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21.06.2011

RE Proposed Cubicle Building for winter housing of part of the Dairy herd

Messrs F C Price & Sons
Magna Castra Farm
Credenhill
Hereford HR4 7EZ

I write in support of the above planning application.

This practice has provided veterinary services to FC Price & Sons for many years. Messrs Price are a progressive family dairy farm who have expanded the herd to remain a competitive, viable business at a challenging time for the dairy industry. Expansion brings many challenges, not least in terms of maintaining high standards of health and welfare.

This planning application is driven by the need to provide a high standard of winter housing for the adult dairy cows. Cubicle housing brings benefits in terms of cow comfort, ease of management and in particular in helping to reduce the challenge from environmental mastitis (infection of the udder) which is a much greater problem for cows in loose housed yards. Such mastitis is a constant threat to individual and herd health and productivity and proved a particular problem to the Price's herd during the winter of 2010.

I welcome Messrs Prices' decisive action in planning to re-organise winter housing for the cows to reduce the challenge from environmental mastitis. A successful outcome for this planning application will be a big step forward in ensuring the highest standards of health and welfare for the dairy herd at Magna Castra in the future and in maintaining the profitability of a respected family farming enterprise.

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