal period for milk is five days and for meat is 23 days.

• **Rimadyl Cattle** (ai carprofen) from Pfizer is an adjunct to antimicrobial therapy in acute mastitis. Administered by intravenous injection the withdrawal period for meat is 21 days, but no days for milk.

• **Synulox Lactating Cow Intramammary Suspension** from Pfizer contains clavulanic acid, amoxicillin and prednisolone. Administer three syringes per affected quarter (one every 12 hours). With cows milked twice daily, milk for human consumption may only be taken from 60 hours. Withdrawal period for meat is seven days. Synulox Ready-To-Use Suspension for Injection is another product in the range.

• **Tetra Delta** (ai novobiocin, neomycin, procaine penicillin and dihydrostreptomycin) from Pfizer is for intramammary administration. With cows milked twice daily, milk for human consumption may only be taken 72 →



• Continued on page 28

# Trodax. Less fluke, less hassle.

(Because life's  
complicated enough.)

●  
Fast-acting,  
highly effective  
and designed  
for fluke.  
With no reported  
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Simple, quick  
and convenient  
injection in an  
easy-to-use pack

**Trodax**<sup>®</sup>  
SIMPLY EFFECTIVE



# ▶ Which Medicines – M–Z

• Continued from page 26

hours from the last treatment. Withdrawal period for meat is seven days.

● Tolfine (ai tolfenamic acid) from Vétoquinol UK is an NSAID, antipyretic and analgesic agent indicated as an adjunct in the treatment of acute mastitis in conjunction with antibacterial therapy. Administered via intravenous injection, withdrawal period is three days for meat and 24 hours for milk.

● Trimacare 24% (ai sulfadiazine and trimethoprim) from Animalcare is for intramuscular or slow intravenous injection. Withdrawal period is 12 days for meat and 48 hours for milk.

● Tylan 200 (ai tylosin) from Elanco Animal Health is given via intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period is 28 days for meat and 108 hours for milk.

● Ubrolexin (ai cefalexin and kanamycin) from Boehringer Ingelheim treats clinical mastitis through intramammary infusion. Withdrawal period is 10 days for meat and five days for milk.

● Ubro Red (ai framycetin sulphate, penethamate hydroiodide and procaine penicillin) from Boehringer Ingelheim is an intramammary infusion for management of subclinical infections present at drying off and to assist in preventing new infections occurring during the dry period. Withdrawal period is 28 days for meat and 84 hours for milk (or when calving 28 days after the last treatment).

● Ubro Yellow (ai framycetin sulphate, dihydrostreptomycin sulphate, penethamate hydroiodide and prednisolone) from Boehringer Ingelheim is an intramammary infusion for mastitis associated with penicillin, streptomycin and framycetin sensitive organisms. With cows milked twice daily, milk for human consumption may only be taken 132 hours after the last treatment, and for meat the withdrawal period is 28 days.

## MASTITIS (OVINE)

Mastitis in ewes can be caused by microorganisms or bacteria and trauma. Lambs can have aggressive nursing habits including head butting of udders or biting that traumatises teat ends, predisposing the teat to secondary bacterial invasion.

Bacteria are the primary cause of ovine mastitis, particularly *Pasteurella haemolytica* and *Staphylococcus aureus*. Mastitis may also occur when ewes are separated from their lambs.

### Symptoms:

Heat, swelling, redness, pain and loss of function are indications of ovine mastitis.

### Treatment:

● Engemycin LA 200mg/ml Solution for Injection (ai oxytetracycline dihydrate) from Intervet/Schering-Plough is administered via deep intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period is nine days for meat and seven days for milk.

● Micotil from Elanco Animal Health is a solution of the antibiotic tilmicosin for subcutaneous injection. Withdrawal period is 42



days for meat and 15 days for milk.

● Orbenin LA (ai cloxacillin sodium) from Pfizer is indicated as an intramammary infusion in ewes at weaning to treat and prevent mastitis. Not for use in ewes producing milk for human consumption. Withdrawal period for meat is seven days.

● Terramycin/LA 200 Solution for Injection (ai oxytetracycline dehydrate) from Pfizer is administered through intramuscular injection. Not for use in ewes producing milk for human consumption, withdrawal period for meat is 24 days.

## MENINGITIS

Often developing in association with a bacterial or viral disease, meningitis is inflammation of the membranes covering the brain and/or spinal cord.

Bacterial meningitis most commonly affects lambs that are two to four weeks old. In calves, it occurs after infection has developed at other sites, particularly the navel and the gut.

### Symptoms:

Signs begin with restlessness, stumbling, turning in circles and falling. Frenzy is followed by dull and quiet behaviour with a vacant expression. Both calves and lambs fail to suckle and are weak, and lambs have congested blood vessels around the eyes.

### Treatment:

● Alamycin 100mg/ml, 200mg/ml and 300mg/ml Solutions (ai oxytetracycline hydrochloride) from Norbrook are injected to treat meningitis in cattle and sheep and have varying withdrawal periods for meat and milk.

● Betamox 150mg/ml Suspension and Betamox LA 150mg/ml Suspension (ai amoxicillin) from Norbrook are administered to cattle and sheep by intramuscular injection. Neither are for use

in sheep producing milk for human consumption. Withdrawal period for Betamox 150mg/ml Suspension is 24 hours for milk (cows), 18 days for meat (cattle) and 10 days for meat (sheep). Withdrawal period for Betamox LA 150mg/ml Suspension in cows milked twice daily is 79 hours and is 23 days for meat (cattle) and 16 days for meat (sheep).

● CombiClav Suspension (ai amoxicillin and clavulanic acid) from Norbrook is administered to cattle by intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period is 42 days for meat and 60 hours for milk.

● Devomycin 250mg/ml Solution (ai streptomycin sulphate) from Norbrook is administered by intramuscular injection to cows and sheep. Withdrawal period is 16 days for meat (cattle), 18 days for meat (sheep) and 48 hours for milk (cows). The treatment is not for use in ewes producing milk for human consumption.

● Devomycin D Solution from Norbrook contains streptomycin sulfate and dihydrostreptomycin sulfate and is administered via intramuscular injection to cattle and sheep. Withdrawal period for meat is 14 days (cattle and sheep) and 48 hours for milk (cows). The treatment is not for use in ewes producing milk for human consumption.

● Duphacillin Suspension for Injection (ai ampicillin) from Fort Dodge is for use in cattle and sheep and is administered by intramuscular injection. Not for use in sheep producing milk for human consumption, withdrawal period for milk (cows) is 24 hours and for meat is 18 days.

● Duphacen+Strep (ai procaine penicillin and dihydrostreptomycin) from Fort Dodge is for cattle and sheep and is administered by intramuscular injection. Not for use in sheep producing milk for human consumption, withdrawal period for milk (cows) is 60 hours and meat is 31 days.

● Hexasol LA Solution from Norbrook contains oxytetracycline and flunixin and is for deep intramuscular injection to cattle. It provides initial anti-inflammatory activity for 24-36 hours and sustained anti-bacterial activity for five to six days following a single administration. Cattle may be slaughtered for human consumption 35 days after the last treatment. Not for use in cattle producing milk for human consumption.

● Intradine Solution (ai sulphadimidine) from Norbrook is administered by intravenous or subcutaneous injection in cattle and sheep. Withdrawal period for milk (cow) is 156 hours, but it is not for use in sheep producing milk for human consumption. Cattle and sheep may be slaughtered for human consumption 18 days after from the last treatment.

● Norobrittin Suspension (ai ampicillin) from Norbrook is administered in cattle and sheep by intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period is 24 hours for milk (cows) but the treatment is not for use in sheep producing milk for human consumption. Cattle and sheep can be slaughtered for human consumption 18 days



from the last treatment.

- Norocillin Suspension (ai procaine penicillin) from Norbrook is indicated for use in cattle and sheep in the treatment of systemic infections caused by or associated with organisms sensitive to penicillin. Intramuscular administration. Withdrawal period in meat (cattle and sheep) is seven days and milk (cow) 84 hours. Not for use in sheep producing milk for human consumption.
- Noroclav Injection for Cattle from Norbrook is an intramuscular injection that contains amoxicillin and clavulanic acid. Withdrawal period for for meat is 42 days and for milk is 80 hours.
- Norodine 24 Solution from Norbrook contains sulfadiazine and trimethoprim and is administered to cattle by intramuscular or slow intravenous injection. Withdrawal period for meat is 12 days and for milk is 48 hours.
- Pen&Strep Suspension from Norbrook contains procaine penicillin and dihydrostreptomycin sulphate and is for use in cattle and sheep for the treatment of infections associated with organisms sensitive to penicillin and/or streptomycin. Not to be used in sheep producing milk for human consumption, the with-

drawal period is 31 days for sheep meat, 60 hours for milk and 23 days for cattle meat.

- Streptacare Suspension for Injection (ai procaine penicillin and dihydrostreptomycin sulphate) from Animalcare is used to treat meningitis in cattle and sheep and is administered by intramuscular injection. Not intended for use in sheep producing milk for human consumption, withdrawal period for cows' milk is 60 hours, cattle meat is 23 days and sheep meat is 31 days.
- Ultrapen LA Suspension (ai procaine benzylpenicillin) from Norbrook is indicated for use in cattle in the treatment of infections associated with organisms sensitive to penicillin. When administered subcutaneously, the withdrawal period is 13 days for meat, but when intramuscular administration is used this rises to 23 days. Milk for human consumption may only be taken from treated cows after 132 hours from the last administration.

#### MILK FEVER/HYPOCALCAEMIA

A metabolic condition of cows and less commonly ewes when the animal's reserves of calcium are turned into milk too quickly, resulting in a rapid drop in blood calcium,

which becomes too low to support normal nerve and muscle function. Loss of consciousness occurs and paralysis of the hindquarters and other body parts.

Traced to artificial management systems, milk fever is more common in dairy breeds and lowland ewes, and tends to occur just before, during or straight after parturition.

#### Symptoms:

Signs include loss of appetite, excitable behaviour, dilated pupils, staggering and loss of balance. Unable to stand, the animal remains quiet with deep breathing. The pulse is fast but weak and the body temperature falls. Death follows coma, but occurs in less than 5% of cases that are treated.

#### Treatment:

- Calcium borogluconate through subcutaneous or intravenous injection may be given with magnesium. If a deficiency of blood phosphorus has been established, 85g of sodium acid phosphate may be administered orally twice daily.

● Continued on page 30

**Virbamec Super** injection for cattle is an effective **3-in-1 treatment** for roundworms, fluke and external parasites, available in 200ml, 500ml and 1 litre pack sizes.

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**POM-VPS** VIRBAMEC SUPER CONTAINS 1% W/V IVERMECTIN, 10% W/V CLORSULON.

**Virbac**  
ANIMAL HEALTH

**If you're ready to chase parasitic invaders away, please contact your usual supplier or call Virbac on 01359 243243.**

Advice on the use of this medicine, or alternatives, must be sought from your prescribing vet or animal health supplier.

# ▶ Which Medicines – M–Z



• Continued from page 29

- Calciject 20 CM Solution from Norbrook contains calcium and magnesium and is given to cattle and sheep by subcutaneous or slow intravenous injection to treat hypocalcaemia complicated by a deficiency of magnesium. No withdrawal period.
- Calciject 20 CMD Solution from Norbrook contains calcium, magnesium and glucose and is administered by subcutaneous injection to sheep to treat hypocalcaemia with accompanying hypoglycaemia. No withdrawal period.
- Calciject 40 Solution from Norbrook contains calcium and is given by subcutaneous or slow intravenous injection to treat hypocalcaemia in cattle. No withdrawal period.
- Calciject 40 CM Solution from Norbrook contains calcium and magnesium and is given by subcutaneous or slow intravenous injection to treat hypocalcaemia in cattle where increased blood magnesium levels are also required. No withdrawal period.
- Calciject LV Solution from Norbrook contains calcium and magnesium and is given by subcutaneous or slow intravenous injection to treat hypocalcaemia complicated by deficiency of magnesium in cattle. No withdrawal period.

## PASTEURELLOSIS IN CATTLE

An acute infectious disease caused by *P haemolytica* and *P multocida*, which are normal inhabitants of the upper respiratory tract. Under stress the bacteria rapidly multiply, causing disease.

### Symptoms:

A high temperature, nasal discharge and a respiratory rate of 60-100 beats per minute indicate pasteurellosis might be present.

## PASTEURELLOSIS IN SHEEP

Pasteurellosis is a serious respiratory disease in sheep caused by *P haemolytica* and less commonly *P multocida*. Associated with pneumonia, and mastitis, young sheep are likely to die from an acute septicaemic form.

### Symptoms:

Symptoms include high temperature, dullness, respiratory problems, muscular tremor followed by collapse and death in three days. Milder signs comprise discharge from the eyes and nose, loss of appetite and absence of rumination.

### Treatment for pasteurellosis in cattle and sheep:

- Baytril 5% Solution for Injection (ai enrofloxacin) from Bayer treats diseases of the respiratory and alimentary tract of bacterial or mycoplasmal origin in cattle via subcutaneous injection. Not for use in cows producing milk for human consumption, withdrawal period for meat is 14 days.
- Baytril 10% Solution for Injection (ai enrofloxacin) from Bayer is a broad-spectrum antimicrobial substance for use in cattle that is administered by subcutaneous injection. With-

drawal period is 10 days for meat and 84 hours for milk.

- Duphacycline LA (ai oxytetracycline) from Fort Dodge is a bacteriostatic antibiotic for cattle and sheep that is administered by the intramuscular route. Withdrawal period for cattle meat is 31 days, for sheep meat is nine days and for cows' milk is 10 days.
- Excenel RTU (ai ceftiofur) from Pfizer is administered by subcutaneous injection in cattle with bacterial respiratory disease associated with *P haemolytica*, *P multocida* and *Haemophilus somnus*. Withdrawal period for meat is eight days and for milk is no days.
- Heptavac-P Plus from Intervet/Schering-Plough is an inactivated vaccine used to protect



sheep against pasteurellosis and other clostridial diseases, that contains *Mannheimia haemolytica* and *Bibersteinia trehalosi*. No withdrawal period.

- Ovivac-P Plus from Intervet/Schering-Plough is an inactivated vaccine used for protecting sheep against four different clostridial diseases including pasteurellosis, which contains *Mannheimia haemolytica* and *Bibersteinia trehalosi*. No withdrawal period.
- Ovipast Plus from Intervet/Schering-Plough is an inactivated vaccine for pasteurellosis in sheep caused by *Mannheimia haemolytica* and *Bibersteinia trehalosi*. No withdrawal period.
- Oxycare 20% LA Injection (ai oxytetracycline) from Animalcare is an antibacterial for intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period for cows' milk is 10 days, sheeps' milk is seven days, cattle meat is 31 days and sheep meat is nine days.
- Rispoval Pasteurella from Pfizer is an inactivated, adjuvanted *P haemolytica* vaccine for the active immunisation of cattle to reduce lesions and respiratory disease caused by *Pasteurella haemolytica* biotype A, serotype 1. No withdrawal period.
- Terramycin/LA 200mg/ml Solution for Injection (ai oxytetracycline dihydrate) from Pfizer treats and controls pasteurellosis in cattle and is administered by deep intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period for milk is seven days

and for meat is 36 days.

- See also Alamycin 100mg/ml, 200mg/ml and 300mg/ml Solutions, Betamox 150mg/ml Suspension, Betamox LA 150mg/ml Suspension, Combiclav Suspension, Devomycin 250mg/ml Solution, Devomycin D Solution, Hexasol LA Solution, Intradine Solution, Norobritin Suspension, Norocillin Suspension, Noroclav Injection for Cattle, Norodine 24 Solution, Pen&Strep Suspension and Ultrapen LA Suspension (in the meningitis section).

## PNEUMONIA IN CATTLE

Inflammation of the lung tissue, the presence of pneumonia means that the normal exchange of carbon dioxide for oxygen is impaired so the animal struggles for breath. Acute or chronic, pneumonia is classified according to the area involved or the cause (bacterial, mycoplasmal, mycotic, non-infective, parasitic and viral).

### Symptoms:

Symptoms include an increased respiratory rate that may seem painful, loss of appetite, dullness, fever and often a cough.

## PNEUMONIA IN CALVES

Enzootic pneumonia is multifactorial in origin and concerns management, the environment and often scours. One or more bacteria, viruses or mycoplasmas are usually involved.

### Symptoms:

Signs include a reduced growth rate and harsh cough. In very young calves, abscesses can form in the lungs, and lobular pneumonia may affect those under one month. Mortality rates vary but can reach 10%.

## PNEUMONIA IN SHEEP

Caused by infection with one or more microorganisms, pneumonia is common in sheep and often results from a complex combination of bacterial and viral infections, adverse physical conditions and physiological stress. Pneumonia caused by *M haemolytica* has become more common in the UK.

### Symptoms:

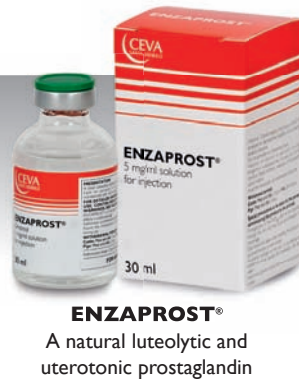
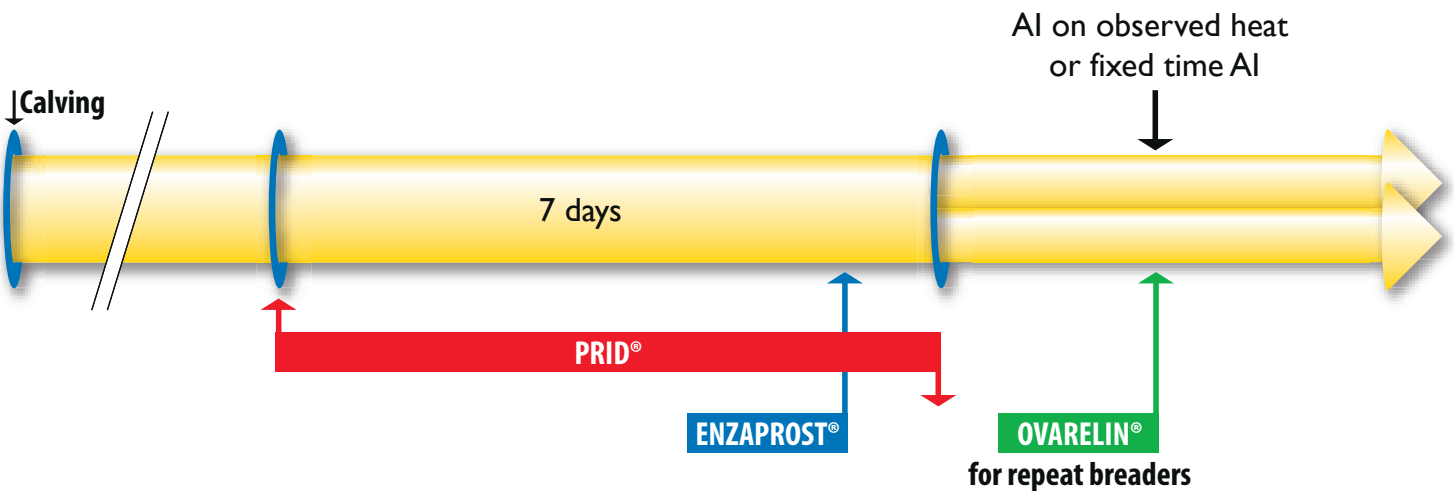
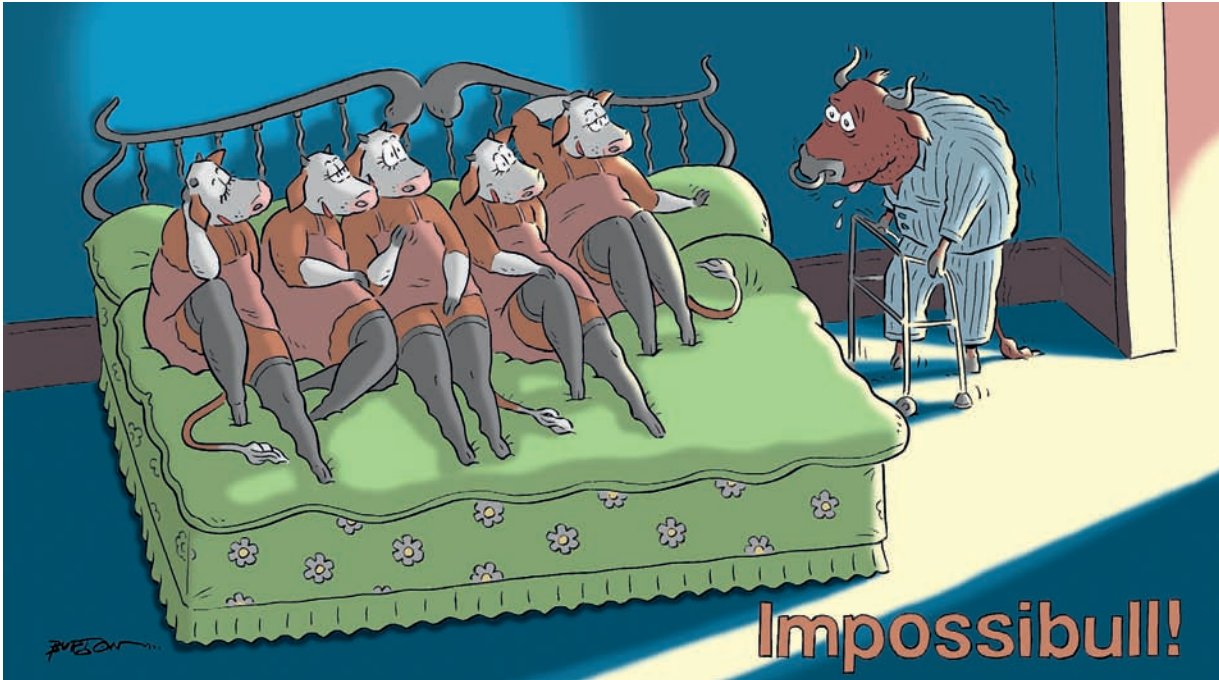
Symptoms comprise drooping ears, fast breathing, discharge from eyes and nose and a cough. Death can occur in two days.

### Treatment:

- Baytril 10% Solution for Injection (ai enrofloxacin) from Bayer is a broad-spectrum antimicrobial substance for use in cattle that is administered by subcutaneous injection. Withdrawal period is 10 days for meat and 84 hours for milk.
- Baytril 2.5% Oral Solution (ai enrofloxacin) from Bayer is an antimicrobial substance for use in calves for the treatment of infections of the alimentary and respirator tracts of bacterial or mycoplasmal origin. Administered via the →

• Continued on page 32

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# ▶ Which Medicines – M–Z

• Continued from page 30

milk, milk replacer, electrolyte solution or water, withdrawal period is eight days.

• **Bimotrim Co Injection** (ai sulfadoxine and trimethoprim) from Bimeda may be used in the treatment of a wide range of diseases and conditions of bacterial origin in cattle and is given by slow intravenous or intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period for meat is 10 days and in cows milked twice daily, milk for human consumption may only be taken from 60 hours after the last treatment.

• **Bovilis Bovipast RSP** from Intervet/Schering-Plough contains inactivated bovine respiratory syncytial virus, parainfluenza-3 virus and inactivated *Mannheimia haemolytica*. It actively immunises cattle against parainfluenza-3 virus, bovine respiratory syncytial virus, and reduces infection, mortality, clinical signs, lung lesions and bacterial invasion of the lung caused by serotypes A1 and A6. Administered by subcutaneous injection in the neck, there is no withdrawal period.

• **Draxxin Injectable Antibiotic** (ai tulathromycin) from Pfizer is subcutaneously injected to treat and prevent bovine respiratory disease. Not licensed for use in lactating dairy cattle, pregnant cows or heifers, withdrawal period for meat is 49 days.

• **Duphacillin 150mg Suspension for Injection** (ai ampicillin) from Fort Dodge is administered to cattle and sheep via intramuscular injection. Not for use in sheep producing milk for human consumption, withdrawal period for cows' milk is 24 hours and sheep and cattle meat is 18 days.

• **Duphacen** (ai procaine penicillin) from Fort Dodge is administered by the intramuscular route to cattle and sheep. Not for use in sheep where the milk is intended for human consumption, withdrawal period for cows' milk is 84 hours and for meat is seven days. Other products in the range are Duphacen+Strep, Duphacen Fort, Duphatrim

IS and Duphatrim Bolus.

• **Metacam Cattle** (ai meloxicam) from Boehringer Ingelheim is a subcutaneous or intravenous injection for use in acute respiratory infection with appropriate antibiotic therapy. Withdrawal period is five days for milk and 15 days for meat.

• **Micotil** (ai tilmicosin) from Elanco Animal Health is an antibiotic for subcutaneous injection that is injected subcutaneously in sheep over 15kg and young cattle. Withdrawal period for cattle meat is 60 days, cows' milk is 36 days, sheep meat is 42 days and sheeps' milk is 15 days.

• **Nuflor and Nuflor Minidose** (ai florfenicol) from Intervet/Schering-Plough are used to prevent and treat pneumonia in cattle due to *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *P multocida* and *Histophilus somni*. Neither is permitted for use in animals lactating for human consumption. Withdrawal periods vary from 30 days to 64 days depending on method of administration.

• **Penacare Injection** (ai procaine penicillin) from Animalcare is administered to cattle and sheep via the intramuscular route. Not for use in sheep where milk is intended for human consumption, the withdrawal period for cow milk is 84 hours and for meat is seven days.

• **Resflor** (ai florfenicol and flunixin) Intervet/Schering-Plough is a subcutaneous injection for pneumonia caused by *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *P multocida* and *Histophilus somni*. Not permitted for use in animals producing milk for human consumption, withdrawal period for meat is 46 days.

• **Rispoval 4 Vaccine** (ai IBR virus and BVD virus) from Pfizer is for active immunisation of cattle to reduce infection, clinical signs and respiratory disease caused by Bovine Respiratory Syncytial virus, BHV-1 virus and Parainfluenza virus type 3 (PI3); and leucopaenia and viraemia caused by the BVD virus Type 1. A duration of immunity of at least six months

has been demonstrated and there is no withdrawal period.

• **Rispoval Intranasal Vaccine** from Pfizer (ai modified live bovine parainfluenza 3 virus (PI3), thermosensitive strain RLB103 and modified live bovine respiratory syncytial virus (BRSV) is for active immunisation of maternally derived antibody positive or negative calves from three weeks of age against BRSV and PI3, to reduce the mean titre and duration of excretion of both viruses. No withdrawal period.

• **Selectan** from Merial is an antibiotic administered through intramuscular injection that contains florfenicol to treat bovine respiratory disease. Withdrawal period for meat is 30 days and it is not permitted for use in cows producing milk for human consumption.

• **Streptacare Injection** (ai procaine penicillin) from Animalcare is administered via intramuscular injection to cattle and sheep. It is not intended for use in sheep producing milk for human consumption, and withdrawal period for milk (cows') is 60 hours, meat (cattle) is 23 days and meat (sheep) is 31 days.

• **Strinacin II** (ai sulphadiazine and trimethoprim) from Merial is given orally to calves with bacterial pneumonia. There is a 15-day withdrawal period for meat.

• **Trimacare 24% Injection** (ai sulfadiazine and trimethoprim) from Animalcare is indicated in the treatment of acute, subacute and chronic conditions of bacterial origin in cattle. Administered by intramuscular or slow intravenous injection, withdrawal period for milk is 48 hours and for meat is 12 days.

• **Trimacare Bolus** (ai trimethoprim and sulfadiazine) from Animalcare are antibacterial tablets for calves. Withdrawal period is 15 days.

• **Trimedoxine 4S** (ai trimethoprim) from Vetoquinol UK is a tablet that treats bacterial pneumonia in calves. Withdrawal period is 15 days.

• **Tylan 200** (ai tylosin) from Elanco Animal Health treats calf pneumonia and is administered through intramuscular injection. Withdrawal period for meat is 28 days.

• **Tylan Soluble** (ai tylosin) from Elanco Animal Health is used to prevent and treat calf pneumonia and is administered orally. Withdrawal period for meat is 14 days.

• **Zactran** (ai gamithromycin) from Merial is an antibiotic administered through intramuscular injection to treat bovine respiratory disease. Withdrawal period for meat is 64 days and it is not permitted for use in cows producing milk for human consumption.

• See also Alamycin 100mg/ml, 200mg/ml and 300mg/ml Solutions, Betamox 150mg/ml Suspension, Betamox LA 150mg/ml Suspension, Combiclav Suspension, Devomycin 250mg/ml Solution, Devomycin D Solution, Hexasol LA Solution, Intradine Solution, Norobrittin Suspension, Norocillin Suspension, Noroclav Injection for Cattle, Norodine 24 Solution, Pen&Strep Suspension and Ultrapen LA Suspension (in the meningitis section).







# SQP ON THE BEAT

Find someone suitably qualified to discuss which medicine to use, suggests chairman of AMTRA, **Bob Stevenson**



## MEDICINES & THE LAW

The abbreviation SQP – suitably qualified person – is scattered throughout the Veterinary Medicine Regulations 2008 and has been embedded in the comparable Regulations, which have been revoked and remade every year since 2005.

Every qualified SQP has a unique number and they should display their SQP category so that animal owners can appreciate their qualification. A register of all SQPs is maintained by the Animal Medicines Training and Regulatory Authority (AMTRA).

SQPs can prescribe medicines that have the legal category POM-VPS, NFA-VPS and those that are more widely available and require less control. The legal category can be seen on the

packaging or medicine container. POM stands for “prescription only medicine” and VPS stands for “veterinary surgeon, pharmacist and SQP”, indicating people who are legally allowed to prescribe such medicines.

SQPs are established as primary prescribers of medicines used to maintain health and prevent disease in domesticated and food-producing species (*see table on page 34*).

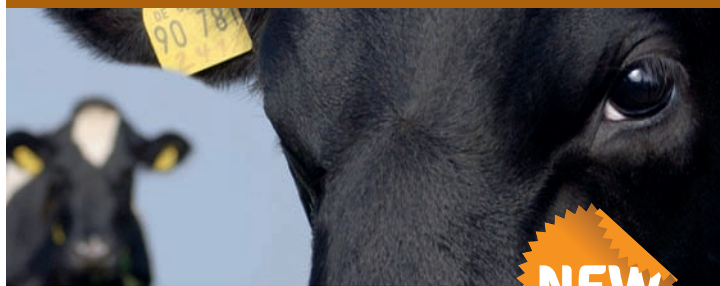
SQPs are legally prevented from carrying out diagnosis of disease or ailments of any kind in any species. Under the Veterinary Surgeons Act, only registered veterinary surgeons are qualified to diagnose. But SQPs and veterinary surgeons are increasingly cooperating through veterinary diagnosis followed by the SQP

prescribing and supplying medicines.

Required to undertake continuing professional development, SQPs maintain up-to-date knowledge of the POM-VPS medicines (as well as medicines used for non-food-producing animals – NFA-VPS). They are able to prescribe the most suitable authorised veterinary medicine for the animals and provide detailed information on correct dose calculation, withdrawal periods, interpreting animal health plans, →

• Continued on page 34

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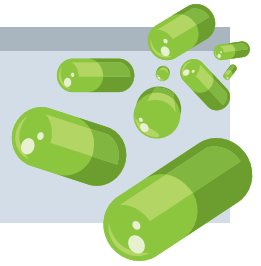
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1. N. Hill. Adults: 97%–100%, immatures: 6–8 weeks 99%–99%, immatures 5 weeks–99%–99%, 3–4 week immatures 22%–73%. Database: WO111 Conpendium 2010; 2. Coles, G. C., Rhodes, K. C., Stafford, K. A. (2000) Activity of clostetel against adult triclofenazole-resistant Fasciola hepatica. Veterinary Record 144, 524–3. Hues, L., Lamparijs, O., Lauwers H. (1990) Activité douicidie du clostetel contre Fasciola hepatica: approche pharmacodynamique. Revue Méd. Vet., 141, 12, 991–995.

JANSSEN ANIMAL HEALTH

# ▶ Which Medicines – M–Z



• Continued from page 33

disposal of medicines and containers, and warnings or contraindications that might apply.

SQPs have a crucial role in limiting the burgeoning advance of resistance by following the best available guidelines, particularly where sheep gastrointestinal worms are concerned.

Qualification in all species is achieved through training, examinations and a project and a viva when dealing with food producing animals. SQPs can only operate out of premises approved by the Animal Medicine Inspectorate.

• For more information visit [www.amtra.org.uk](http://www.amtra.org.uk)

## CATTLE & SHEEP POM-VPS MEDICINES

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Liver fluke (cattle & sheep)	Sheep scab
Clostridial diseases (cattle & sheep) vaccine	Erysipelas arthritis (lambs) vaccine
Coccidiosis (cattle & sheep)	Lice and tick infestation (cattle & sheep)
Foot rot (sheep) vaccine	Louping Ill (sheep) vaccine
	Lungworm (cattle & sheep)

# PRODUCERS CASH IN FROM IMPROVING COW COMFORT

The pain associated with disease can affect your bottom line, points out **Laura Randall**, veterinary adviser at Boehringer-Ingelheim Vetmedica

## PAIN RELIEF

Cow comfort and welfare in the dairy industry have not traditionally been at the forefront of dairy farmers' minds when it comes to dealing with disease issues. Now, however, farmers are increasingly recognising and prioritising the benefits of managing the comfort and welfare of animals during times of disease.

The costs of sub-optimal health associated with poor welfare are not directly attributable to any specific disease or condition, and are instead hidden and accepted in reduced production.

Research into bio-economic relationships has provided a better understanding of how biological indicators of welfare, such as bulk milk somatic cell count (BMSCC) and lameness can influence farm economics. An increase in costs associated with poor welfare has been shown to result in a 56% reduction in economic outcome, demonstrating a strong and reliable association between profitability and high standards of animal welfare.

Welfare indicators with strong effects on contribution margin (economic outcome) include BMSCC, veterinary treatments, claw and leg treatment, young stock mortality, culling rate and late insemination (first >70days).

### TAKE ACTION

Identify the health issues that could be contributing to reduced cow comfort and welfare. Two of the most common conditions affecting dairy cattle are mastitis and lameness. Somatic cell counts related to the incidence of mastitis are increasing year-on-year with average rates of 195,000 cells/ml in 2007 and 197,000 cells/ml in 2008. The direct and indirect costs



due to mastitis alone have been quoted at around £200 per cow, and the disease is responsible for 10% of cull cows.

It is a similar picture in lameness or foot disease, where economically, the results cost more than the treatment. Reduced milk yields, lower reproductive performance, increased involuntary cull rates, discarded milk and the additional labour costs to manage the cows in question account for the largest monetary losses.

Numerous direct and indirect costs associated with a varying severity of mastitis cases are

evident, but the degree of pain involved in everyday cases and its economic impact are less readily recognised.

Even a mild case of mastitis can be painful, with common pain indicators such as increased heart rate and hock-to-hock distance pointing it out.

More obvious pain indicators are visible when it comes to lameness, but evolution states that cattle inherently try to mask pain. Yet 98.4% of veterinarians believe that cattle would benefit from pain relief as part of a regular disease treatment protocol.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as Metacam for cattle are increasingly being used in cases of clinical disease for their anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties, but more animals could benefit from their wider use.

### KNOCK-ON EFFECTS

Consider the level of pain felt with any condition associated with ill-health and the knock-on effects to production and welfare. Recent studies demonstrate that the positive effects of using NSAIDs alongside antibiotic therapy in conditions such as mastitis can benefit farm economics.

For example, Metacam used alongside Mamyzin in mild farmer-diagnosed mastitis cases resulted in cull rates being reduced by 11.8% and average somatic cell count reductions of 161,000 cells/ml.

When a cow gets mastitis, treat it appropriately with the appropriate antibiotic, but consider the effect of the associated pain and what it might be doing to your bottom line. Remember, it's not just about treating the disease.

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## MILD DRY AUTUMN SEES BATTLE BEGIN

Steve Cook considers grass weed control

### AGRONOMIST'S VIEW

What a difference a year makes. Autumn 2008 saw wet, cold seed beds and late sowing following a late harvest, whereas 2009 has seen early sowing into warm, good, but often dry seed beds.

There is a far greater potential for high grass weed populations this autumn. In 2008, residual herbicides were applied in cool moist conditions to later sowings that had lower grass weed populations, resulting in high levels of control. This year, residual herbicides have been applied to warm dry seed beds much earlier, from which we would expect a lower percentage control of a higher population, with faster break down of the residual herbicides.

The drier seedbeds are often cloddy too. The result could be a greater population of faster growing grass weeds.

At least, application of pre-emergence herbicides has been possible due to good spraying conditions and these have been robust mixtures, in my case mainly Crystal (Flufenacet and Pendi-methalin) tank mixed with Hurricane (Diflufenican).

This season would have been an ideal situation to top-up the residual herbicide at the 1-2 leaf stage with IPU, but with it no longer permitted the consideration is whether to top-up the residual activity of already applied actives at 1-2 leaf, possibly with Chlor-toluron if the variety allows, or wait and see what emerges.

### CLODDY SEED BEDS

The cloddy nature of many seed-beds will result in more grass weeds emerging from depth, beyond where the residuals will be active, particularly following the dry start with little moisture to move herbicides through the soil profile. The addition of more residual herbicides will be unlikely to help if weeds are emerging from under clods. Therefore, we are likely to be faced with large grass weeds and some emerging from depth, so this season, particularly in winter wheat, is likely

to favour an autumn application of Atlantis plus Biopower for black-grass or Broadway Star if sterile brome is the problem.

The past two years have favoured Atlantis in the spring as only a few small black-grass plants were present in the autumn. This season, soil temperatures could remain high for longer resulting in better Atlantis activity.

If Atlantis is autumn applied, the addition of further residual herbicides could be required. Cloddy seedbeds will require some thought as winter weather is likely to break these clods and could result in a spring flush. The spring flush is then difficult to control if you have used up the most effective elements of your armoury already.

● It will be a question of weighing up these considerations:

- How much more black-grass could come?
- How large will the black-grass get over winter?
- How soon are you likely to be able to spray in good growing conditions in the spring?
- How competitive will the black-grass be over winter and will this reduce the crop tillering?

Winter barley crops are more likely to favour further residuals as the contact options are limited to Axial or Strimmer; or a tank mix of residual and contact if crops have hardened off. These could both suffer poor control from fop/dim target site resistance.

Good establishment of crops, in the absence of slug problems, will help produce competitive crops that will help herbicides keep black-grass under control, even if higher water rates are required for contact herbicides.

Appropriate nozzle choice will also be an important factor to ensure the best results are achieved with the limited armoury we are now working with.

● Steve Cook is an independent agronomist serving growers across Hampshire and the south of England. He can be contacted at [steve@cropadvisors.com](mailto:steve@cropadvisors.com)



## US soya crop puts pressure on prices

The US is producing a huge soya crop and it's still not certain the world economy will recover and produce the demand to take it all up, says one of the country's top oilseeds traders.

"If you really believe what I say, you go short the palm and long the soybeans and you make money," Ernesto Zamudio, trading manager of AAK, told a meeting held by United Oilseeds in London. Asked what his position was he replied: "Short."

He highlighted some of the factors that will affect the world's market in coming months, pointing out the dominant role of palm and soy oil that account for half the world's oils and fats trade.

On the bullish side, he said, increased demand and an economic recovery could be set to push prices higher. The US soybean crop was going to be huge, but it was already delayed. That could mean a tight market before the Brazilian crop comes on stream next year. "There are loads of beans coming in the spring, but before that it's tight from September to February," Mr Zamudio stated.

Hedge funds could come back into the market, but the new attitude of regulators could limit the effect they have on prices. "If inflation is going to be there someone is going to take advantage, which is speculative hedge funds," he said. "The US Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) is put-

ting its foot down and saying it's had enough of the hedge funds. The liquidity is lower."

Stocks of palm oil are rising in Malaysia, which is still approaching its production peak. Large areas of soya are to be planted in South America because of poor planting conditions for cereals and high forward prices for soya, and despite the delay, the record soybean crop in the US shows no sign of deterioration.

### THE BIG QUESTION

Looming over any view of the market was what Mr Zamudio called the Big Question: "What if the economic recovery is not actually happening? Equities seem to be losing momentum," he said. In his view, there are few concrete signs of a near to medium-term pick-up in the global economy.

Despite the problems of the wider economy, United Oilseeds reported a good year. "We've done very well under very difficult circumstances," said managing director Chris Baldwin. "We've seen prices pick up a bit which is encouraging, but they're going to need to pick up a lot more if farmers are going to keep buying inputs."

The group, which has 3,150 farmer members, made £1.027m in the year to 30th June, compared with £1.267m the year before. Turnover rose sharply, to £54.625m from £40.601m, thanks to higher seed sales.

**BusinessCrops**

# GLOBAL GRAIN SHORTAGE OVER-HYPED, SAY EXPERTS

Eastern Europe's capacity to balance world supply of grain highlights the need for UK producers to grow for a pre-determined market, reports **Chris Lyddon**

**HGCA CONFERENCE**

Fears of a global shortfall in grain that sparked suggestions that the world will struggle to feed itself have been over-hyped – the world has plenty of production capacity, it just needs to better utilise it. The Black Sea region has enough land to supply the world's extra grain needs for years to come, the HGCA's recent Outlook Conference was told.

Delegates also heard how, with demand still rising, the world is going to need it and that farmers face another rise in fertiliser costs next year.

"For the foreseeable future there's enough area for grain," Simon Bentley, head of grains at LMC International, an international group of consultants specialising in agriculture, told the conference. "The world actually has a lot of area to give."

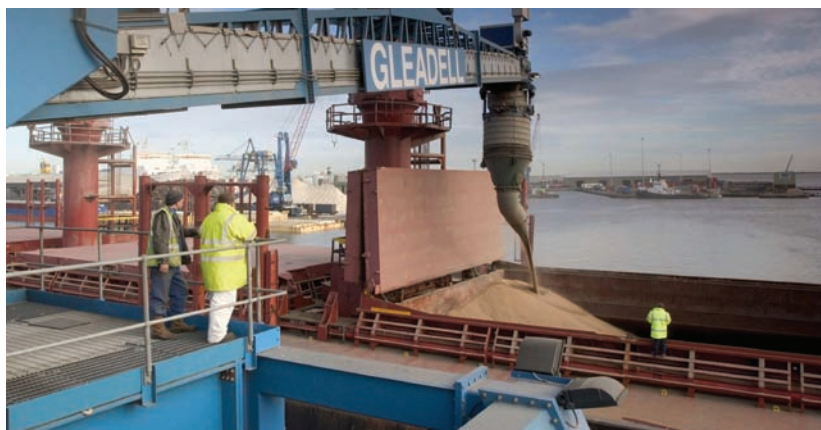
Russia and Ukraine, he said, had shown how they could expand production in response to price signals from the world market. They have already put more land into grain, but growth in efficiency would play a major role as more area is taken over by larger, more efficient farms. Yields could be comparable with the rest of the world.

"It's provided most of the swing capacity in the world's grain market," Mr Bentley said. He stressed how the region had made a big difference after 2008's sharp rise in food prices, which prompted talk of shortages around the world. "If we hadn't had a financial crisis and the Black Sea hadn't responded, you'd have seen prices you wouldn't believe," he commented.

There are, however, still big problems with the logistics, which means the cost of getting grain from the farm to fob came to \$65 a tonne.

"They're actually discussing increasing the amount of rolling stock," Mr

**"If we hadn't had a financial crisis and the Black Sea hadn't responded, you'd have seen prices you wouldn't believe"**



Bentley said. "They're taking control."

HGCA senior analyst Jack Watts reminded the conference that demand for grain was still at record levels, but even so, big crops have taken some of the fear out of the market. "The forecast of another surplus in 2009-10 really is changing the sentiment in the wheat market," he said. "We're still really seeing the fall-out from that 45m-tonne surplus in 2008-09."

UK wheat, he said, would continue to follow French price levels, although better UK wheat quality had reduced the discount to French.

**COMPETITION ON EXPORTS**

Mr Watts predicted huge competition on export markets in 2009-10, while volatile foreign exchange rates would add uncertainty. He also pointed out that developing bioethanol production in the UK and elsewhere would change the dynamics of the feed grain market. "We're losing starch capacity in East Anglia so there's a net effect between ethanol and starch capacity," he said. "There certainly will be a need for the UK to export wheat in 2009-10."

With the new ethanol plants being

built in the North, he expected to see a change in the internal dynamics of the UK market as well. "I expect to see a reduction in the flow of M62 wheat," he said. Instead of travelling across the country to the West, the wheat would be heading North.

Mr Watts advised farmers to give priority to managing risk, noting that markets do not respect costs of production. He was concerned that farmers were too often labelled as price takers. "It plants the seed in the farmer's mind that they can't do anything about the price they get," he said. "Prices need to be managed as aggressively as yields."

Marina Simonova, of British Sulphur Consultants, was definite about where she saw nitrogen prices going next. "In 2010 nitrogen fertiliser prices will move upwards," she stated. "This will be supported by improved demand."

She explained how closely the cost of producing fertilisers is linked to the cost of energy. "Natural gas costs account for up to 70% of the cost of ammonia," she said. Farmers have to put more on after holding back, while the industry has to produce more because it ran stocks down following the financial crisis.

## Now Guillotine gives oat weeds the chop

The residual and contact-acting herbicide, flumioxazin, available as Guillotine, has a new off-label approval for use in winter oats, just in time for the season.

Applied at 100ml/ha in a minimum water volume of 200litres/ha, Guillotine can be sprayed pre-crop emergence in all varieties of winter oats for the control of black-grass and rye-grass and a wide range of broad-leaved weeds. It adds to the very limited range of

herbicides that can be used in winter oats, a crop that is growing in popularity.

Growers need to obtain a copy of the notice of approval to use Guillotine in winter oats via the Chemicals Regulation Directorate (CRD) website ([www.pesticides.gov.uk](http://www.pesticides.gov.uk)), ADAS offices or the NFU. The SOLA reference number is 2506 of 2009.

Guillotine (flumioxazin) is formulated as a white, non-staining, easy-to-use suspension

concentrate containing 300 gms ai/litre and is packed in a 500ml pack. It can be used for the control of a wide range of broad-leaved weeds, including charlock, chickweed, cleavers, common poppy, field pansy, fumitory, groundsel, speedwell, mayweed, red deadnettle and Shepherd's purse, as well as having good activity against annual meadow grass and offering some activity against black-grass and rye-grass. It should not be used with adjuvants.



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# APHID CONTROL TOP PRIORITY FOR BEET

Experts advise long-lasting seed treatments

## SUGAR BEET

Broom's Barn is advising sugar beet growers that persistence of aphid control should be the main consideration in seed treatment choice for 2010. The full contract packs recently sent out by British Sugar are due for return by Friday 6th November and include three options for insecticidal seed treatment: Nuprid (imidacloprid) or the second-generation neonicotinoids; Poncho Beta (clothianidin + beta-cyfluthrin) or Cruiser Force (thiamethoxam + tefluthrin).

Dr Mark Stevens, Broom's Barn's head of crop protection, says evidence indicates that imidacloprid provides at least 10 weeks of protection, but the second-generation neonicotinoids can persist for up to 14 weeks.

"Persistence is crucial in a season like the one we've just had," he comments.

"A lot of crops were drilled in mid to late March and although the virus yellows forecast was low, conditions in June favoured massive multiplication of aphids, so where imidacloprid had been used, crops were exposed. Poncho Beta and Cruiser Force largely saw crops safely past mature plant resistance."

In the past growers could have fallen back on foliar sprays when imidacloprid ran out of steam, but development of high levels of MACE resistance and knock down resistance (kdr) has rendered the two remaining products ineffective.

## PERSISTANCE NEEDED

Dr Stevens recommends: "Persistence should be a major consideration in insecticidal seed treatment choice for next year."

Seed priming options for 2010 are Advantage or XBeet. Varieties Bullfinch, Goya and Saracen are still available with either, but all 14 other varieties come with the new generation primer XBeet as standard.

Bayer's Dr Bill Lankford says growers choosing these varieties will need to partner XBeet with a complimentary new generation insecticidal seed treatment. "There have been reports this year of imidacloprid delaying emergence by a day or two compared with Poncho Beta – that could neutralise much of XBeet's enhanced priming effect."

## Beet nematodes marching north?

British Sugar reports an increased number of samples testing positive for beet cyst nematodes on black fen and silts around Peterborough.

The pest, which attacks plant roots restricting yields, had largely been concentrated in similar soils south and east of this region.

Experts suggest this could be due to warmer temperatures and moister summer soils combined with an increase in the number of host crops that favour the nematode.

The discovery of the pest in the region around Peterborough, Yaxley, south to Sawtry and around Holbeach comes from samples tested by Broom's Barn, initially thought to be suffering from rhizomania. "Low levels of beet cyst nematode damage produce symptoms similar to rhizomania – crops yellow and leaves wilt," explains Wisington fieldsman, Simon Allen. "Only on closer examination of the roots can the cysts – cuticles of dead females – clearly be seen."

Mr Allen suggests the pest might have been present for some time as high yields, particularly on the silts, could have masked the issue.

His advice is to examine beet roots from patches of fields where growth is poor or leaves are paler than expected as cysts should be visible to the naked eye. If they are evident, it may pay to have soils tested and prepare a plan of action to minimise build up and yield loss.

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# VARIETY CHOICE KEY WHEN LATE DRILLING

Be prepared to change your seed choice, says consultant

## SEED SELECTION

Many growers are literally dusting down their drills and getting back onto land that has enough moisture to produce a seedbed and provide good germination. But, with drilling delayed by around two to three weeks in the driest parts of the UK, it will be important to increase seed rates and if you have not already got seed in the barn, switch to higher performing late-drilling options.

According to variety consultant Mike Jeffes, later drilling generally leads to shorter crops and reduced lodging risks, as well as lower disease concerns. Also, milling wheat growers can benefit from reduced protein dilution and there might be opportunities to use glyphosate to clear black-grass.

Trials show that from mid-October onwards yields can drop by over 1t/ha compared with optimum mid-September timings, so it is important to pick the right variety for the later drilled slot.

On analysis from Recommended List late drilled trials, Mr Jeffes confirms Conqueror is likely to give the highest yield, followed by

Oakley. "In truth, though, there would be little to choose in yield terms between these front-runners and Ketchum, Viscount and JB-Diego," he points out.

Mr Jeffes says Viscount, KWS Sterling and Humber seem well adapted to both early and late sowing, although Oakley will still probably give a little more yield.

Varieties where the yield drop between early and late autumn drilling is on the high side include Claire and Grafton, plus perhaps Duxford, Zebedee and KWS Quartz, so here it could pay to switch orders if you can.

Whatever variety is selected, with later drilling comes a need to increase seed rate, because plants have less time to tiller in the autumn before growth closes down, and depending on variety, there may be no extra time in the spring for additional tillering as stem extension is mainly driven by day length.

Mr Jeffes' advice is to generally increase rates by 25-30 seeds per square metre for each week's delay from those you would normally use at the end of September.

## Raise Scout seed rate if soil is dry, says breeder

Cereal growers waiting for seedbed moisture before drilling Group 3 winter wheat Scout should consider increasing seed rates as October begins, advises breeder Senova.

Delays caused by dry seedbeds will not be a problem with the variety, which has the agronomic characteristics to cope with lodging and disease challenges associated with higher seed rates, says Senova's commercial director Jeremy Taylor.

"Scout's well suited to the traditional winter wheat drilling slot from mid-September until November, but because it has slow primordial development, some growers were hoping to drill it in the first week of September, as they used to do with its predecessor Claire," he says.

Where lack of seedbed moisture has thwarted these plans, growers should increase seed rates from early September levels of around 140 seeds/m<sup>2</sup> by 30-40 seeds/m<sup>2</sup> for each subsequent week, Mr Taylor suggests. "That means using a seed rate of around 300 seeds/m<sup>2</sup> once you get into October."

An eyespot resistance score of 9, together with very stiff straw and an inherently high specific weight will all help to counter potential problems, he notes.

"The other reason for lifting seed rates with Scout is because the variety is not a profuse tillerer," he adds. "It helps to get a bit more yield from it, as well as to offset the effects of any dry spells during next year's growing season."



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**BusinessCrops**

# NOW THE TIME IS RIPE TO TACKLE PESTS IN RAPE

Autumn is the key time for oilseed rape with pest levels often determining a crop's final performance. *Farm Business* reviews pest levels this autumn and considers what growers can do to ensure successful crops next year

**OILSEED RAPE UPDATE**

The range of pests affecting rape establishment is growing and some post-emergence control options are not effective. Now is a good time to review whether pests have affected establishment and, although it is a long way off, start planning seed treatments for next season. It is especially opportune as last year's wet autumn and this year's dry September, while causing headaches, allow an assessment of pests and treatments over contrasting conditions.

**Cabbage stem flea beetle**

This has always been an annoying and sometimes devastating pest, causing shot-holes in the developing cotyledons and leaves. The neonicotinoid seed treatments give good control and clothianidin (as in Modesto) has a label recommendation.

Usually, cabbage stem flea beetles are a greater problem in dry rather than wet conditions but, overall, it appears they were worse in the wet season of 2008 than the drier 2009. In this year's dry conditions there were some instances of flea beetle feeding, but the new seed treatments have done a reasonable job.

If adult beetles are still present in late October, growers should monitor their crops and be prepared to spray with a pyrethroid using a threshold of two to three larvae per plant.

**Rape winter stem weevils**

These can cause serious damage but at the moment they are mostly a localised problem in parts of East Anglia and the



Peach potato aphids

**"Now is a good time to review whether pests have affected oilseed rape establishment"**

Scottish borders. The larvae tunnel into the stems and leaf stalks during the late autumn, often killing the terminal bud.

Rape winter stem weevils have proved difficult to control, even with repeated pyrethroid sprays, but trials are underway to determine the effect of the neonicotinoid seed treatments on this potentially serious pest.

These pests should not be confused with the similar cabbage stem weevil, which attacks plants in the spring.

**Cabbage root fly**

This usually lays its eggs in the ground near the plant during August and September. The larvae, which penetrate via the roots, can cause serious damage.

Using a neonicotinoid seed treatment such as Modesto, which has a label recommendation for this pest, can reduce the level of damage caused.

**Turnip sawfly**

This pest is encouraged by mild autumns and the black caterpillars, which can grow up to 18mm long, can cause rapid defoliation of the crop. Initially it was a pest in southern counties, but it has been gradually spreading further North and is now becoming more common in East Anglia. Modesto also has a label claim against this pest.

**Leaf miner larvae**

These are occasionally seen in rape, but this season they appear to be abundant

in some areas. Damage is variable, even within the same field.

As well as the common leaf miner, cabbage leaf miner, has also been identified in fields this autumn. This tends to cause pitting in addition to some mining. This season the majority of damage has been limited to mining and some blistering with, so far, few effects on crop vigour.

Assessments of the effectiveness of seed treatments are taking place this autumn. Trials will be monitored for any interactions with foliar disease.

**Aphids**

Yield reductions of up to 30% can be caused when peach potato aphids infect rape with Turnip Yellow Virus (TuYV). Symptoms of this virus are often not obvious until March or even the summer, but a lot of the infection occurs in the autumn and Broom's Barn has reported a relatively high proportion (around 30% or more) of peach potato aphids carrying TuYV this autumn.

"Neonicotinoid seed treatments are an important part of the control and management of these pests," advises Adrian Cottey, Bayer CropScience's campaign manager for combinable crop seed protection. "When considering your options for future rape crops, look at the pest pressures in your areas and the label recommendations of the different products. One of the biggest risks to yield is from TuYV and Modesto is the only product with this on its label."

**Slugs**

These are not controlled by seed treatments in rape. While they were not an issue in September, they are still present and wet conditions will bring them to the surface.

"Once soils are wet, look for the start of slug grazing or use traps baited with layers' mash or equivalent to determine the risk and, if necessary, treat with an effective pellet," advises Dr Richard Meredith, Bayer development manager for molluscicides. "Methiocarb (as in Draza Forte) is the choice, especially when conditions are wet, as its durability is first class. It will also reduce the reliance on metaldehyde where the stewardship guidelines restrict use when heavy rain is expected," he adds.



Adult cabbage root fly



# PEST CONTROL RESEARCH BEGINS TO BEAR FRUIT

Joanna Wood considers recent advances in understanding top fruit pests and diseases

## ORCHARD PEST CONTROL

Improving pest and disease strategies is a major concern for the Horticultural Development Company's (HDC) sector panels and one that receives significant resource through the producer levy. Two recent examples for top fruit include an old problem – battling apple canker – plus a new concern for cherry growers – controlling light brown apple moth.

Growers spend a lot of time and money each season trying to control canker (*nectria*) but often find they make little impact. Canker is difficult to control because the fungus produces spores all year round. The driving factor is rain – wet autumns mean a significant increase in canker risk.

East Malling Research pathologist Angela Berrie has evaluated canker control measures in HDC project TF 167. An intensive fungicide programme gives significant reduction in the incidence of canker, but it is costly and results in detectable residues at harvest.

A more targeted fungicide programme can deliver control and avoid residues. An updated

version of DEFRA's *Best practice guide for UK apple production* will be available soon on the HDC website and will contain all the detailed fungicide recommendations.

Winter assessment for canker risk by inspecting orchards, particularly Bramleys, combined with storage rot data, will identify low or high risk sites. Problem orchards will need routine treatments every year, otherwise an integrated approach is possible. Pruning out cankered wood and canker painting wounds plus removing and burning prunings is still good advice.

### CHERRIES AT RISK

Following a severe attack of light brown apple moth (LBAM) in a Kent cherry orchard in 2005, the HDC commissioned a survey using sex pheromone traps (project TF 169) to determine how widespread the species was in commercial orchards. The LBAM was found to be more abundant on cherry trees than other crops, but no one factor alone seemed to influence the abundance of the pest. The most likely

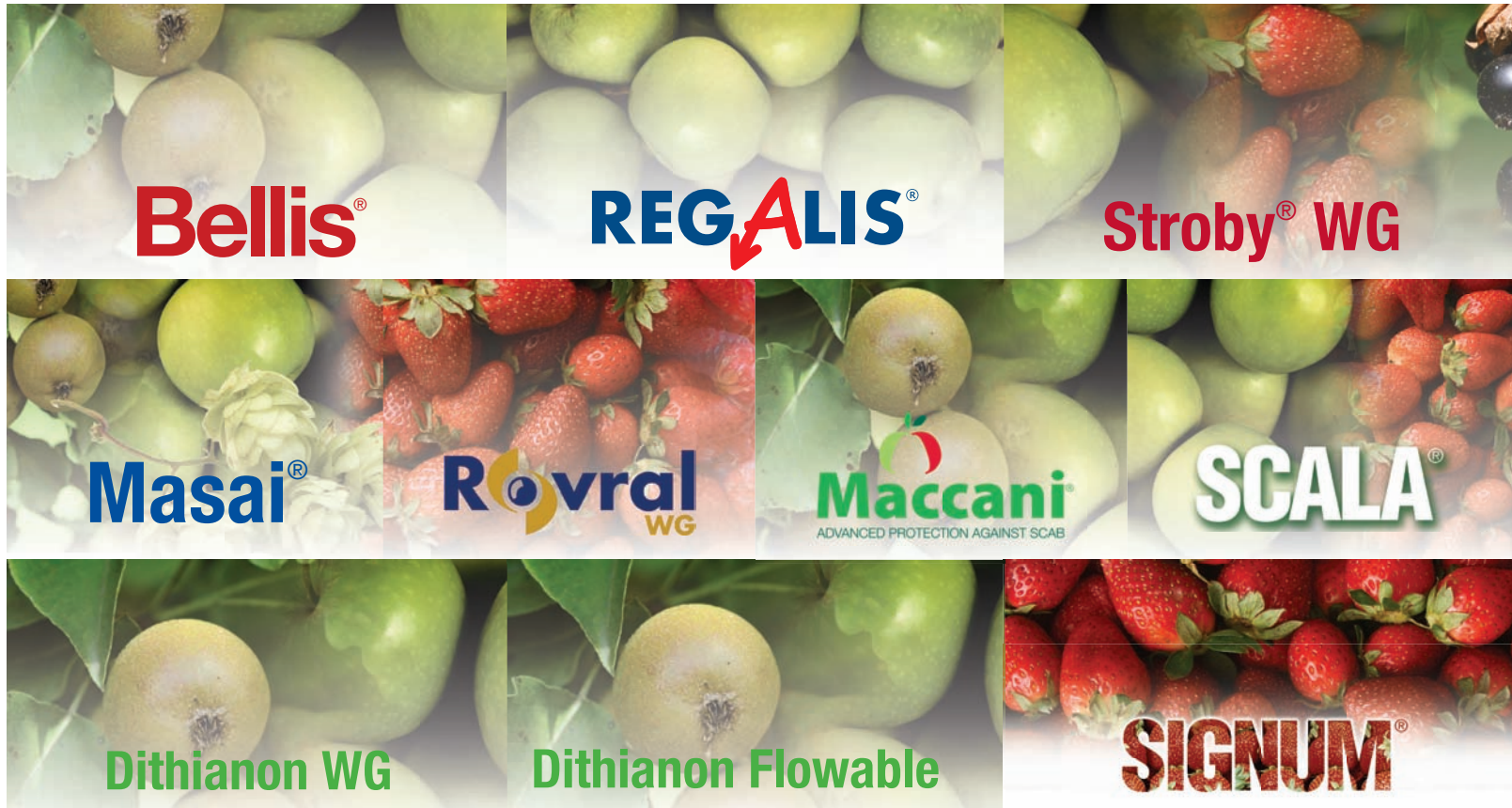
explanation is that cherries receive the fewest insecticide sprays.

Climate change means that LBAM could become more of a pest in cherry crops which receive no specific caterpillar protection.

Growers are advised to monitor moth populations in all orchards, particularly cherry orchards which are at higher risk, using sex pheromone traps.

Meanwhile, some good news emerged this year in May when Exosect announced that it had received an emergency approval to market Exosex LBAMTab for the control of LBAM in cherries and plums. Using its patented Entostat powder technology, the Light Brown Apple Moth dispenser attracts male moths to the tablet, which is made from compressed electrostatic powder impregnated with synthetic female sex pheromone, thus spreading sexual confusion throughout the male moth population.

Growers must hope that the company will be able to gain approval again for next year.



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# TRIAZOLE LINK TO DIFFUSE BROWNING DISORDER

Research triggers need for Cox's Orange Pippin growers to reconsider their fungicide strategies

**APPLE DISEASE**

Apple growers struggling to tackle diffuse browning disorder (DBD) in Cox's Orange Pippin and its derivatives should revise their use of certain triazole products following Horticulture Development Council-funded research which identified the fungicides as a contributory factor in its development.

The HDC work, which concluded earlier this year, identified factors within the fungicide regime of growers using certain triazoles. While the research is far from conclusive, it has identified a clear correlation between the use of certain triazoles and the onset of DBD in Cox's Orange Pippin.

Based on data from six out of nine orchards investigated by East Malling Research (EMR), a greater level of DBD was detected in stored Cox's from spray regimes that included the growth regulator pacloburtrazol (cultural) or fungicides myclobutanil (Systhane) and penconazole (Topas). In contrast, DBD was virtually absent in fruit from orchards where a non-

triazole programme was used, whereas the inclusion of triazole chemicals resulted in DBD development in fruit from 67% and 71% of orchards in 2006 and 2007, respectively.

**ENZYME INHIBITION**

It is believed that the triazoles can inhibit the activity of an enzyme called catalase that performs a vital role in fruit ripening and senescence by removing excess hydrogen peroxide, which can cause toxic effects, from the tissues.

EMR identified that where samples were subjected to a delayed cooling (seven days at 20°C) or post-harvest treatment with diphenylamine (DPA) or 1-methylcyclopropene (1-MCP) DBD development was greater.

Fungicide application was more conducive to DBD development than application of pacloburtrazol, but in combination, induced the highest incidence of DBD.

Triazole application generally increased the respiration rate of fruit stored in a controlled



atmosphere, but ethylene production rates were not affected. The development of DBD was not affected by post-harvest application of DPA, 1-MCP or a delayed cooling of the fruit. Triazoles, however, play a vital role in controlling scab and mildew and EMR is not suggesting that growers cease using them for this reason, but instead suggests that late sprays of penconazole should not be used on fruit intended for long-term storage.



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# CONTRACT FARMER IS GUIDED BY SAFE HANDS

Restructuring a business can be difficult, but handled carefully it can build staff motivation and lead to an improved financial return, as Safety Revolution's **Oliver Dale** explains

## DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

If you spend £40,000 per annum on a key member of staff you hope to retain them – if you succeed in doing that over 10 years you might well spend, on aggregate, £500,000 on them – would you expect to invest that sort of money on equipment without budgeting a maintenance spend to keep it operating safely and at peak performance?

Managing staff or components of that process such as recruitment, drafting contracts of employment or undertaking a disciplinary or appraisal process are often looked at in isolation.

In fact, they should all be seen as part of the process of ensuring that your team is in the right shape and progressing at the right pace to meet your business's goals. If you are growing in terms of land or new enterprises, then the team needs to grow and develop at the same pace to ensure that it is able to deliver quality and consistency as you concentrate on making a financial return.

Getting the most out of the team, ensuring that documentation, such as contracts of employment, are in order and helping staff and employers to communicate effectively are part of a process of investing in your people – your human capital.

Like a Formula One car, maintaining peak performance of your team involves regular tweaking. It involves a maintenance spend – in just the same way as you do for the valuable equipment that they operate.

## BUSINESS STRUCTURE

When Robert Barnes, who farms 2,000 hectares at Marston Moretaine, in Bedfordshire, decided to restructure his contract farming arrangements, he realised that this meant changing his business's structure.

His first consideration was how he could reshape his team and lay the groundwork for the future. At the same time he wanted to step back from the business to have more time with his family while giving the guys on the ground the opportunity to grow and develop in their roles.

Mr Barnes already used Safety Revolution to deal with his employment contracts and employment procedures and asked us to organise and lead the team development process. The first stage was



**“An appraisal system was introduced that gave staff the chance to air their views in an informal but organised manner”**

to establish what the business goals were and how we needed to manage the team to meet those goals. It was important to consider the practical aspects: how did we maintain a flexible team; how did we create opportunities for staff to develop professionally and at the same time ensure that the business also improved its financial performance.

It was a sizeable task and one that fortunately Mr Barnes realised would not be performed overnight. In addition to acting as a facilitator we were able to act as a sounding board to help ensure each stage was completed with the minimum of stress.

This included managing a redundancy process, refreshing employment contracts and setting performance-based goals for the core team.

An appraisal system was introduced that gave staff the chance to air their views in an informal but organised manner.

Chaired by Safety Revolution for employee and employer benefit, the appraisal meetings presented an opportunity for staff to speak freely while using me as someone the guys could talk to for guidance and at times vent their frustration. It allowed us to summarise key objectives, build those with the team and get everyone on board.

The role of mediator and facilitator doesn't end once the process is completed. I spoke to Mr Barnes recently to evaluate progress and was pleased with how the team is adapting.

As he said: “We are, as a team, very much a work in progress, but we are

finding that the guys are excited by the progress we are making and it [the engagement process] has definitely given us a massive payback in terms of motivation and commitment from the team.”

The Barnes's situation is typical of British agriculture. As the owner he is fully engaged in running the business and wrestling with the commercial vagaries of the market.

Working with his men on a daily basis makes it difficult to be able to step back and assess performance in an objective manner without having emotion distorting his view. It is this impartial and constructive appraisal that we supply. We are able to give the owner or manager feedback on what is going on elsewhere in the industry, what are the trends in salaries and benefits and what the business needs to do in terms of remaining competitive as an employer that wants to attract and retain the best staff.

## INDEPENDENT PERSPECTIVE

Having got the core of his team in place, we are now assisting Mr Barnes in the recruitment of a new sprayer operator.

Recruiting the right person to compliment the team is as much about finding the right character and cultural fit as it is about identifying the right skills, and this is where our independent perspective really helps.

We then assist in short-listing candidates for interview as well as helping the client to compare candidates, identify those likely to best fit the system and, most importantly, follow the new recruit as they settle into the role to help both parties ensure success.

It is worth noting that if you are recruiting or using temporary staff sourced from a labour provider or gangmaster, it is vital that you check that they are licensed by the Gangmaster Licensing Authority (GLA). There is a duty placed upon the employer or user of staff to ensure that they are using a licensed labour provider.

● *Oliver Dale is managing director of Safety Revolution Ltd. He runs team building and development projects for farm and estate clients. Contact him by email at [oliver@safetyrevolutionltd.com](mailto:oliver@safetyrevolutionltd.com) or by phoning 07766 433433.*

## BusinessIndicators

Pig prices across Europe plummeted this week while beef and lamb prices showed modest gains, though all sectors are down on the same time last year. Dairy prices steadied. Cereal prices remain depressed while uncertainty over US soya crops boosted oilseed prices.

### Potato prices

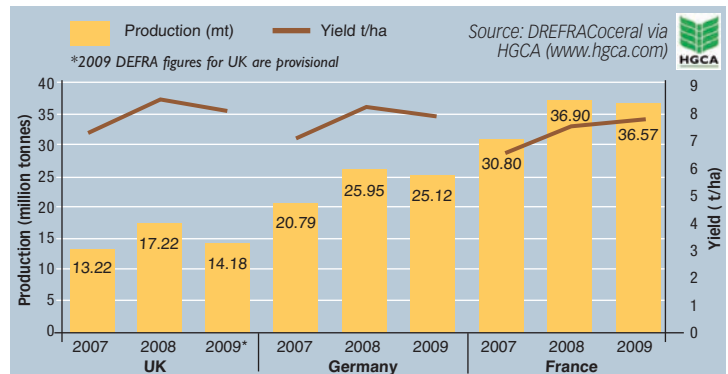
Source: BPC

	2nd Oct	9th Oct	16th Oct
GB weekly average 2009 crop	97.43	101.06	103.71
Free-buy 2009 crop	74.05	77.13	79.69
GB av price change on prev week	9.6%	+3.7%	+2.6%
GB free-buy price weekly change	-13.2%	+4.2%	+3.3%
Futures London (Apr 2010)	100.89	106.13	100.29
Futures London in 2008 (Apr '09)	133.82	128.69	124.44
Holland	54-72	54-64	50-68
France	45-72	45-72	45-60

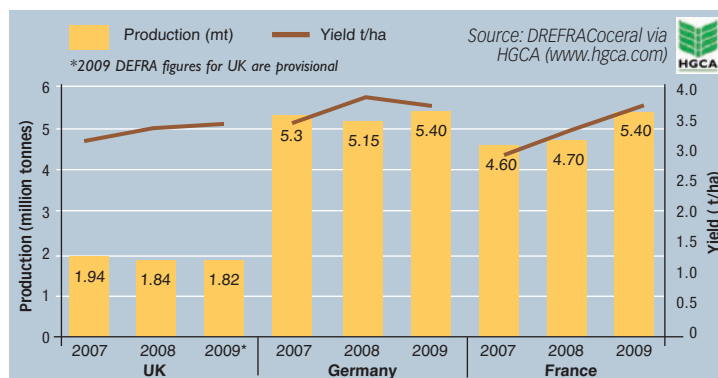
**POTATOES** Packers continue to move mainly contracted material in most regions. This is leaving limited demand for free market stocks, but there is some interest, mainly centred on bruise-free and quality skin finish stocks. Supplies though are still sufficient for buyers to be selective with most movement coming from repeats of known quality. Loading pressure is still reported for material not up to required standards. Trade for graded bakers is slow, with wholecrop loads providing adequate large size tubers for requirements. A few Estima graded 65mm up are £125/t and odd committed M Piper £185/t. Few graded 65mm+ Cuiltra £80-£85/t and Saxon £85-£90/t. Harvest to 16th October was estimated at 108,000ha (82.9%), compared with 91,500ha (71.3%) in 2008. In the East, despite some rain recently, soils remain hard and many growers are irrigating before lifting to minimise bruising. In the West progress has been good in ideal conditions following rain. Yields are above average in some regions.

**WHEAT** DEFRA has released provisional production estimates for the 2009 UK harvest. Wheat production is put at 14.2m t, 18% below the 17.2m t produced in 2008. The lower production is a result of planted area falling 14% on 2008 to 1.8m ha, and yields falling to 7.9t/ha (8.3t/ha 2008). The UK production is part of a large EU crop. The latest Strategic Grains estimate puts EU27 wheat production at 129m t (140m t 2008), with France producing 3.65m t (36.9m t 2008) and Germany 25.1m t (26m t 2008). The USDA has estimated global wheat production at 668m t for the 2009-10 season (682m t 2008-09). With global demand at 648m t, ending stocks are set to remain comfortable at 186m t with a 28.7% stocks-to-use ratio.

Latest HM Revenue & Customs data puts UK wheat exports at 266,000t for July-August 2009, well above the 186,000t exported during the same period last year. Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands remain the largest importers, taking 114,000t, 40,000t and 49,000t, respectively.



Wheat production for UK, Germany and France



Oilseed rape production for UK, Germany and France

**OILSEED RAPE** DEFRA estimates 2009's UK OSR harvest at 1.9m t, 2% lower than that of 2008 (2m t). The fall in production was mainly due to planted area falling 4% to 540,000ha, although the fall in area was partly offset by higher yield of 3.4t/ha, up 3% on 2008 (3.3t/ha). Total EU oilseed rape production has been estimated at 28.1m t, well above the 26.5m t level of last year, according to Cocal, the body that represents Europe's grain trade.

US soyabeans have been the main driver of global oilseed markets recently; fears of late maturing crops being affected by poor weather has led to prices increasing. At 11th October, 23% of the US soyabean area had been harvested, well behind the five-year average of 57%.

In trading recently, prices reached \$370/t, before falling back due to profit-taking, closing at \$365/t on 14th October.

Crude oil prices closed at over \$75/barrel on 14th October, the highest level for nearly a year. Crude oil is linked to oilseed rape markets in the EU because of rapeseed's use in biofuel production in the EU.

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	€/kg dw	% change on year	<b>Cattle prices (young bulls)</b> €1 = £0.92
United Kingdom	2.89	-15.3	
Portugal	3.39	+6.0	
Irish Republic	2.86	-11.0	
France	3.07	-4.4	
Denmark	3.12	-9.6	
Belgium	2.65	-1.9	
Italy	3.52	+2.0	
Germany	3.03	-9.1	
Netherlands	2.89	-7.5	
Sweden	2.62	-10.9	

Source: AHDB

**BEEF** Steer and heifer averages increased marginally to 279.5p and 277.1p/kg respectively in the week ended 10th October, but the general trend was steady. AHDB Meat Services reports the young bull average fell a penny to 263.9p/kg while in the week ended 14th October LW prime cattle trade eased marginally to an overall average of 149.8p/kg. Steers averaged 149.0p/kg, heifers 154.8p/kg, both down nearly 1p on the week. Cull cow price was back a similar amount to average 87.1p/kg. UK prime cattle slaughterings in September totalled 161,000 head, 4% or over 7,000 head lower compared with September the previous year. On the Continent, AHDB reports that since the start of June cow prices in France have been lower than a year earlier. In the week to 10th October the O3 cow price averaged €2.53/kg dw, down 7% compared with a year earlier. Demand for cow beef has been lower while supplies have been high. In the Netherlands the cow price was down 17% to €2.17/kg.

**LAMB** DW sheep prices rose 7p to 316p/kg in the week to 10th October – 35p better than the same week last year, reports AHDB Meat Services. But the LW trade at GB auction markets in the week to 14th October eased nearly 6p/kg with the SQQ averaging 135.7p/kg. Even that was 21p higher than year earlier levels. UK clean sheep slaughterings during September of 1.2m head were 6% lower than year earlier levels, although throughputs in September 2008 were exceptionally high. Throughputs at abattoirs in England and Wales fell by more than 9% compared with a year ago to a little over one million head. In contrast, lamb throughputs at Scottish abattoirs were 28% higher on the year, albeit at lower levels. In Europe, demand for domestic and imported lamb was reported to have eased on the Rungis wholesale market in Paris. By the week ended 14th October the domestic price had fallen by 8% since the middle of September to average €5.35/kg. The price for imported lamb also eased, falling by 10% over the same period.

	€/kg dw	% change on year	<b>Heavy lamb prices</b> €1 = £0.92
Great Britain	3.42	-4.0	
Spain	6.68	+1.7	
Austria	4.93	+6.5	
Belgium	4.09	-6.0	
Germany	4.14	+1.2	
France	5.52	-2.6	
Irish Republic	3.07	-2.1	
Netherlands	4.30	-0.3	
Northern Ireland	3.00	-2.4	

Source: AHDB

	€/kg dw	% Change on year	<b>Pig prices</b> €1 = £0.92
United Kingdom	1.54	-8.5	
France	1.26	-18.7	
Denmark	1.23	-14.6	
Belgium	1.29	-17.4	
Italy	1.69	-14.6	
Austria	1.34	-20.8	
Irish Republic	1.27	-18.0	
Germany	1.41	-18.9	
Netherlands	1.27	-18.8	
Spain	1.38	-9.3	
Portugal	1.42	-8.4	
Sweden	1.51	-7.8	

Source: AHDB

**PIGS** With average carcase weight and probe measurement up for the sample, the DAPP fell nearly 1p in the week to 10th October to 147.54p/kg. Mirroring developments in the finished pig market, there was a drop of over £1/head in the average weaner price to £50.32. AHDB Meat Services says this was the largest weekly change since October 2008, although prices are still around £5/head higher than a year ago. This, it says, is in contrast to the situation in some other EU member states. After peaking in mid-April, the EU weaner price has fallen more than 20%. In the week ended 10th October the average price was around 6% down on the same week last year. In Germany, the current price for a 28kg weaner is €41 per head and in just two months the price has fallen €10. Increased weaner imports are exerting downward pressure on the market. Some 585,000 pigs were slaughtered in England and Wales during September, 3% more than a year ago.

**MILK** Average farmgate prices paid in the UK, GB and Northern Ireland rose between July and August, but all three are below August 2008 prices. Using the latest DEFRA statistics, DairyCo calculates that the average UK farmgate price increased to 23.26ppl in August, a rise of 1.2% (0.27ppl) from July. Comparison with last year shows the farmgate milk price in the UK fell by 11.5% (3.03ppl) from 26.29ppl in August 2008. Although farmgate prices historically rise between July and August, mainly due to changes in seasonality payments, DairyCo says the percentage increase between July and August 2009 was lower than last year. For the same period in 2008 the average UK farmgate price rose 1.8%; this year the rise was 1.2%. The fall might partly be due to some milk buyers reducing the price paid to farmers for milk in August, says DairyCo. In Great Britain, the milk price for August rose by 0.11ppl (0.5%) to 24.03ppl, but remains 2.69ppl (01.1%) behind the average price in August 2008. In Northern Ireland the average price between July and August increased by 0.64ppl (3.6%) to 18.30ppl.

Dairy	€/100kg	<b>Milk prices Based on EODC, 4.2% fat 3.4% protein</b> €1 = £0.92
Danone (pas de Calais) (Fr)	31.36	
Kerry (Ir)	21.88	
Glanbia (Ir)	21.06	
Arla Foods (Dk)	24.49	
Sodiaal (Fr)	32.88	
Friesland Campina (NL)	25.66	
Nordmilch (Ger)	21.89	
Dairy Crest Davidstow (UK)	27.93	
First Milk (UK)	24.94	
<b>Euro average</b>	<b>26.27</b>	
USA average	19.55	
New Zealand	18.37	

Source: European Dairy Farmers and LTO Nederland, see www.milkprices.nl

**International milk prices (August 2009 delivery)**



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# FINANCIAL REVIEW

by Richard Wright

## 'BONFIRE OF QUANGOS' PROMISE NOT KEPT

The cost of taxpayer funded quangos has hit £170 billion. It is now claimed there are close to 1,000 bodies, from the Welsh Language Board (annual budget £13 million) to the Union Learning Fund (£40m over three years) to the Health and Safety Commission (£232m a year) which are absorbing seven times more than they did 10 years ago.

This is despite the fact that when the Government came to power it promised a "bonfire of the quangos".

Many running these bodies earn comfortably more than the Prime Minister or heads of industry, and most were appointed to the posts on the basis of their political contacts rather than their skills for the job. The number of staff employed by quangos has also rocketed from about one million to 1.5m.

**1.5m**

**THE NUMBER OF STAFF EMPLOYED BY QUANGOS**

## BANK BOSS CAUTIOUS

Michael Geoghegan, the chief executive of HSBC, has said he fears the global economy faces a second downturn.

He has also confirmed that HSBC was likely to delay expansion plans because of the economic outlook.

"Is this a V recovery or a W? I think it's the latter," he said, adding that he was cautious about HSBC growing when there was still a risk it might have to cut back again.

"I'm not as convinced as others that we're through the worst," Mr Geoghegan added.

## LEVY INCENTIVE IDEA

Paul Tucker, the deputy governor of the Bank of England, has suggested that a levy should be imposed on banks, which could be used to pay for the costs of future financial crises.

He claimed this would act as a deterrent against reckless behaviour, as bankers would know that in the event of failure, it would be ultimately the banking system, not taxpayers, picking up the bill. He admitted that ultimately governments were the backstop against

financial disaster, but stressed that this did not necessarily mean taxpayers should be left with the bill.

"If banking sees that in systemic crises it would have to meet the cost I would like to think that would change incentives and behaviour," he said.

## GOLD WORTH ITS WEIGHT

The treasure trove of gold coins found in Staffordshire has attracted headlines, but how would it have stood the test of inflation? Data on gold prices does not go back to the 8th Century, but an analysis back to 1560, when Elizabeth I ordered new coinage, has confirmed that gold is an effective store of value.

Since gold prices were allowed to float freely in 1971, they have enjoyed two major bull rallies – including the current one – and endured a 20-year bear market.

But Paul Marson, of Lombard Odier, a Geneva-based private bank, calculates that since 1971 gold has risen by an average of 8.5% a year, compared with average annual inflation of 4.5%. But

if you had bought the last time prices peaked, in January 1980, gold returned just 1.2% against an inflation rate of 3.3%.

"Gold has proven to be historically a poor hedge against major inflations but has performed particularly well during periods of deflation," he concludes.

## FIFTY NOT SO THRIFTY

Savers over 50 are getting the worst deals on ISAs as the Government increases the amount they can save tax-free.

The limit has been raised for older savers, with the over-50s now able to invest an extra £1,500 a year.

Building societies have launched several deals aimed at older savers but some are offering poorer rates than their mainstream products.

Under the old rules, savers could invest a maximum of £3,600 in a cash ISA, with any interest earned being free of tax. From 6th October, anyone over the age of 50 can invest a further £1,500. The higher limit of £5,100 will apply to all savers from next April.

**8.5%**

**THE AVERAGE FIGURE GOLD HAS RISEN PER YEAR SINCE 1971, COMPARED WITH AVERAGE ANNUAL INFLATION OF 4.5%**

**SOURCE: LOMBARD ODIER**

**2.47m**

**NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE OUT OF WORK**  
**SOURCE: OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS**



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Paul Neate in **Devizes** - 01380 723496  
Andrew Vickery in **Exeter** - 01392 214635  
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Ian Sharpe in **Shepton Mallet** - 01749 343366  
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**72%**  
**THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF FRAUDS REPORTED TO CITY OF LONDON POLICE**  
**SOURCE: COMMISSIONER MIKE BOWRON**

**CALL FOR PHONE TRIAL**

Mobile 'phone users should be offered a 'try before you buy' get-out clause to help them get the coverage they want, Ofcom has said.

More than half of users claim to have experienced difficulties with mobile reception and a third said this was a regular experience. A lack of accurate coverage information made the problem worse, claims Ofcom.

It wants people to be able to try out a company's service before committing to a contract. Reception was deemed more important by consumers than the cost of the 'phone, the quality of customer service or the type of handset on offer.

The most commonly reported problem for consumers was so-called 'not spots' – areas in which the user received no reception at all – a particular problem in many rural areas.

**JUDGEMENT OPENS WAY**

A little tested law could help people fighting for refunds of payment protection insurance (PPI) deemed to have been mis-sold by banks and credit card companies.

Lawyers say a judgement at Newcastle County Court, where a case was won against credit card giant MBNA, has opened the way for new claims. PPI is meant to pay out if the borrower is unable to meet repayments due to loss of income through injury, illness or redundancy. Cover was often sold, however, to those who would never have been able to claim, including the self-employed, retired people or the unemployed.

MBNA claims the case was lost on a technicality but, crucially, the judge said MBNA had created an "unfair relationship" by failing to disclose the commissions it would gain from PPI insurance. This breaks laws introduced in 2007.

The case emerged as the Financial Services Authority (FSA) published a report on the handling of PPI-related complaints.

The FSA has ordered banks and credit card companies to review more than 185,000 complaints received since July 2007.

**MIDDLE-CLASS FRAUD ON THE UP**

Britain is in the grip of a middle-class fraud boom. According to Mike Bowron, commissioner of the City of London Police, professional workers have exploited their position for personal and illegitimate financial gain.

He said his officers were arresting lawyers, accountants and insurance brokers over alleged offences worth millions of pounds. The number of frauds reported to his force has risen by 72% in the past financial year. In many cases, he said, the victims were well-educated, confident investors, who had fallen victim to sophisticated scams.

One of the biggest investigations is into an £80m Ponzi-style investment fraud, thought to have claimed 750 victims. Another probe centres on an alleged £200m mortgage fraud.

**BIG BURGLARY RISE**

Meanwhile, the recession has been blamed for a big rise in burglaries. London alone has seen a 9% rise since the start of April, when the downturn began to hit people hard. Police forces across the country are reporting a similar upward trend, just as they did during the recessions of the 1970s and early 1990s.



*"Oh Mandy, I fear I'm about to end up on the scrapheap."  
 "Don't worry, Gordon, I've only extended the scrappage scheme for cars and vans... so far."*

**HOW LOW WILL THEY GO?**

Interest rates will stay at record lows for five years, according to a report from the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR). The think-tank says the rate is likely to remain below 2% until 2014, as the UK economy struggles out of recession.

The report stresses, however, that while banks and building societies can borrow money at historically low rates, they are under no compulsion to offer similar rates to the public. This means that repaying credit cards and overdrafts is not expected to become cheaper.

Foreign holidays are also likely to become more expensive, as the CEBR predicts sterling will weaken further against both the US dollar and the euro.

**0.5%**  
**EMISSIONS FELL BY THIS AVERAGE IN EACH OF THE FIVE YEARS TO 2008**  
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**takefive** with John Sheaves



# 'UK FARMERS NEED TO BECOME MORE SAVVY IN MARKETPLACE'

**John Sheaves**, chief executive of Taste of the West, talks to **Iona Walton** about tackling the serious challenges facing the agriculture industry

John Sheaves's roots are firmly embedded in farming. Brought up on a small West Country dairy holding and then farming himself for 15 years, he knows only too well how tough the industry can be. But today, as chief executive of Taste of the West, the regional food hub, he is in a position to do something about it.

"The UK's agricultural industry faces serious challenges, particularly in the dairy sector with lower milk prices and with regard to TB in cattle," says Mr Sheaves.

"We will not have the resources to produce quality food in the future if we don't start tackling these fundamental issues now.

"But the future market outlook is more optimistic than it has been for years. The domestic market for local and regional produce is thriving, worth £4.5bn and expected to rise to £5.5bn by 2012.

"The world population continues to expand so food produced in the UK will be in greater demand. Coupled with global warming and the anticipated competition for water, UK farmers will be well placed to produce quality products for domestic and world markets."

Further openings are found in the UK procurement market, which is under pressure to source more regionally produced food.

"Farmers in the UK are good at growing and producing quality food, but are less

strong when it comes to selling it," comments Mr Sheaves. "They need to become more savvy in the marketplace, ensuring market expectation is met through research to establish whether demand exists and combining quality and integrity at the right price point.

"The premium end of the market has commanded a great deal of growth and we now need more affordability. We have seen a consumer shift away from organic, but provenance has not suffered in the same way and needs to be made affordable to more people."

**MEMBERSHIP THRIVING**

Taste of the West was established in 1991 by, among others, the NFU, and enjoyed over a decade of funding. But the recession has led to a contraction in public finances as the Government strives to cope with its debt burden and has forced the group to expedite plans to become an independent commercial group. Membership is thriving, with 800 West Country producers on its books in 2009 compared with 350 three years ago.

"In today's economic climate, money to help farmers with marketing won't come from the public purse, so it's down to producers to look at their businesses and plough some of their own revenue into telling consumers about their products," says Mr Sheaves.

One option is to join producer groups such as Taste of the West, which are beginning to operate as cooperatives, and help members flourish through building food supply chains, boosting demand for locally sourced products and offering consultancy and marketing services. Many smaller producers struggle to find a route to market and the 50,000 farm holdings in the South-West are particularly regionally challenged," he explains.

"There was a need to increase trade development by pooling resources and setting up a central distribution hub. We had gaps in knowledge and experience when it came to distribution so partnered with a distribution company, J&R Foodservice, which offered expertise and installed a computer programme that eased logistical challenges."

After a successful trial the hub was set up in Exeter, Devon. Deals have been negotiated with nine Mole Valley Farmers stores and Budgens, while Taste of the West is in discussions with Waitrose and other multiples.

"Organisations similar to Taste of the West exist all over the UK and we collaborate and meet regularly," Mr Sheaves says. "We're likely to work more closely together in the future to supply national markets.

"I anticipate membership will continue to increase as producers realise the benefits of joining regional marketing bodies."



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# INCREASED SUPPLY OF LABOUR MOST WELCOME

HSBC's **Andrew Suddes** takes a look beyond the recession

There is now a solid body of opinion that believes the recession has ended or is now at least drawing to a close.

The huge de-stocking has probably run its course, the mood of industry (as reflected in the monthly PMI surveys) has been improving for five or six months, and both the Nationwide and Halifax measures of house prices have been creeping up. While an end of recession is to be welcomed, it is only the first step in the recovery process and there is some way to go before the economy is 'back to normal'.



In the game of alphabet soup that economists have been playing for most of this year, a four or five-quarter recession looks just about V shaped – deeper than earlier downturns but not necessarily as long. Yet there is a nervousness that there is still some bad news to come, that the initial recovery is a false dawn and

we end up with a double-dip recession, or a W shape.

The supply of credit is another source of concern, while the now-widespread view that public sector spending has to be reduced could curb the one part of the economy that has kept going over the past 12 months. Since government spending is planned well in advance, however, steps to rein in public spending are not likely to be implemented in the short-term.

The human cost of the recession is most clearly evident in rising unemployment, with the number of people out of work moving above two million. Arguably, this does not have to be negative for the farming industry. An increased supply of available labour into the UK agricultural sector would be most welcome for many areas of the industry. A drift of skills away from UK agriculture in recent years has had a harmful impact on businesses going through the process of recruiting or replacing experienced farm workers.

Although unemployment is still rising, the rate of increase appears to have



**"HSBC expects that unemployment will peak at less than three million next year"**

slowed. HSBC expects that unemployment will peak at less than three million next year, in part because, compared to previous recessions, labour markets have responded to the downturn with more flexibility. Many employers, for instance, have reached agreements with their workers to implement pay freezes and/or shorter working hours, thereby avoiding the need for mass layoffs.

It should be borne in mind, however, that pay freezes and cuts in working hours ultimately have the same economic impact as rising unemployment: they all have the effect of constraining the total spending power of the UK consumer sector. On top of this, the big gains in house prices coupled with the easy availability of credit are unlikely to feature so prominently in the near-term future. The upshot is that, even as the UK economy begins to recover, is consumer spending growth will remain relatively muted into next year.

• *Andrew Suddes is agriculture banking manager, North Cumbria & South-West Scotland, for HSBC Bank plc.*

## ▶ **Bottomline** Don't be drawn into the web of the phishing fraudster, warns **Richard Wright**

Most of us would find it difficult to live without the internet. We increasingly rely on it for everyday tasks. Indeed, in the not too distant future online will be the only means of paying VAT, although smaller businesses will be able to opt out for the first few years.

This raises the issue of fraud, and figures suggest that as the technology becomes more widely used the scale of fraud is on the increase.

It is never clear with these reports the degree to which they are encouraged by those who sell the various systems to protect us against fraud. They also reflect a failure to learn simple lessons. Recently, passwords and other details for thousands of online email accounts, such as Microsoft's Hotmail, were published on the internet. People gave away this information by responding to emails asking them to submit their details. This continues to happen, no matter how many times banks and other businesses underline that they do not seek information via

insecure means. This is known as phishing.

Online banking fraud rose by more than 50% to £39 million this year. From January to June alone there were more than 26,000 examples of attempts at phishing for information. Credit card fraud has, however, fallen, thanks to the chip and PIN system and people taking more care with their PIN. They are also now more aware of hidden cameras and dodgy cashpoints. Those who gained from this have now transferred their attention overseas, where the chip and PIN system is less common, so if you are abroad don't let your card out of your sight when completing a transaction.

On your home computer the checks are simple if you want to avoid becoming a victim of fraud. Never give your information, other than when logging on. Always make sure the padlock symbol is there and the web address begins https rather than http – the s denotes secure. Be aware of websites which can load so-

called trojan programmes to monitor your computer activity and collect passwords. There is plenty of free and effective software to prevent this happening, and ideally let it scan your computer every day. Above all, remember that if anything looks at all doubtful, hit ctrl alt delete to escape your web browser instantly. If that fails, switch off your computer at the wall.

Check your bank accounts regularly, as fraudsters depend on time being on their side. With credit cards, if you see a small amount you do not recognise do not assume it is an odd description by the retailer. Query it, as fraudsters test the temperature by starting small.

It is important not to allow this to put you off using the internet for business. Equally, do not let hysteria about this push you into buying costly identity theft protection insurance, because your liability will be limited to a nominal amount by most banks and credit card companies.



### **MOMENT OF CLARETY**

When asked to describe how radio transmission works, **Albert Einstein** explained: "You see, wire telegraph is a kind of a very, very long cat. You pull his tail in New York and his head is meowing in Los Angeles. Do you understand this? And radio operates exactly the same way; you send signals here, they receive them there. The only difference is that there is no cat."

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**QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

**"It's great to be sat here as world champion and I personally think I thoroughly deserve it. I've been the best over 16 races and that's what world titles are all about."**

**Jenson Button speaking after winning the Formula 1 world motor racing drivers' championship**

**WEB HEADLINES**

Green investment promises healthy returns – English Nature

Investment in the natural environment can solve many of the problems facing society, the economy and the planet, a new report from Natural England claims.

Wheat markets continue rally despite the figures

World wheat markets have remained firm over the past week amid continuing concern caused by US harvest delays and potential frost damage to maize and soya crops.

Study reveals sheep vaccine misuse

A worrying level of vaccine misuse by sheep producers has been unearthed by an independent pilot study.

Obey IPU ban, farmers ordered

Farmers and agronomists have been urged not to be tempted to use up existing stocks of isoproturon that might be lying around in the farm store.

**NEWS JUST IN**

**CHEAP BEEF THREAT**

The National Beef Association has warned that supermarkets stocking cheap beef from Ireland are threatening the UK beef industry by virtually forcing other retailers to follow suit on economic grounds.

It also warns that the Anglo-Irish companies processing the imported beef are putting themselves in danger if their actions kill off the industry here.

Pointing out that less than half the fresh beef that has recently been moved through ASDA is UK produced and that more than 30% of that sold by Sainsbury's is from the republic too, NBA director Kim Haywood said the crux of the problem is that beef coming in from the RoI is taken from cattle that are 13% cheaper than similar stock moving through the UK system.

**SUPPORT 'NOT ENOUGH'**

A €280m dairy support package announced by EU agriculture commissioner Marian Fischer Boel this week has been welcomed by the European farm and co-op union Copa-Cogeca, but with a warning that it is not enough to "improve the drastic situation in all EU farm sectors".

After a Farm Council meeting in Brussels, president Padraig Walshe said: "The EU dairy crisis is deep and unprecedented. Many producers across all farm sectors are also facing major difficulties. Further market measures must be introduced to help them survive and to prevent a further exodus from the rural areas of the EU."

But Mrs Fischer Boel warned the package left her with virtually no money in the CAP budget and it still had to be approved by finance ministers.

**VOLUNTARY MEASURES**

Farmers are being urged to continue using Crop Protection Management Plans to demonstrate to the Government that voluntary measures rather than legislation to control environmental damage is working.

A newly revised plan for 2009-10 has been launched to reflect changes in legislation or best practice advice in the past year.

"The CPMP remains a vital measure for proper planning when using pesticides," said NFU deputy president Meurig Raymond. "At this time it is vital that farmers show their support for voluntary measures and continue to use pesticides responsibly."

**▶ Pubtalk**

Hearts and tongues were on the menu in the bar the other evening, as the smokers began to grumble about how cold it was getting outside. We weren't eating them, you understand – its bangers and chips for most catering needs in our local – we were just discussing whether anyone actually eats such items any more.



**"Our local beef man had a steer's heart going begging"**

The topic cropped up because our local beef man had a steer's heart going begging and it seemed, initially, that knowledge of such delicacies was quite extensive, even if they were no longer readily enjoyed. Those who had no idea what to do with a heart were told by one bar "expert" that it should be sliced and pan-fried. But then we recalled that he

was the one who sought to turn an earlier debate on undercooked meat into a study of culinary uses for rabbits' brains, so we ignored him.

It turned out no-one was any kind of expert and the offer of a free steer's heart went unclaimed. But the topic led to tongues which seemed not to be a favourite on the dinner tables of the village, although everyone had a vague recollection of eating some, sometime, possibly purchased from a supermarket and not looking much like the original.

We chewed over (if you'll forgive the pun), the possibility of re-introducing such delicacies as hearts, tongues and oxtails to the domestic menu, the better to boost the scandalously low returns of the beef man. But we decided he'd better stick to the boxes of prime beef he sells to us now and again and leave the dodgy stuff to the Chinese who, we concluded, would pretty well eat anything.

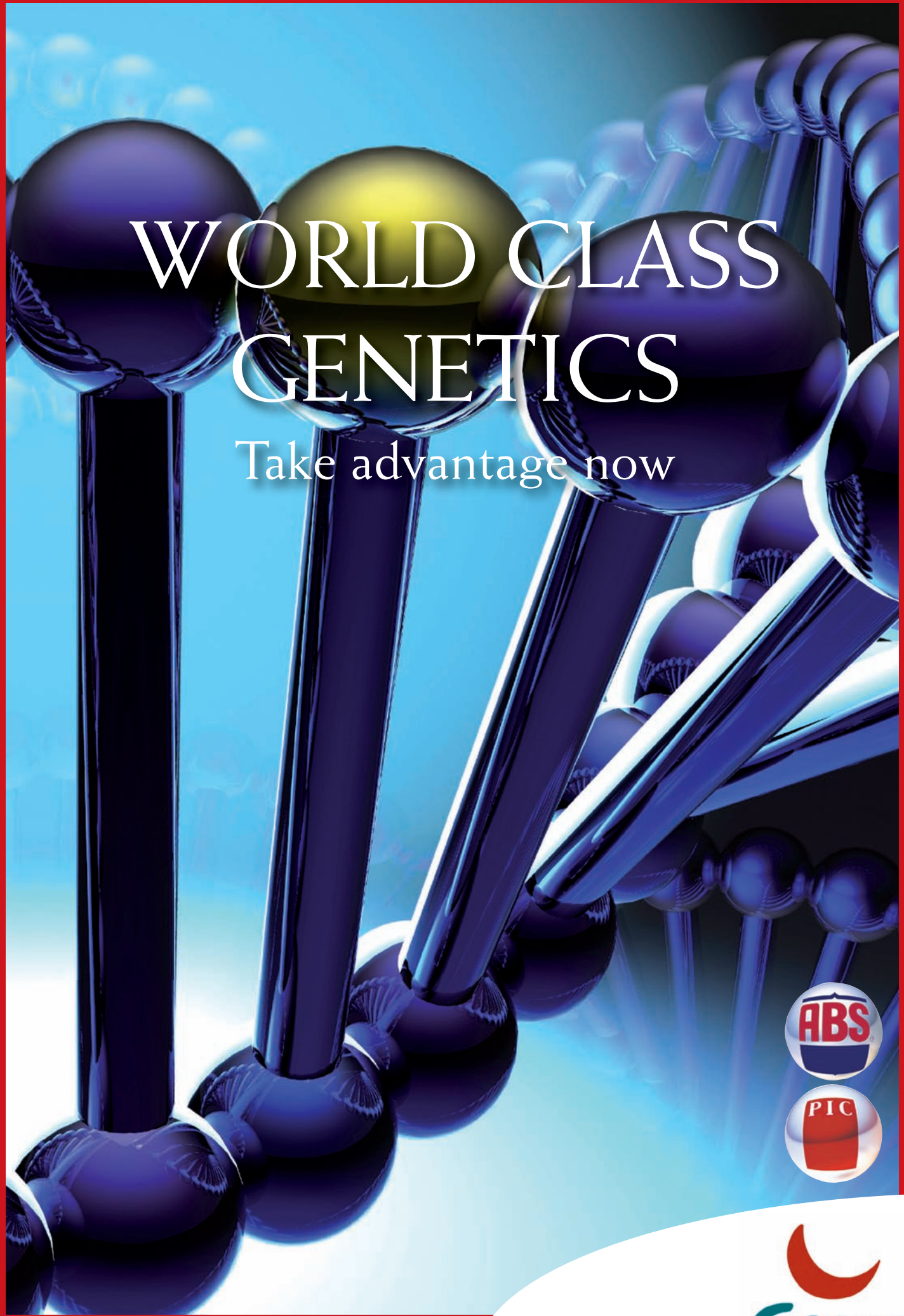
**Contacts:**

Editor, Andrew Watts, T +44 (0) 1892 861770, E andrew@ghpublishing.co.uk Production Editor, Nick Bull, T +44 (0) 1892 861813, E nick@ghpublishing.co.uk Sub Editor, Sally Murray T +44 (0) 1892 861813, Marketing Director, Caroline Whibley, T +44 (0) 1892 861664, M 07786 993797, E caroline@ghpublishing.co.uk Production, Mike Banks, T/F +44 (0) 1622 766053, M 07813309514, E mjb\_uk@btinternet.com Design, Mark Day, T +44 (0) 1702 232058, E surface99@btinternet.com Photography, iStock.com Advertisement Manager, Keith Nicholson T +44 (0) 1954 214555, M 07881 888855 E keith@ghpublishing.co.uk Publisher, Alan Whibley, T +44 (0) 1892 861993, M 07786 993789, E alan@ghpublishing.co.uk

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**THOUGHT FOR THE DAY**

**"There is a steep climb ahead. But I tell you this: the view from the summit will be worth it." David Cameron on challenges facing the Conservatives if they win the next election.**



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