

July 2008

myhealthyherd.com



BCVA recently held a herd health management course at the University of Nottingham Sutton Bonington campus, with a 'hands on' training session on the use of myhealthyherd.com. The background of the project and the basic principles were introduced, then participants were set up on laptops and guided through logging on, registration, measurable data entry and the practical use of the four main components of the system:

- Health evaluator**—*economic assessment of recoverable losses*
- Infectious disease**—*the management of disease*
- Biosecurity**—*keeping herds healthy*
- Health management**—*assessing risks and discovering how best to improve health*

Using real data from example herds, delegates were able to clearly see how the system worked and appreciate how invaluable it can be in setting SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time related) targets; in numerical/

data analysis; in cost benefit assessment for proposed actions and in evaluation of whether an investment delivers a return for the farmer.

The day was rounded off with a presentation and workshop around building a preventive health practice business model. Further courses are planned—definitely to be recommended for those colleagues doing farm animal work! Contact BCVA on 01452 740816 or e-mail office@cattlevet.co.uk for further details.

NWL Clin Path Club

The next NWL Clin Path Club meeting (North East region) is at 8.00pm on 31 Jul 08, at the Holiday Inn Leeds Bradford, Tong. **Ellie Mardell will speak on Hypertension.**

For further details contact Kate Simister at NWL Poulton on 01253 881035.

Which tube? - guide available



Correct blood tube selection is vital to ensure we are able to provide reliable results, so we are preparing a laminated blood sample tube guide. For a copy, please contact NWL Leeds.

Laboratory investigation of suspect inflammatory bowel disease

Chronic or recurrent diarrhoea is a common presenting sign, in companion animal practice but making a specific diagnosis often presents a challenge! Clinical details can be helpful in deciding whether the diarrhoea is most likely to be small or large intestinal in origin (tenesmus, frequency, urgency, stool volume, mucus, presence of fresh blood, vomiting, weight loss) but a laboratory work up is often necessary for diagnosis.



A routine blood work up plus a full faecal analysis is a good place to start. Haematology is valuable to identify any anaemia and/or inflammatory response and routine serum biochemistry provides a screen for underlying systemic or metabolic disease and, critically, indicates protein and electrolyte levels. Further serum biochemistry assays that are useful include pre and two hour post prandial bile acids to assess hepatic function and B12, folate, TLI and PLI. Faecal analysis should include culture for salmonellae and campylobacters, plus parasitology including tests for giardia and cryptosporidia. Cytology and histopathology on intestinal tissues are potential second stage diagnostic tests.