

A man wearing a green plastic protective suit and white gloves is examining the head of a cow. He is looking down at the cow's face with a focused expression. The background is dark and appears to be an indoor farm setting.

# Caesarean study aims to boost success after surgery

Sotirios  
Karvountzis.

**THE second stage of an XLVets audit on caesarean procedures in cattle has closed, with more than 4,500 case studies submitted from 49 XLVets vet practices across the UK. It is anticipated the results will help farmers and vets maximise a cow's return to full health after surgery.**

The audit was devised and organised by vet Sotirios Karvountzis, of Shepton Veterinary Group in Shepton Mallet, Somerset. Of the 4,500 case studies, around 3,000 stem from suckler herds, and the remainder are from dairy herds.

In the first stage of the audit, data was collected on aspects such as reason for the caesareans, including deformed calves, twins, calving difficulty, cow cleanliness and operating technique. The second phase involved monitoring the postoperative care and the animal's recovery over the following two weeks. Further information was gathered on, for example, speed of wound healing and weight gain of the calf. The final phase of the study is continuing and involves monitoring the health and performance of the cows and heifers during the 18 months post-surgery. It will include information on subsequent performance and fertility and enable factors affecting the success of operations to be evaluated.

Mr Karvountzis explained: "We had run a pilot scheme here at the Shepton practice, but a larger dataset was needed to draw some meaningful conclusions. So this is the first study of this scale to have been carried out, and it would not have been possible without the collaborative spirit of XLVets practices and the cooperation of their farm clients."