

FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2024

ABORTION IN SHEEP



Always assume that any sheep which abort, the aborted lambs and afterbirths are contagious to other sheep (and humans) unless proved otherwise. Any farm experiencing over 2% abortions or premature lambings is likely to have an infectious cause of abortion present. It is always worthwhile investigating the cause of abortion as control measures will vary depending on what is found. Contact the surgery to find out which samples from aborted lambs are most appropriate to test, or what we can tell from blood samples taken from ewes which have aborted. For information on control measures for Enzootic abortion, Toxoplasma and Campylobacter visit our website www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk.

A polite reminder that any abortion samples being brought down to the surgery must be in sealed bags/tubs, clearly labelled and left in the yellow grit bin in the bottom car park. Please let us know when you have delivered the samples.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING ABORTION SAMPLES IN TO THE SURGERY

RATTLEBELLY / WATERY MOUTH / SLAVERS CONTROL



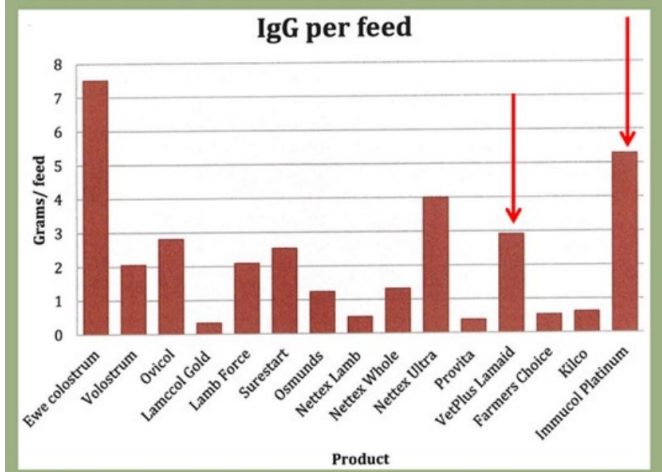
As most of you will already be aware, Spectam Scourhalt, the only licensed antibiotic oral doser for the prevention/treatment of rattlebelly has been taken off the market. Preventative strategies focus on maximising good quality colostrum intakes ASAP after birth and environmental hygiene in the lambing pens to avoid build up of infection. Preventative antibiotics should only be considered for the most vulnerable lambs. Speak with one of the farm vets to discuss your options.

With regards to colostrum requirements a target would be for a lamb to receive 50ml/kg of good quality colostrum ASAP after birth and up to

250mls/kg in total over the first 24

hours. The ewe's own colostrum is

invariably the best quality but if top-ups are required with a powdered colostrum there are major differences in the antibody contents of the various alternative products. Speak to one of the vets/SQP's to find out which offer the best protection!



FREE SURVEILLANCE TESTING FOR SCHMALLEMBERG VIRUS



There have been numerous reports this spring of lambs being born in other parts of the country with deformities consistent with Schmallenberg virus infection (fused joints), although thankfully very few examples in this area. As part of a national surveillance programme APHA (the VI centres) are offering free testing of samples for evidence of Schmallenberg disease from aborted lambs/calves or those born with deformities.

For more information, please contact the surgery.



LEPTOSPIROSIS AND BVD VACCINATIONS FOR CATTLE PRE-TURNOUT



In the spring, prior to turnout, is when the majority of breeding cattle are vaccinated to give protection against BVD and Leptospirosis. Previously unvaccinated animals may require a course of 2 injections 4 weeks apart to become fully vaccinated (**Leptavoid and Bovilis BVD**) or if using **Bovela BVD** vaccine only a single injection is required to establish immunity followed by annual boosters. It is recommended to complete the initial course prior to service so consideration needs to be given to which animals are going to be served through the summer. It is particularly important that BVD vaccinations of replacement stock are completed prior to service to avoid the potential infection of susceptible animals during the first 3 months of pregnancy leading to the production of persistently infected (PI) calves.

If you are unsure of the BVD status of your herd signing up to the 'Animal Health and Welfare Pathway' will allow BVD screening tests and health planning to be carried out and the cost covered by a successful grant application. Please contact us for more information.

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE PATHWAY



The AHWP

We have seen a fantastic uptake of the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway which was launched in 2023. It offers farmers funding for an annual visit from their nominated vet to consider the health and welfare of their animals (this includes carrying out diagnostic testing, reviewing biosecurity and the use of medicines, and providing bespoke advice on actions and available support to improve the health and welfare of their animals).

The results have been very interesting and we continue to encourage clients to take advantage of this grant to monitor disease on their holding. For more information, please contact the surgery.

Those of you who do not receive Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and meet the livestock requirements may now apply for this grant.

CALF VISITS THIS MONTH

We've seen some great weight gains this month on Vet Tech calf visits. These calves are the best of the bunch:

BEEF:

- A charolais bull 1 month old, a whopping 2.07kg daily.

DAIRY:

To hit dairy heifer rearing targets we are aiming for 0.7-0.8kg daily.

- Holstein heifer, 3 week old 0.75kg daily.
- Holstein heifer, 5 week old 1.12kg daily!
- Holstein Heifer, 10 week old 1.28kg daily.

A set of beltters!

We have seen some cases of crypto over the last couple of months. Weight gains in affected calves can take a real hit, seeing daily gains of around 0.2kg.



Growth Rates

DAIRY

1.12kg
daily

BEEF

2.16kg
daily

DAIRY FARMER MEETING

Controlling Lungworm Is Wormer Resistance An Issue in Cattle?

Wednesday 13th March 2024, 12pm at Bentham Golf Club,
Robin Lane, High Bentham, LA2 7AG

Our speaker Colin Mason is a vet from the SRUC disease surveillance centre in Dumfries, we will discuss actual levels of wormer resistance and why vaccinating for parasites (e.g. lungworm) and targeted treatments may be beneficial.

Hot lunch included and kindly supported by MSD.



Please contact the surgery to book your place by Wednesday 6th March 2024.

