



Johnes Control at Westhayes Farm

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Introduction



Background



- 330 milking cows
- Calving year round
- Cross bred
- 6,500 litres

Background: 2010

- 120 milking cows
- 9,000 litre Holstein Friesian
- Cows were “burning out”
- Clinical Johnes disease diagnosed on a few cases but vets offering no further advice

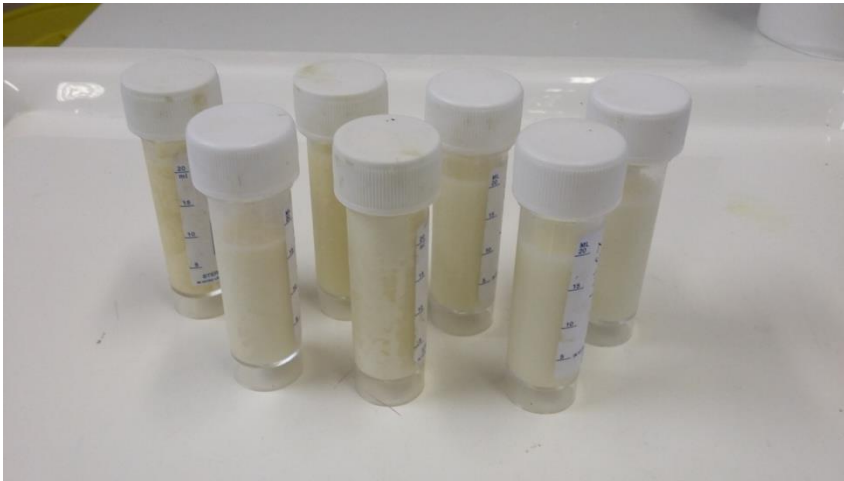


Background: 2011

- Changed veterinary practice
- Created a Johnes plan, part funded by AHDB (South West Healthy Livestock Initiative)
- Expanding the herd; rearing 120 replacements a year whilst buying in more from market
- First test showed 40/160 milk antibody positive for Johnes.



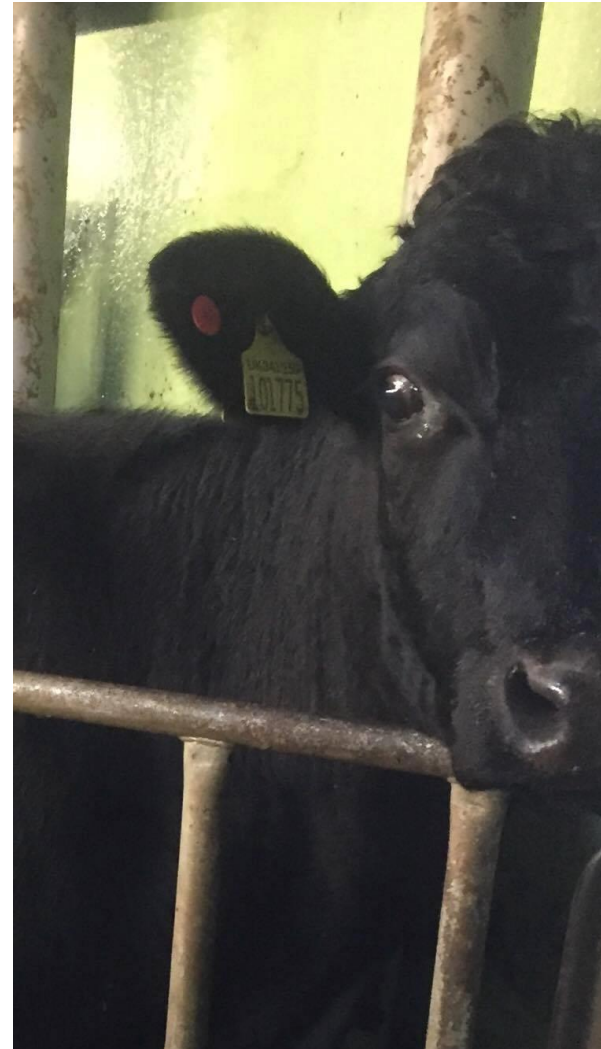
Testing



- No milk recording
- Annual whole herd test
- Single test prior to drying off
- Test positive cows not retested: ALWAYS REGARDED AS POSITIVE
- No test result: treat as positive

Cow and calf ID

- **Red button tag** given to all test positive, inconclusive or absent
- High risk calves also red tagged



Breeding Decisions



- Red tag cows bred to beef
- Only low risk cows bred to dairy
- Herd split so that replacements only born February to May

Calving Management



- Dry cows managed together

Low risk calving



- February to March
- Sick cows kept out of the calving yard!

Low risk calving

- April to May



High risk calving

- Calved in bull pen, or outside in separate paddock
- Dairy heifers are snatch calved, with the help of Moocall



Colostrum

- Calves fed colostrum from low risk cows for 5 days
- Pre-milking hygiene a priority
- Then switched to milk replacer



Milk Feeding

- Dairy calves reared in hutches on milk powder
- Waste milk only fed to beef calves
- Beef calves sold at 10 days old



Culling Policy

- Test positive cows are culled as soon as they show other signs
- Condition, yield, lameness, fertility, mastitis
- Clinical signs of Johnes no longer seen



Biosecurity

- Still buying in from market!
- Bought in cows treated as high risk and calved to beef in the autumn
- As the prevalence comes down this policy may need to change



Current Situation: 5 years on

- Latest test showed 2 new positive out of 220 tested
- 18 existing high risk cows in the herd
- 25% test positive down to 6%
- No clinical cases for 3 years



Weaknesses

- Buying in
- Dry cow yard
- Slurry spreading on cow pastures
- In utero infection
- Testing frequency



Lessons Learnt

- With hindsight nearly all the original 160 cows went on for Johnes related reasons
- High prevalence: consider a flying herd unless you have a great deal of tenacity
- Snatch calving is hard work and requires commitment from the whole team



