



ROUTINE FERTILITY VISITS – DAIRY CATTLE

Good fertility is the key to a successful dairy enterprise. Without calves, there is no milk produced!

A range of disease problems can lead to sub-optimal fertility on a dairy farm including heat detection, infectious disease, nutrition and lameness. If your vet is only rarely on your farm, the early identification of these problems is near impossible. The key to correcting fertility problems is early identification, investigation and the implementation of strategies for improvement.

The Farm Animal Practice can arrange regular routine visits to your farm to monitor the fertility of your herd. These can be weekly, fortnightly or monthly dependent on your current system and requirements. We would recommend fortnightly routines as a minimum, as this is often the best timeframe for identifying problems and fitting in suitable re-checks.

Our policy is to install one of our vets as your primary clinician and point of contact for ongoing health planning, with a second clinician as back-up. This does not mean you will only see these two vets! However we aim to maintain some consistency which will benefit the herd planning and health strategies.

The benefits of routine fertility visits can be huge, but the main key benefits are;

- **Diagnose non-pregnant cows early**
- **Diagnose cystic and non-cycling cows**
- **Diagnose and treat uterine infections**
- **Synchronise groups of heifers or cows for insemination**
- **Reduce the calving index**

During routine fertility visits, we utilise portable, battery-powered ultrasound scanners which allows us to perform examinations in AI stalls, crushes or in the parlour. The general checks that will be performed will be on the following groups of cows;

PCC/PNC – Post calving/natal checks, on cows 3 - 4 weeks calved.

PD – Pregnancy diagnosis from 30 days after service.

NSB/ONO – Not Seen Bulling/Oestrus Not Observed – all cows that have not been seen bulling by the end of your voluntary waiting period

Dirty cows – Any cows with a vulval discharge that are not included in the above groups

Fertility problems are costly for your farm. Even if the direct costs are not immediately apparent, it has been reported that the cost of keeping a cow that is not in calf can be £3-5 per day that she is not pregnant.

A fertility visit is not just a PD session! It is a way for you and your vet to discuss any problems or concerns, to check the general health and condition of your cows at different stages of lactation, and to identify any problems early before they have serious long term consequences for your business.

Please Contact the Farm Animal Practice for more Information
