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FARMERS WEEKLY

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July 3 - July 9 1998 £1.35

**GAINING
FROM SOUND
GRAIN STORE
ADVICE**

page 72

**COULD YOU
BE LIVESTOCK
PRODUCER OF
THE YEAR?**

page 53

**QUICKEST WAY
THROUGH THE
TRAINING MAZE**

page 96

**High spots of
the Royal
Highland**

page 42

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CONTENTS



Highland highs... Not even football could lower the spirits at the livestock, machinery and technical events at this year's Royal Highland Show. Reports start on p42.



On course... Polishing up skills in off-road driving is one of the more unusual courses featured in our in-depth guide to what's on offer in agricultural education and training p96.



Trial trail... Canadian soya bean breeders are on the trail of varieties that will succeed in Britain as growing trials take place on nine sites around the UK p62.



All change... Management changes have more than halved lamb mortality figures as best practice has boosted flock performance on a MAFF-funded project on a south Devon farm p49.

COVER STORIES

Gaining from sound grain store advice p72. Could you be livestock producer of the year? p53. Quickest way through the training maze p96. Highland high spots p42.

OPINION

U.C. DAVIS

5

NEWS

JUL 10 1998

6

BUSINESS

SER. REC. LIBRARY

23

New crop cereals. Brussels confirms new set-aside rate. HGCA Enterprise Awards. Divorce case confirms ruling shift. Management Matters — Dowrich potato update.

MARKETS

30

STOCK & SALES

38

LIVESTOCK

45

Show report p42/43. Feed additive confusion p45. Call for better husbandry to stop scab; new product controversy p46. Cow welfare meeting p48. Boosting flock performance p49. Criss-cross breeding improves quality p50. Grazing discussion group report p51. Passport deadlines p52. FW/Marks & Spencer Livestock Farmer of the Year — entry form p53. Training products p54. Farmer Focus p55.

ARABLE

57

Ditch cereal seed dressings, says NIAB; rape choices — swath, direct cut or desiccate p57. Dull weather and lodging hit rape and cereal prospects p58. Drilling rate defines crop prospects p60. Canadian soya in UK trials p62. Dual sprays pay in barley p64. Early beet steals the day p65. Vegetable pointers p66. Barley-to-beer finalists from Yorks and Lincs p68. Farm sprayer operator of the year winner p70. Grain storage special including no-chem storage; mite furore continues; novel separator; liquid applicator; on-combine cleaning p72.

MACHINERY

83

New lease of life for the Trantor planned p83. Royal Highland Show report p84. Post driver gets the elite treatment p86. Feeder/spreaders make their UK debut p87. McHale launches the mini-bale wrapper p90. Stone clearance Welsh style p92.

FEATURES

96

Education and training special, including course table p96.

LETTERS

102

TALKING POINT

105

ON OUR FARMS

106

LAND

107

CLASSIFIED

108

FARMLIFE

Young French farmers helped to get a foot on the ladder p1. Four native pony breeds under extinction threat. Troubled times for the Punch p3. A table to treasure p4. Young farmers p5. Crossword p6. Farm Women's Club p7. Tough characters from roof of world p8. Rare black poplar is alive and doing well in Bucks p9.

NEXT WEEK

ROYAL SHOW SHOWCASE

Highlights of this year's Royal Show receive full coverage in our comprehensive report. Packed with news and views from the stocklines, machinery area, show ring and plots, it will perfectly complement your day at this premier outdoor event.

A VARIETY OF QUESTIONS

The NIAB Varieties and Seeds Day lays down the markers by which varieties will be judged. Our report will help you to make the most of your cropping choices for next season.

PROPERTY PROFITS

Most farms have a least one farm cottage. Here's how, with careful management and some investment, you can turn it into a worthwhile asset rather than a liability.

Highly toxic sheep chemical under fire from SAC specialist

By Allan Wright

AFIRM which makes a new sheep dip has been criticised for marketing a highly toxic product without a detoxification kit.

The product is Ecolleece from Bimeda and the criticism was made at the Royal Highland Show by Scottish Agricultural College sheep specialist, John Vipond.

"Ecolleece is a new formulation HCC — High-cis-cypermethrin. It is effective against both blow fly and scab and is a non OP. It should be useful for hill flocks but farmers must be warned that if they do not take extra care, they will face pollution problems," said Dr Vipond.

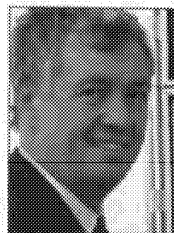
"This product is 100 times more polluting than OPs as far as water-courses are concerned. One litre overflowing from a dipper will pollute a mile of stream. Even a ewe or lamb leaving the dipping area while still dripping and crossing a burn will pollute it. A tiny amount will pollute the water for three months and it will be easily traced back to source," he said.

A detoxification kit was available for other cypermethrins and Dr Vipond was critical of Bimeda for marketing their dip without a similar kit. "The firm should definitely have taken that precautionary step."

Responding to the criticism, Bimeda's general manager, Reece

Owen, said the product had been approved by the Veterinary Medicine Directorate on the back of its disposal recommendations. "We know there is a detoxification kit for another HCC product, but our market research suggests it is not widely sold. Our advice would be to follow disposal instructions on the back of the pack. But we are developing a product which will neutralise dip."

Dr Vipond's advice was to empty the dipper as soon as the



Failing to dip for long enough and underdosing with scab injections are perpetuating outbreaks, warned SAC's John Vipond.

operation was over to avoid any risk of overflowing after rain. "Remove the dip with a slurry spreader and spread according to environment agency rules. Also avoid any sheep leaving the dipper area while they are still dripping," he said.

He also said farmers were responsible for continued outbreaks of sheep scab because they were not dipping for long enough and were underdosing with new injections.

Sexing claims dismissed

CLAIMS of a commercial breakthrough in sexing cattle semen were dismissed by Genus scientists at the Royal Highland Show.

They said there was nothing new in the process being promoted by rival cattle breeding firm Cogent and said they were following a different route both in-house and in conjunction with two different laboratories.

"The technique heralded by Cogent as a breakthrough has already been trialed by several international AI organisations and has been abandoned," said Brian McGuirk, Genus' head of R&D.

"The cytometer is a very expensive way of producing a pregnancy and poor conception rates mean that the approach has no practical contribution to make at farm level," he said.

Genus senior vet Stuart Revell said output from the system was about 12% which had to be halved

for the sex required. "Only 6% is available and it has been knocked about by a centrifuge which really means that it is unsuitable for freezing. Fresh semen has a shelf life of about 12 hours so the scope is very limited," he said.

Genus believes flotation or filter methods of sexing semen offer a much greater chance of achieving a commercially viable system.

"We are doing work in-house and will make a decision by the end of the year whether to progress with that. We are also collaborating with a number of research groups working on these solutions," said Dr McGuirk.

But Tim Heywood, director of Cogent defended its technology (Livestock, June 19), saying great strides had been made, and further improvement was likely, while work is currently looking at freezing semen.

Mineral Clinic for

JULY

Q: Two years ago we used your special Tubby to improve our milking cows' feet. The problem is here again. Which Tubby was it?

A: It was the TUB HPZ. This product is for high yielders and other milkers to help fertility and foot problems. If you keep your dry cows separately from the milkers then the best product to use is the TUB OCZ. This is fast becoming one of our best sellers. It actually strengthens the hoof tissue whilst the cow is 'on holiday', when she makes best use of the special zincs, and gives the cow and the unborn calf the best protection against calving problems. We strongly advise the use of this Tubby to cover the two areas of concern.

Q: Will your TUB-TUP eliminate the need to use sponges on the ewes? Last year we had better results from the TUB-TUP than the sponges on different flocks.

A: Inserting sponges is a well known method of reducing lambing periods. Unfortunately it is expensive and it is a man-made 'artificial' method of getting sheep to do what they should be able to do naturally. To give a true answer the sponges should be better than the TUB-TUP. For customers who say the ewes become barren after regular use of the sponges we advise the TUB-SUPERTUP for the natural way to get as many ewes to go on early. The TUPPING TUBBYS are now the best selling product that we make. Do not forget the rams, use TUB RSM.

Q: Why do our cows lick earth? They seem to be obsessed with certain areas and have licked some places down to 8" deep.

A: They lick earth when the dietary inputs are insufficient to satisfy their needs. It is getting more common in dairy herds trying to utilise as much grass as possible. We have the product to stop this and restore normality. Large TUBHP30kg, particularly if you have ongoing insemination periods. If the cattle are drinking urine then use TUB AUD.

We also manufacture many other products for sheep and cattle, including orvec-stimulus to improve the fertility of dairy and suckler cows

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