

New for 2015, Academy Vets would like to introduce a service available to progressive dairy farm clients – **Rumen Health Visits**

What's Included

Six fresh cows and six peak lactation cows are selected and various individual tests performed

- On farm blood ketone measurement for ENERGY
- Body condition scoring
- Rumen Fill assessment
- Rumen fluid sample and assessment including pH
- Faecal consistency scoring
- Dung sieving to assess digestion

Ration assessment on farm with practical nutrition and feeding advice

Simple calculations will be used to ensure the diet is appropriate and balanced

Reasons for poor rumen health will be identified (including SARA, see right) and practical steps for improvement suggested

The visit is designed to take up to three hours and timing depends on what kind of ration is fed

- For herds feeding cake in the parlour samples are taken 2 hours after milking
- For herds feeding a true TMR (no cake in parlour) samples are taken 4-6 hours after delivery of the mix



A needle is used to take a rumen fluid sample (rumenocentesis)

The procedure is performed using local anaesthetic and is well tolerated by cows

This is a unique service that only vets can perform

What is SARA?

Subacute ruminal acidosis (SARA) is a term that often comes up when talking about nutrition and ca

n get the blame for anything from loose dung to poor fertility

If the rumen pH (acid) is low for long periods during the day it can kill off the rumen bugs and cause milk drop, weight loss, ketosis and displaced stomachs

It can be associated with feeding too much concentrate, however lack of effective fibre in the diet is just as important

A Rumen Health Visit will diagnose if SARA is likely to be an issue in your herd, and identify ways to help stop it.

If you are interested in Rumen Health Visits on your farm then please contact the surgery and ask for Ian McDonald



A heated microscope allows accurate assessment of rumen samples on farm to give immediate feedback on rumen health

