



SW Farmer MM RR Jan2010

Chris Just from the specialist farm only practice Westpoint Vet Group Southwest looks forward to a prosperous 2010

Having had a very successful 2009, the New Year will see a strengthening of the practice with two new vets arriving in February. This will bring the total number of vets covering Devon and Cornwall up to seven.

I'd like to thank all our clients, new and old, for working with us to help ensure a healthy future for Southwest farming, through modern veterinary practice and a full educational programme. The meetings we held in 2009 addressed all of the big issues in cattle practice – fertility, mastitis and lameness – as well as some of the issues we are all becoming more aware of including how to tackle Johnes' disease and best practice for managing Bluetongue.

Our meetings, mostly on-farm, come with a strong practical element. The first practical course of 2010 will be foot trimming training for our Cornish clients, although the course is open to anyone with an interest! Give the office a call on 01566 86985 for details. The practice's own foot trimmers are rushed off their feet with work (as all good foot trimmers should be!) so let us know early if you require a visit. We offer this service to all farms in the Southwest – you don't have to be a Westpoint client.

On a personal front, the New Year has brought plenty of snow, though hopefully not as heavy as last February! The first call of the year, requiring the use of my now well-used snow chains, was a pedigree Suffolk needing a caesarean for a 14lb ram lamb. This was more than double the weight of my daughter who was born just before Christmas!

It worries me that many new clients are averse to caesareans claiming expected survival rates for the dam of "50:50" and pregnancy rates the following year to be "hopeless". This should not be the case when using good technique and modern drugs and materials. It certainly wasn't for this client who proudly informed me that in a caesarean done last year the ewe has scanned with twins - so should lamb in her own this time, fingers crossed!