

More than 450 companies will be showcasing their latest inventions and innovations

What's new?

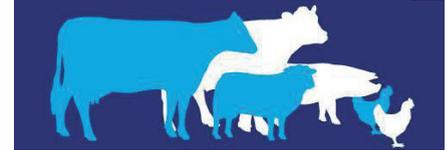
With the Livestock Event, organised by the RABDF, just weeks away, companies are preparing to launch new products and services. Huge crowds are expected, so we look at some of the exhibits that are worth seeking out at the two-day show.

text **Ben Pike**

Designed to maximise cow comfort



Wilson Agri says it has designed a cubicle system that reduces injuries caused by cows leaning and rubbing against steel when lying down. It is either post or floor mounted while supports and brackets are all made from galvanized steel. But the difference with the Cowcoon is that the bottom of the stall loop is replaced by a polyethylene tube. It has been designed to maximise cow



Free tickets

When: July 8 and 9, 2015

Where: NEC, Birmingham

Free tickets: To help attract producers who have been hit by huge price drops in recent months, a free ticket to the show has been sent to every dairy farm in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

➔ Get your tickets online at www.livestockevent.co.uk

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comfort and to increase cow lying times, which in turn should boost milk yields.

The absence of steel will also reduce swellings and injuries and lameness, according to the company. It has trialed the product for the past two years and has now installed them on 11 farms in the UK.

It retails at between £59 and £83 per cubicle, depending on specification.

Simple SCC solution

Simplicity is the basis for the most successful products and Dairy Quality Technology's RT10 has it in spades.

The gadget clips on to an iPhone or iPod and uses the Apple camera to read a small bulk milk sample, in order to identify the somatic cell count (SCC) and the principle

pathogen – all within 40 seconds. This task would usually take 48 hours.

The robust piece of technology can sample individual cows and the results can be recorded to build up a history of infection in that animal, which can then be downloaded.

It costs £1,400 (plus VAT) for the RT10, 72 sample cards, carry case and delivery.



Cost-effective milk feeding

Why spend thousands of pounds on a warm-milk calf feeder when you can get the same thing for less than £400? That's the message from producers Gill and Alan Dickson, and their son James, who have developed the Heatwave Milkwarmer, which costs just £385. Multiple feeds per day deliver strong, robust and healthy calves. "Feeding between 900g and

1,000g of milk solids per day during the first 70 days of life also programmes the calf to become more efficient for the rest of its productive life," says Alan.

The feeder allows producers to prepare a bulk reservoir of cold milk once a day. This is heated just before being delivered to the teat, offering the calf access warm milk several times a day. Each system feeds 30 calves.



New technology – at a glance

Hoofcount Excel is being exhibited by its designer Antony Marsh. The automated footbath builds on the success of its predecessor, which was launched three years ago but offers producers a longer, 3.7m, length to ensure each hoof enters the footbath at least twice.

Rosensteiner is launching its Red 5 vertical crush and Red Q hoof-trimming crush. The Red 5 has electrical front and rear leg-lifting winches while the Red Q

is aimed at professional hoof trimmers on the move.

Ecohoof says that its preventative Blue Clay Shoes product could reduce Formalin use on farms.

The paint-on clay applied after trimming acts as a barrier to infection by forming a poultice, which dries in around 10 minutes.

It naturally flakes off within 12 hours, but the company says that it continues

to protect delicate areas of the hoof. Another alternative to formalin has been produced by G Shepherd Animal Health. Targeting digital dermatitis, TK Everyday contains a blend of organic acids as powerful disinfectants and a surfactant, which helps to increase the cleansing effect of footbathing. With 200 litres costing £500 and 1,000 litres costing £1,950, it has a cost-per-cow similar to formalin.



Focus on calf nutrition

Some of the world's leading animal nutrition companies are targeting youngstock in their next wave of product launches.

A calf and heifer-rearing programme, which sets targets based on an accurate assessment of individual units, is being launched by Cargill.

The Nurture Calf and Heifer Programme is designed to help producers rear young dairy stock to calve at 24 months old – a target recognised as the most cost-efficient for most dairy units.

The programme focuses on colostrum feeding, pre weaning, post weaning, grower, puberty, pregnancy and 'close to calving'.

Each of these phases sets out feeding and management guidelines and possible targets to promote a consistent growth rate from birth to 24 months old.

Alltech's Rumagen protein is designed to provide balanced nutrition and improvement in fibre digestion and can

be used in the final month of the dry period.

The company says that the product contains a full range of essential amino acid representing a similar profile to microbial protein, feeding the cow, and the growing calf. It also claims to regenerate udder tissue and the digestive tract.

Early calf management is also being targeted by Trouw with its Lifestart best practice concept.

The company says that only the correct combination of management skills and milk replacer will achieve the programme's objectives of enhanced growth and healthier calves, and that it will only be branding products with the Lifestart logo if they have proven to meet set criteria.

The company's ruminant specialist Georgina Thomas said: "The concept is about more than growth. It is about making the full use of the potential the calf has, but nurturing them so they

achieve higher growth rates in a healthy way."

The programme focuses on the pre-weaning period and is based on five key areas of cleanliness, colostrum, comfort, calorie intake and feeding consistency.

