

Johne's demand

Increased awareness of the prevalence of Johne's disease has boosted demand for NMR's screening service for the disease. "There's no doubt that producers are appreciating the severity of the disease and the extent to which it is present in our herds," says NMR's Hannah Pearse.

"And the availability of a screening test using milk samples already collected has been a turning point. It's been the catalyst for many, through their vets,

to take action in a bid to assess and control the disease."

Producers interested in screening their herd for Johne's should ask their vet about it, or contact NMR Customer Services, for more information.

NMR is continuing its training in Johne's disease control and the use of its Herdwise milk screening tests early in 2009. A series of workshops, aimed at vets, will take place in Devon, Cheshire and Nottingham.

Technical team grows



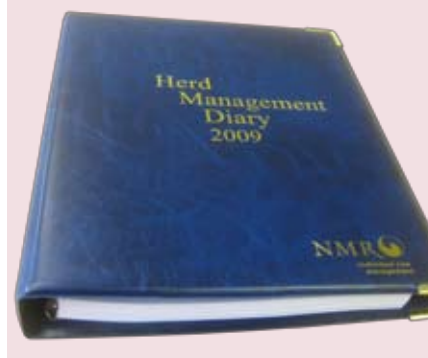
Nicola Mason

Biochemist Nicola Mason has joined National Milk Laboratories (NML) as technical laboratory manager in its Wolverhampton laboratory. A graduate of the University of Wolverhampton, Nicola spent six years with ADAS and then Eurofins in the microbiology division. More recently she set up a new food testing microbiology laboratory in the West Midlands.

Andy Dungey has moved from the NML disease testing laboratory at Wolverhampton to the NMR Group's quality control team. He will strengthen the team responsible for ensuring all group operations adhere to national and international standards.

2009 Diary

The NMR Herd Management Diary 2009 is now available. Dedicated to dairy management and with sections for recording all event details, this diary is an essential part of day-to-day management on many dairy units and is a reference document for all those involved in the running of the herd. Priced at £19.50 + VAT, copies are available from Customer Services on 08701 622547.



Herd Companion hits



The popularity of Herd Companion continues to grow with more than 6,000 visitors to the website in October and more than 250,000 page views in the month.

The most popular pages are those relating to the Feed Monitor system, particularly the section that analyses protein production in early lactation and provides an assessment of the risk

of ketosis and acidosis in individual cows.

Milk Quality Monitor, which provides bulk milk test results directly from NML, is now highly popular among advisers, nutritionists, vets and producers as they appreciate the value of early notification of this information off the website.

Just embarking on Herd Companion training for its 32 feed specialists is national feed compounder NWF. "We have become increasingly aware of the merits of value added milk records data particularly, in our case, for monitoring performance against diets and for fine-tuning rations to individual herds," says Ian Simpson, NWF national sales manager.

In view of this, NWF is training all its feed specialists in the system early in 2009 to allow them to help their customers make full use of NMR data to monitor and improve performance.

Lab scores on quality

It's been a successful autumn for NML's payment testing laboratories in Wolverhampton and Hillington, Glasgow.

Both NML labs have recently had their UKAS accreditation renewed following the annual audits. This accreditation is awarded for all aspects of laboratory operations, working practices, calibration protocols and confirms the reliability of testing at both sites.

In addition, NML has recently received the results of its latest FAPAS audit run by the Rural Payments Agency which validates the accuracy of fat testing. NML normally performs well in this audit and this year has been no exception.

In September NML secured a two-year extension on its contract with Defra for brucellosis and EBL screening. This contract involves testing all dairy herds for brucellosis every month and EBL once every five years.