

A Move Toward Improved Mobility

Cattle welfare is set to get a boost thanks to a Lantra-approved programme that will unite farm vets and hoof trimmers in the challenge to improve mobility in the national herd.

The British Cattle Veterinary Association (BCVA) is joining forces with colleagues at the Cattle Hoof Care Standards Board (CHCSB) to create a Lantra-approved training programme that will enable farmers, hoof trimmers and farm vets to combat cattle lameness.

“Lameness is the top welfare concern in the dairy industry yet one that can be a challenge to tackle, which is why BCVA Board has been keen to work with CHCSB on this project” explains Dr Elizabeth Berry, BCVA President. “One component of lameness management that is important in every herd, regardless of size or management system, is the *early detection, prompt, effective treatment* of lame cows. Despite its importance, there are still improvements that can be made on almost every farm, whether it be detecting cows earlier in the course of lameness or revisiting treatment techniques and protocols.”

Sara Pedersen, BCVA Board Director says, “There is considerable concern about the welfare and economic impact of lameness, yet we still need to improve coordination and communication between hoof trimmers and farm vets to ensure consistent messaging at farm level. So, this collaboration between BCVA and CHCSB will strengthen that stakeholder partnership and give us evidence-based, accredited training at appropriate levels, so that foot health is always competently managed.”

This training partnership aims to raise the standards of hoof trimming at every level; farmer, vet and hoof trimmer and create a more co-ordinated and consistent approach. The Lantra-approved courses range from ‘Basic Foot First Aid’ through to ‘Intermediate Hoof trimming’, allowing clear progression in skill level and complementing the existing Advanced Level 4 qualification in professional cattle hoof trimming. Anybody involved with cattle can benefit from this training.

“Professional hoof trimmers play an important role in maintaining foot health in a herd, but there also needs to be a plan in place for the days when the hoof trimmer isn’t there and a lame cow needs attention” says Tim Carter, Chairman of CHCSB. “Alongside the need for more qualified hoof trimmers, we need to ensure there is at least one person on every farm who is competent in the recognition and treatment of lameness. Our approach to trimming and treatment has changed in the last 20 years so it’s important that we ensure that everyone treating a lame cow is using the latest evidence-based approach, so these courses provide a great opportunity to not only learn new skills but also refresh existing ones. Our view is anybody who is dealing with cattle should attend one of these courses, whether that be the farmer, herds person or contract rearer.”

Each course comes with Lantra certification. “It’s important to show you are competent and for your skill level to be a recognised with a Certificate of Competency” Tim explains.

“Lantra will be the awarding body and they are recognised by Ofqual, SQA and Qualification Wales, this ensures a thorough training standard, which is crucial if we are going to make progress with lameness.”

“We know farm vets understand the complexity of lameness and see the value in working alongside their clients and their trimmers to improve foot health” concludes BCVA’s Sara Pedersen, “and these courses not only give us all a higher level of skill and confidence, but they also bring us together as part of a vet-led team dedicated to better welfare.”

The courses will be delivered by a BCVA Accredited Foot Health Trainer in partnership with a CHCSB Accredited Instructor, both of whom will have attended a training course specifically related to the delivery of the courses. This training partnership means that delegates will benefit from a wide range of theoretical and practical expertise and the requirement for trainers to remain up to date and accredited to deliver the courses means standards of training will be maintained.

The Lantra courses will be launched at the [CHCSB Conference on Friday 30th September at Hartpury College](#). The first instructor training courses for eligible vets and hoof trimmers will be delivered this autumn with the rollout of the ‘Basic Foot First Aid’ and ‘Intermediate Hoof trimming’ expected to begin before the end of the year. BCVA members will receive priority notice and booking for the instructor training.

WHAT WILL THE COURSES COVER?

BASIC FOOT FIRST AID: Full one day course

- Basic anatomy of the foot/landmarks
- Tools for the job (including knife sharpening)
- Mobility scoring overview
- Recognition of main lesions causing lameness
- Handling, lifting and examination of a foot
- Introduction to the 5-step trimming method
- Treatment protocols: block choice and NSAID administration
- Practical lesion treatment/blocking

INTERMEDIATE HOOF TRIMMING: Three full days

This course will build on the Basic level course and cover areas in more depth as well as expanding knowledge and skills in other areas.

- Anatomical overview and lesion development
- Tools for the job (including knife sharpening) and grinder use
- Mobility scoring overview
- Recognition of lesions causing lameness and recording

- Handling, lifting and examination of a foot
- The 5-step method
- Treatment protocols: Block choice and NSAID administration (including vet referral)
- Practical trimming and lesion treatment/blocking
- Lameness prevention: Success Factors

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Notes for Editors

The British Cattle Veterinary Association represents 1600 farm vets principally working with livestock. Most of our members are in farm and mixed practice throughout the UK, and we also represent those working in industry and academia. We provide, support, advice, and education, working alongside our colleagues across the wider veterinary profession. We wish to see a central role for the vet to safeguard and improve the wellbeing of cattle and safety of our food within sustainable beef and dairy industries. For more information about this release email kay@cattlevet.co.uk