

THE COW VETS MATING PLANNER

One of the keys to successful reproduction programmes is good planning. We have worked with clients over the years to develop a plan that can be used successfully on most farms. A brief outline is given below, but for a more in-depth discussion, or a personalised mating plan, please feel free to call us at the clinic.

The programme is best explained in two parts. The first part is the use of different tail paint colours as outlined below: *(Note that the number of days between paint colour changes can be varied to suit your system.)*

	<u>Colour</u>
1. Tail paint all cows at the start of September.	RED
2. Cows seen in heat before the start of mating get painted the day before mating starts	GREEN
3. Cows with RED paint are checked and treated at the start of mating	
4. Cows mated in the first 21 days of mating get painted	BLUE
5. Cows mated in the next 21 day period get painted	ORANGE
6. Cows mated in the next 21 day period get painted	YELLOW
7. Cows mated in the next 21 day period get painted	RED

The second part of the programme involves early pregnancy detection using the ultrasound scanner. This is done around 35 days after the end of each of the 21 day periods. Cows detected in calf are tail painted to identify them e.g. Blue. The goal is to change all the cows in the herd to blue tail paint by the end of mating.

Cows that are not in-calf should have cycled within the 35 day period and will have changed colour. Early scanning allows us to check for any cows that have been mated and are not in-calf. We can check for signs of infection, anoestrus ovaries or other ovarian problems using the scanner. This gives us the opportunity to treat them early and more accurately, giving them a better chance of getting in calf.

While at first it might appear confusing, a big advantage of this programme is that you do not need to record cow numbers when it comes to drafting and treatments, as the colour coding allows instant recognition of each group.

Experience has shown that for most farms there is probably no need for a whole herd pregnancy scan later on, as any suspicious cows can be tail painted and drafted for scanning at any stage of the programme.