

Rodent Control on Farms

Rodenticides are often used as part of a control programme to reduce the population of rats and mice on farm. Rodent control is important as they harbour transmissible diseases to humans, companion animals and farm livestock. There is evidence however, to suggest that the use of rodenticides can have an unintended impact on non-target species – scientists have found residues of the rodenticides in predatory and scavenging species of mammals and birds.

The Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) have developed the UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime and is coordinating its implementation. The aim is to ensure that rodenticides are used responsibly and in a way that minimises the exposure of these products to wildlife and other non-target animals. This will also help ensure that these products are effective in the future.

In April 2016, edible rodenticides (first and second generation products containing anticoagulant active ingredients) started to be sold with legally binding instructions. This label requires the person buying and using these products to hold certified proof of competence in rodent control. Products on shelves have been slowly transitioning to these new labels and requirements so that, as of October 2016, only edible rodenticides with the new labels can be purchased.

At present, options available to farmers that use these professional edible rodenticides are:

- Employ a professional pest contractor who are themselves certified as competent
- Gain a certificate through a written/online exam to demonstrate competence
- Purchase products through membership of an assurance scheme such as Red Tractor – this is an interim option and only available until December 2017

Please [click here](#) for more information.

Bishopton Training Courses in 2017

As most of our clients will already be aware, as a practice we believe that on-going training of staff and managers to improve understanding on farm is important to ensure that the best can be gained from the pigs on farm.

This coming season, we will be supplying some of the training for the AHDB Stockman Courses – please [click here](#) for more information from the AHDB Pork website regarding course dates and content.

In addition to this we would also like to run some in-house training courses covering various areas, such as the use of vet medicines which has already been requested by several clients. **Please contact Sylvia on 01765 602396 to register your initial interest** in training courses for next year and request any areas you would specifically like to cover.



'Flu vaccinations – Reminder

'Flu (full name Influenza) can have a major impact on productivity in both breeding and finishing herds. It is a viral disease that can be transmitted easily between humans and pigs. Viral circulation has caused significant clinical problems on farm both at the end of last year and during the first half of this year. Some of our client's farms are still affected with re-circulating 'flu virus as well. Please [click here](#) to read our full article on 'flu in pigs.



clipart.me

To help decrease the level of circulating 'flu virus on your farm, in both the pigs and the stockmen, it is recommended that anyone working with pigs has an appointment with their doctor or pharmacist to have a 'flu vaccination themselves.

Current Clinical Trends – What are we seeing out there?...

Some farms are experiencing some low level looseness within their rearing and finishing herds, sometimes occurring over a diet transition period. Pigs find sudden diet changes stressful, so this usually lowers feed intake and disease flare ups can be seen. Blending of rations to ease this dietary transition is important, particularly at present as new grains from this year's harvest are still coming through the mills into feed.



worldartsm.com

We have also been seeing an increase in the number of outbreaks of tail biting in finishers, although now predominantly milder cases compared to some severe cases earlier in the year.

Tail biting is an immediate welfare problem and can be linked to many interacting and complicated factors that can be difficult to solve. Finding the cause of the problem as soon as possible is important.

Factors that can be involved, and some resolutions to problems include:

- Feed issues – check feeders are full, with clean feed flowing freely and there is no bridging of feed in the feed pipes or blockages.
- Water issues – check water can be accessed by the pigs (dependent on pig size) and there is good water flow with appropriate water space provision for the number of pigs in the pen
- Ventilation changes – check there is no evidence of draughts, especially overnight when staff are not present
- Stocking density issues – ensure maximum stocking densities have not been exceeded
- Disease – monitor pigs closely to identify any signs of clinical disease, treating pigs identified as required.

Please speak to your vet about any questions you may have.

Feedback

Please let us know if there is anything that you would like including, or more information on, in a future newsletter.

www.bishoptonvets.co.uk



www.facebook.com/BishoptonVeterinaryGroup



[#bishopton_pigs](https://twitter.com/bishopton_pigs)