Guidance for Welsh farmers on protecting cattle from disease

THE Welsh Government has launched a handbook for cattle keepers to help them protect their herds from disease. The ‘Cattle Keepers’ Guide to Safeguarding Health’ was launched by Christianne Glossop, the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales, at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society’s spring festival on May 16. The handbook provides information on the clinical signs of six significant cattle diseases (bovine viral diarrhoea, infectious bovine rhinotracheitis, Johne’s disease, leptospirosis, neosporosis and bovine TB) and outlines some simple steps that keepers can take to minimise the chances of their animals contracting or spreading disease. These steps include checking disease status and testing history of any animals being brought into a herd, and also good health planning with veterinary involvement.

Dr Glossop commented: ‘With all diseases, prevention is better than cure. Finding disease quickly and preventing it from spreading are important elements of disease management. Cattle keepers can help minimise the risk of the disease spreading by maintaining good biosecurity measures. The six diseases described in the guide can have a significant economic and welfare impact on farms and the industry as a whole. However, there are a number of simple steps farmers can take to help protect their cattle from possible infection, starting with asking for the disease and testing history of an animal and the herd it comes from at the point of sale.’

The guide can be downloaded from www.gov.wales/ahwframework.

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