

Worms In Adult Cows

In the past, it has generally been considered that gut worms are a problem in the first grazing season, and that adult cattle are unaffected by worms due to a build up of immunity, however recent research has shown that 9 out of 10 ADULT dairy cows at pasture can carry a worm burden, and that this can affect their fertility and milk yield. Antibodies formed by cows to the stomach worm *ostertagia ostertagi* are a good indicator of gastrointestinal worm challenge. These antibodies can be detected in the milk therefore allowing bulk milk samples to be tested for the level of challenge on your farm.

Merial - the company that manufacture **EPRINEX** pour on (nil milk withhold), are sponsoring free bulk tank testing for *ostertagia* this summer and autumn, please contact the surgery for details. A combination of warm wet summers and milder winters in recent years has led to better survival of Lungworm infection on the pasture over winter, and earlier outbreaks of clinical signs. Reliance on wormers to prevent lungworm rather than vaccination on some farms has led to the immunity in older animals not being protective, and resulted in an increase of the incidence of clinical signs in adult animals - milk drop of up to 50%, loss of body condition as well as coughing ranging from mild to severe. A diagnosis of lungworm can be confirmed by submitting dung samples for larvae identification or blood samples for antibody detection.

Leptospirosis in farm dogs

At the surgery we have seen a few cases of Leptospirosis in farm dogs. This is a bacterial disease that affects the kidneys and liver causing lethargy, vomiting, internal bleeding, jaundice and death in severe cases (this is a different type of Leptospirosis to that of cattle). Dogs do **not** need exposure to other dogs to be infected, as the bacteria is carried by rats and can be picked up from contact with their urine, therefore every farm dog is potentially at risk. The acute form of the disease does not respond well to treatment and therefore vaccination of sheepdog puppies is recommended, 2 injections being given initially 2-4 weeks apart - this **must be boosted** annually to maintain immunity. If your dog has been vaccinated in the past but has not had an injection in the last 12 - 14 months, it will **no longer be covered** and will need to start the course again.

During the months of August and September, for farm dogs only, we are offering the 2 injection vaccine course for the price of a single booster injection (**£27.07** + vat). This is an ideal opportunity to protect your sheepdog whether it is completely unvaccinated, or has lapsed in its cover. Dogs can be vaccinated on farm when we are there for other jobs, but please mention the vaccination when booking the visit as we do not carry the vaccine in our cars.