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## FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - AUGUST 2023

### QUARANTINE PROTOCOL FOR PURCHASED SHEEP

It's that time of year again when the majority of sheep farmers will begin purchasing sheep to add to their flock. Whether it's tups, gimmer lambs or drafts it is of the utmost importance to protect our existing flock by following quarantine and isolation procedures.

- Firstly, isolate bought in animals for 28 days. The isolation area should be **at least 2 metres** away from other stock and in a different airspace (this means none of the air from the isolated animals will pass over the other animals on the holding).
- All sheep should have their feet examined and good practice is to footbath them 3 times at 5 day intervals during isolation. Consider a foot disinfection mat in the isolation unit.
- Any ill health or abnormalities during isolation should be investigated by seeking veterinary advice; respiratory signs, scour, lameness, swellings, skin disease, etc.
- Vaccinate to the same status as the flock.
- Keep on a fluke free pasture (no snail habitat) for 4 weeks after second fluke dose, or realistically as low risk as possible.
- Hold in a quarantine pasture or yard for 48 hours after worm treatment then turn onto a worm contaminated pasture (i.e. one that has grazed ewes and lambs during the summer).
- Blood sample purchased sheep for scab exposure.
- The animal can enter the flock after 28 days or 14 days after the last vaccine and whenever test results are all negative.



#### Step 1. Treatment

All sheep brought onto the farm should be treated with a product likely to remove all worms (resistant and susceptible). Resistance is reported in the UK with BZ (group 1-White), levamisole (group 2-Yellow) wormers, ML (group 3-Clear) wormers and now Zolvix (Group 4-Orange) wormer. The recommendation is to treat with 2 broad spectrum wormers which are most likely to kill all worms carried. **The simplest regime which also takes into account a scab risk is Zolvix and Cydectin 1%.** However if Footvax has or is going to be used Zolvix and Dectomax injection or OP dip.

#### Step 2. Holding

Hold sheep off pasture for 24-48 hours, until any worm eggs present in the gut have passed out with the dung. Faecal egg count (FEC) sampling at least 10 sheep where possible, 14 days after treatment will show that the worming regime has worked. Manure produced during this post-treatment period should **NOT** be spread on grass that will be grazed by sheep.

#### Step 3. Turnout onto contaminated pastures

Bought-in animals should then be turned out onto pasture contaminated with the farm's natural population of worm eggs and larvae. This helps to dilute any resistant worms that may have survived the treatment and rapidly infects the new animals with the farms specific worm population. This shortens the period when any introduced worms are dominant.

#### LIVER FLUKE

A treatment with fluke products other than triclabendazole is prudent (*resistance to triclabendazole has been reported in sheep, and more rarely in cattle*). Sheep should be kept off pastures for at least four weeks after treatment to prevent resistant fluke being introduced (*infected animals can pass eggs for up to three weeks after the adult flukes have died*). Remember that no flukicide kills all fluke with one dose, immature fluke need to be killed by treating twice.

#### SCAB

Considering the fact that the resistance of scab to group 3 injections (e.g. Cydectin, Dectomax) was identified in late 2017, and that the use of these products also increases the resistance of worms to clear drenches, this emphasises the importance of using drugs responsibly and of quarantining bought-in and sheep grazed on other holdings. There is a blood sample available for detecting whether sheep have been exposed to scab. This can be used to monitor the disease in sheep grazed on open fells, in purchased stock or as a marketing tool if selling sheep.

## ARE YOUR TUPS TIP TOP ?

It has been shown that carrying out a physical examination (not semen analysis) will identify 95% of infertile and sub-fertile tups. The fact that 30% of tups are sub-fertile illustrates that a pre breeding examination is a really useful exercise to avoid a high geld rate or late lambers. We do recommend semen tests in tups with abnormalities or where they are used as single sires. Here is a summary of the things we check in our pre-breeding examinations . The "T" theme continues!

### TOES

A lame tup is not going to be able to serve ewes to his full potential. Footrot and CODD are the most common infectious causes of lameness in sheep resulting in tups becoming infertile. Using a footrot vaccine (*Footvax*) 6 weeks prior to tupping can aid in preventing these diseases and is highly recommended.

### TEETH

Checking the incisors for broken mouths is an obvious inspection to carry out. The back teeth (*molars*) are equally important in allowing a sheep to be able to eat efficiently. It is difficult to visually inspect the molars, but they often feel spiky or irregular when you feel along the jaw if they are overgrown. Cud spilling or grass staining around the mouth is a tell-tale sign of advanced diseased molars.

### TOE

In this context tone is used to describe the body condition of the tup. To maximise his fertility a tup should be BCS 3.5-4 at tupping. He will lose 2 condition scores during tupping time, so he needs to have some reserves going into tupping. Ideally you can gradually feed him over 8-10 weeks pre-tupping to reach his ideal BCS and supplement him daily during tupping time. Overweight tups have a notorious reputation for poor fertility. This is because they have a poor libido!

### TESTICLES

The testicles, scrotum, sheath and penis should all be inspected for abnormalities. The size and consistency of the testicles tell us a lot about the fertility of the tup. There is a minimum scrotal size we accept tups should reach when they are in the breeding season. The testes should be the same size and have no lumps or bumps within the tissue.

### TREATMENTS

The worm and fluke status of the flock should always be taken into account, remember that tups may be on different pastures and may not have the same exposure and immunity as the ewes. Sampling is always advisable. It is also important to realise that newly purchased tups could introduce Scab, Footrot, CODD or resistant worms or fluke into your flock.

Do you have a quarantine treatment plan that you are sure is protecting you from these possibilities? A chat with one of the farm vets or SQPs is worthwhile from this perspective.



## LUNGWORM - HIGH RISK

Parasitic bronchitis (lungworm disease) caused by the nematode *Dictyocaulus Viviparus* is a serious disease of cattle.

### Life Cycle

Infection is by the swallowing of 3rd stage larvae (L3) from pasture which penetrate the gut wall and migrate to the lungs approximately 7 days after ingestion. Here the larvae move to the larger airways (bronchi and wind pipe) to become adults approximately 25 days after ingestion where they lay eggs containing the first stage larvae (L1). These are coughed up and swallowed by the infected animal and then passed out in faeces. In warm, damp conditions the L1 larvae passed in the faeces can become infectious L3 larvae within 7 days. Peak risk periods for lungworm outbreaks are in August/ September often after a period of damp weather. First season grazers which have not been vaccinated with lungworm vaccine (Huskvac) and are grazing land on which youngstock have grazed in previous years are particularly at risk, although we are increasingly seeing outbreaks in older animals including adult cows as well.

### Symptoms

Symptoms include a raised respiratory rate and coughing especially when moved.

### Laboratory diagnosis

Laboratory diagnosis can include the presence of lungworm larvae in dung samples but in the early stages of the disease it is possible to see clinical cases of lungworm before larvae appear in the faeces.

### Treatment

Treatments for lungworm include ivermectin based injections and pour-ons or levamisole treatments. In adult dairy cattle we have found eprinomectin based injections with a nil milk withhold to be very effective. In severely affected animals worming treatments may need to be combined with a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory to reduce the inflammation in the airways. For further advice on lungworm control please speak to one of the farm vets.



## BREAK DOSING

There are several strategies that are recommended for good worm control. The use of a break dose, where we use the group 4 orange or purple group 5 drenches to remove resistant worms from lambs and clean up pastures is one of the key procedures we recommend. A break dose is recommended after we have used a clear and a yellow wormer in a season.

### IMPORTANT POINTS WHEN BREAK DOSING

<b>X</b>	<b>DON'T leave any lambs untreated</b> <i>We want rid of all resistant worms</i>
<b>X</b>	<b>DON'T dose too early in the season</b> <i>The lambs need to have been exposed to all types of worms</i>
<b>X</b>	<b>DON'T dose if there are no worms</b> <i>Do a WEC to ensure we need to dose</i>
<b>X</b>	<b>DON'T dose adult sheep</b> <i>You will only encourage resistance</i>
<b>✓</b>	<b>DO dose correctly</b> <i>Calibrate the guns, weigh the animals, dose over the back of the tongue</i>
<b>✓</b>	<b>DO a post drench test</b> <i>Ensure the dose has worked. Sample 10-14 days.</i>



## CONGRATULATIONS KAREN

On behalf of the Directors, we would like to share the news that Karen Swindlehurst has been made an Associate of Dalehead Veterinary Group Ltd. As a valuable member of the team her contributions have developed the quality of service we offer to our clients—particularly but not limited to such a successful Flock Club.

Going forward Karen will continue to take responsibility for the Flock Club, Health Planning and SQP training and will take on responsibility for Practice Standards as well as other projects as and when necessary.



## PRODUCT NEWS

### Sheep Abortion Vaccines

We currently have good supplies of Enzootic abortion vaccines but would recommend that Toxoplasma vaccine is ordered in good time as soon as you know likely quantities required.

### Footrot Vaccine

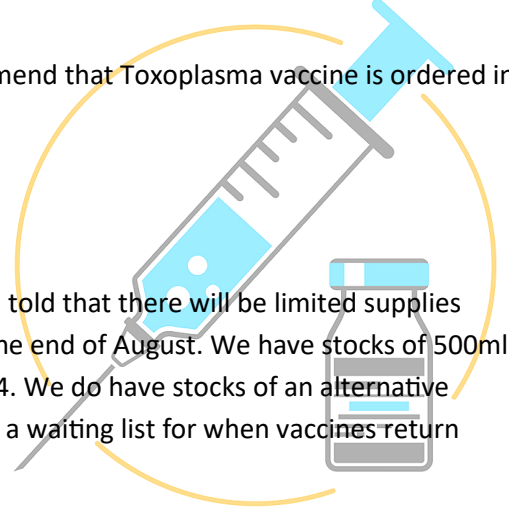
We have good supplies of Footvax.

### Clostridial/ Pneumonia Vaccines

There are currently ongoing supply issues with clostridial vaccines. We have been told that there will be limited supplies available of 100ml and 500ml Heptavac P in September and Bravoxin 100mls at the end of August. We have stocks of 500ml Ovivac P but 100ml bottles Ovivac P are unlikely to be available until January 2024. We do have stocks of an alternative clostridial vaccine available. To discuss your vaccination protocols or to be put on a waiting list for when vaccines return contact the surgery.

### Cattle

We have good supplies of IBR, Leptospirosis, BVD vaccine as well as Rotavirus and calf pneumonia vaccines.



## DAIRY FARM ASSURANCE REQUIREMENT

It is a requirement for all dairy farms to have done some Johnes testing (a minimum of a 30 cow screen) and have a Johnes plan in place as well as BVD testing and a control plan in place as part of their annual Red Tractor Farm Assurance. Signing up to Annual Health and Welfare Pathway entitles you to a sum of money which will pay for BVD testing screening tests and health planning.

Contact the surgery for more details or visit: <https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/register-your-interest?clid=1wAR2Cri3ZKqjBVxCiMbN11E1UpA1koLW6AUsMutvIkHM34UW8zLbGOL7B6qY>

## VETERINARY ATTESTATION FORMS

The procedures and paperwork required to export all goods have changed since Brexit. At the moment a farmer declaration is all that is needed to allow export of lambs but from 13th December 2023, the guidelines will tighten. There must be a complete paper trail for all Agricultural products which details regular veterinary health visits to each holding. This means that every farm that sells lambs to be exported needs a Veterinary Attestation Form signed. We must declare that you have disease control plans in place, practice good biosecurity, are free from notifiable disease and have regular veterinary visits; you need an up-to-date health plan in place.

The declaration is valid for 12 months and a copy accompanies consignments to the auction mart or abattoir. The information it contains is then used to support any export health certificates that are needed subsequently.

Those who are Red Tractor Assured or equivalent will already be compliant with the rules. Clients who don't have a health plan in place already will need to arrange for a vet visit and get a plan written up.

The good news to this extra paperwork is that there is grant funding for health plans through the Health and Welfare Pathway. When we write a plan for you it will be Red Tractor, Export Attestation and AHWP compliant. If you require further information, please contact the surgery or auction mart where you are planning on selling your animals. The link to apply for the grant funding is <https://defrafarming.blog.gov.uk/2023/03/23/animal-health-and-welfare-grants-apply-now/>



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Malham Show—SATURDAY 26TH AUGUST 2023

Hodder Valley Show—SATURDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 2023

We look forward to seeing you there for a brew and piece of cake or a pint and pork pie!

