Mobility score to identify lameness and assess severity (see below)

Restrain – ideally in a crush

Lift and examine the lamest leg

Foot problem

- Sole haemorrhage (ulcer, White line disease)
- Digital dermatitis
- Interdigital necrobacillosis (Foul)
- Toe necrosis
- Wall fissures
- Interdigital hyperplasia

Joint inflammation and infection

- Patellar luxation
- Cruciate injury/ rupture

Common disorders

- Cellulitis, tenosynovitis, tendon injury
- Metabolic deficiencies
- Spinal injury

- Nerve damage – secondary to trauma, calving or intramuscular injection
- Long bone fractures (rare)

Stifle injury

1. Patellar luxation
2. Cruciate injury/ rupture

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If multiple cows have swollen hocks (tarsal bursitis - consider cow comfort)

Systemic antimicrobials and NSAIDs, Consider joint flushing

If multiple joints in the same cow are affected, consider joint fluid sampling for Mycoplasma culture

Lame Cow

Lift the foot using a recognized method such as the Dutch 5 Step Trim (see below) or Dairyland trimming style. Most lameness is in the foot, and 90% of foot lameness is in the hindfeet.

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AHDB Dairy Mobility Score (adapted from Bell 2008)

0 – Non-lame, even weight bearing, rhythm, stride length and a flat back
1 – Uneven locomotion, with irregular rhythm, weight bearing, tracking or arched back. Affected limb(s) not immediately identifiable
2 – Uneven locomotion with a limb that is immediately identifiable
3 – Score 2, and unable to keep up with the rest of the herd

Modified Dutch-5-Step Trim for hindfeet (adapted from Manning et al 2016)

1. Measuring from the hard horn at the coronary band, cut the medial claw toe length to 75-90mm depending on the size of the cow. See Foot: hoof trimming 02
2. Pare the weight bearing surface down to 5-7mm at the toe, sparing the heel. See Foot: hoof trimming 03
3. Match the untrimmed lateral claw to this length, and balance the weight bearing surface across the toe and heel of both claws.
4. Model out the middle third of the sole, to reduce weight bearing over the lateral claw sole ulcer site and allow slurry clearance. See Foot: trimming – post-trim
5. Identify any lesions, and remove weight bearing from a painful claw
6. Remove loose or under-run horn and hard ridges
References