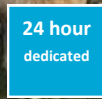




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FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2023

DO YOU KNOW YOUR FLUKE DOSES?

It's the time of year when sheep farmers consider a pre-tupping fluke dose for ewes. Our farm vets and SQP's are having daily discussions with clients about whether to dose their ewes and, if so, which product to use. To determine the presence of liver fluke infection, there are 3 main methods that we can use.

Fluke egg detection in dung samples (Adult Fluke Detection)

Examination of pooled dung samples, from at least 10 ewes, for the presence of liver fluke eggs can be done in-house at the Settle surgery. This test has the advantage of being a quick (same day results) and cheap (£21.85/test) BUT will only detect the presence of adult fluke (it takes 10-12 weeks following fluke being eaten off the pasture before they become mature egg laying adults in the bile duct).

Serology via blood sample (Immature Fluke Detection)

This blood test detects antibodies from 2 weeks after exposure to liver fluke, levels remaining high for several months following infection. This means that interpretation of results from adult sheep that have been infected with fluke the previous year is difficult but the test is extremely useful when sampling this year's lambs to diagnose when they are starting to be challenged by fluke, and therefore what the likely risk to ewes is, and whether we need to dose.

We currently have several monitor farms in all parts of the practice where we are blood sampling lambs for early detection of fluke which gives a good indication of the likely fluke challenge this autumn. For the latest updates or to discuss this method of detection on your holding, please contact the surgery.

Examination of livers at post-mortem

Any animals that we post-mortem at the surgery will have their livers checked for the evidence of liver fluke infection. Feedback from slaughterhouse reports also provide additional information.

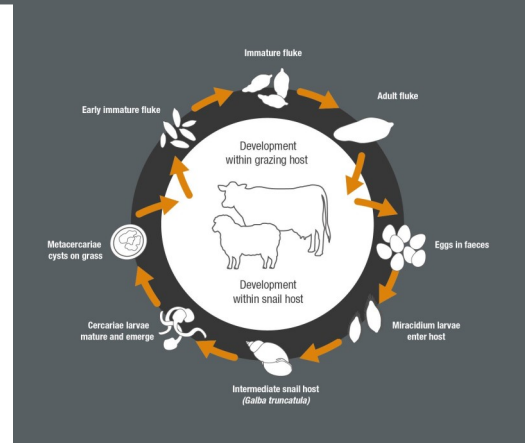
The current situation is that there is minimal evidence of new season fluke from blood samples, post-mortems and slaughterhouse feedback.

For anyone wanting to fluke drench sheep pre-tupping, we would advise a fluke egg count on pooled dung samples (bring in at least 10 fresh, individual samples from adult ewes to the surgery for us to pool together and test) to make sure that adult fluke which have been carried over from last winter are not still present.

Once we know whether our sheep are carrying adult flukes or are likely to be infected with immature flukes the next step is to decide which product to use if treatment is required.

Triclabendazole based products (e.g. Endofluke, Tribex, Fasinex, Triclafas) will kill fluke down to 2-3 day old immatures in sheep but there is an increasing issue with resistance to this drug. Closantel based products (e.g. Flukiver, Solantel) will kill down to 5 week old immatures whereas oxcyclosanide and albendazole based products (e.g. Tramazole, Albex) will only kill adult fluke.

To discuss your need to fluke sheep or cattle this autumn and/or which products would be most appropriate to use contact the surgery to speak to our farm vets/ or farm SQP's.



FLUKE IN LIVER													
Acute fluke						Chronic fluke							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
Blood sampling detects fluke						Copro-antigen detects fluke						FEC detects fluke	
Triclabendazole 90% - 99%						99.90%							
Closantel 23% - 73%						85% - 97%						99 - 100%	
						Nitroxinil 50% - 90%						91% - 99%	
												Oxcyclosanide 50% - 70% 80% - 99%	
												BZ white drench	

INFECTIOUS BOVINE RHINOTRACHEITIS (IBR)

Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR) is a viral infection of cattle resulting in respiratory symptoms such as runny eyes, nasal discharge (snotty noses), coughing and increased breathing rate. Infected cattle usually run high temperatures with decreased appetite, are off colour and have reduced milk yields. Spread of the infection from cow to cow is usually airborne so new infections are often seen in the autumn period after housing.



The virus that causes IBR in cattle is a herpesvirus, a feature of herpesvirus infections being that once an animal has been infected the virus remains in the body for life and the infection can flare up in the future at times of stress such as calving, peak milk production etc. In human medicine the chicken pox virus and cold sore virus are examples of herpesvirus which can flare up as shingles or repeated cold sore symptoms at times of stress.

Studies have shown that the virus is present in over half of the UK dairy herds with individual carrier cows having several flare ups of infection during a lactation resulting in a significant reduction in milk yield. The economic impact of IBR infection is reduced by vaccination once or twice each year (e.g. with **Bovilis IBR Marker Live**, **Risposal IBR Marker Live** or **Hiprabovis IBR**) although it can be difficult to eliminate the virus from the herd.

Bulk milk samples can be used to tell whether the infection is present in unvaccinated herds and also how much virus is circulating in herds that already vaccinate. **We have some funding available to carry out free bulk milk testing to help determine your herd's status.**

To discuss your herd's IBR situation and optimal vaccination protocols contact the surgery and speak to one of our farm vets.

CALF JACKETS

Research has shown that maximising daily liveweight gains of dairy heifer calves before weaning results in extra milk production when they calve down. An extra 100 grams of growth per day up to weaning can result in an extra 250kg of milk produced in the first lactation.



We encourage farmers to have good ventilation in calf buildings to remove stale and humid air in order to reduce the incidence of respiratory disease. However, **it is also important that young calves are kept warm.** As a general rule when the air temperature falls below 10 degrees Celsius at night the calf uses up extra energy just to keep warm, therefore it's growth rate will be reduced. If the calf is in a draught or has damp bedding the temperature at which it uses additional energy to keep warm will be higher.

The use of calf jackets to keep young calves warm in order to maximise their growth rates is becoming increasingly popular and is proving very successful. A recent study carried out at the practice found that calf jackets increased growth rates over winter by 0.2kg/day from birth to weaning. To achieve this with extra feed would cost over £27 per calf. **Calves heavier at weaning tend to live longer, give more milk and are more fertile than those weaned lighter.** We currently stock 'Cosy Calf' jackets at a very reasonable price of £22.00 plus VAT (direct debit/cash sale price).

For more information on the benefits of calf jackets and protocols for when they should be used please speak to one of the farm vets or farm vet techs.



CALF SERVICES



HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Looking at housing, colostrum management, nutrition & disease levels.
Provides advise & targets for calf rearing.

COLOSTRUM TESTING

Quality testing & measurement of antibody transfer.

WEIGHING & GROWTH RATE ANALYSIS

VACCINATIONS

DISBUDDING

Local anaesthesia & NSAID pain relief are included.

DISEASE MONITORING

CALF MEETING



We had a good turnout for our dairy calf meeting on Monday. The on-farm meeting was kindly hosted by Richard Parsons at Manor Farm, Barnoldswick. Iain McCormick from Zoetis discussed bovine respiratory disease (BRD) and methods to help prevent pneumonia in calves, such as good colostrum management, housing/environment and the use of vaccines.

Our vet Ian used smoke bombs to demonstrate airflow under umbrellas which had been modified to replicate different types of ventilation in the calf building.

Veronica Waller from The Farmer Network shared information about the calf housing grant available, for which the first stage deadline is 30th November. There are also some equipment grants becoming available next year.

Dalehead has a range of calf services available including visits from our vet techs to assess housing, disbud calves and weigh calves for growth rates.

We can also vaccinate calves for protection against pneumonia viruses from birth. For a limited time our vet techs are offering a free of charge visit and administration of your purchased intranasal pneumonia vaccine. If you would like to take advantage of this offer, please contact the surgery for more details.

AHDB "RIGHT CARCASS RIGHT MARKET" FLOCK CLUB MEETING

"Right Carcass Right Market" was the topic for our latest Flock Club meeting. This was an on-farm meeting run in conjunction with AHDB. Ceva animal health sponsored the day, Home Barn foods provided the catering and we were hosted by the Harrison family at Harrop Hall, Slaidburn.

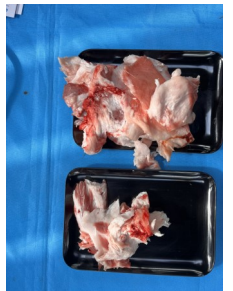
The five presentations raised lively discussion over many areas; consumer trends, advertising campaigns, importance of in-spec lambs to profitability, hands on demonstration of lamb selection, eating quality, cost of production, customer satisfaction, EUROP scale, carcass condemnations, signet projects, EBVs and genetics. The last presentation of the information filled day was an excellent butchery demonstration comparing in and out of spec lambs.

The take home messages we came away with were:

- The demographic that buys lamb in the UK is ageing, with the youngest consumers buying virtually no lamb. The majority of lamb bought in the UK is by the Muslim community
- The cost of putting fat on a lamb is considerably more than muscle, and the FCR is much better as a younger lamb (creep fed lambs are more profitable than housed store lambs)
- The eating quality, meat yield and processor profitability is much higher in lambs that are not over fat
- The ideal carcass for many markets is R3L. This is achieved on muscling and fat cover not the weight of the lamb
- Genetics play a major role in finishing time, carcass grade and eating quality
- The butchery demonstration showed very well the difference between an in spec R3L carcass and a R4H. The waste and time taken to butcher the fore end was considerably more in the R4H but the meat yield was almost the same in both.

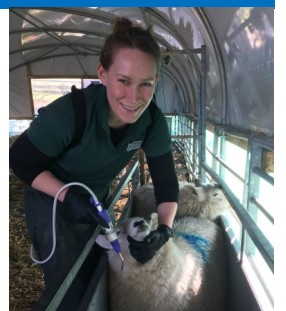
All in all, we had an extremely interesting and thought-provoking day!

If you want to join us at our Flock Club events give the surgery a ring or speak to one of the vets.



ANNA WALKER - FARM TEAM LEADER

The farm department continues to grow and evolve with many projects in the pipeline. Anna Walker, a qualified RVN and our Farm Vet Tech for many years has played a vital role in the development of the business, even winning the Petplan Veterinary Nurse of the Year award in 2018 for her work involving anthelmintic resistance in sheep flocks. We are very pleased to announce that Anna has accepted the position of Farm Team Leader in order to further promote the practice, co-ordinate all aspects of the department and continue to develop the services we offer.



Annual Health and Welfare Pathway Grant

The Animal Health and Welfare Pathway Grant was made available earlier this year to Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) eligible farms with at least 11 cattle or 21 sheep. It has now been opened up to farmers who have not been claiming BPS.

We have seen a fantastic uptake so far from clients in all areas (dairy, beef and sheep) and we continue to have daily conversations regarding the grant.

The annual health review involves a visit from your vet to discuss herd/flock health and biosecurity. There are also mandatory laboratory tests which depends on the species involved in the plan. We intend to tailor your review to incorporate any Red Tractor, PCHS or milk contract health planning you have already undertaken and ensure that we can apply for additional funding that is being planned.

How much is the grant worth?

Beef cattle £552 Dairy cattle £372 Sheep £436 Pigs £684

The grant is designed to cover the cost of 2-3 hours of vet time and the lab fees for the required tests. The funding is payable to you the livestock producer, after the vet visit and lab work is done. The grant cannot be paid directly to your vet, nor can they apply or claim on your behalf.

What laboratory tests are involved?

- BVD testing for dairy and beef cattle - if you already routinely test you will not have to do any additional sampling.
- Pre and post drench worm egg counts for sheep
- Porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome for pigs.

What is the cost to you?

The fee for the review is £200 (exc VAT) plus the laboratory fees.

What do you do now?

You must apply for the grant before the health planning visit or the laboratory tests are done and have an agreement number in place. The timing is important to ensure you receive the funding.

Step 1. Register your interest online through the following link and follow the online process.

<https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/start>

Step 2. Contact us with your agreement number and arrange the health planning visit and laboratory testing. These both must be completed within 6 months of receiving the agreement number.

Step 3. Send the signed veterinary declaration back to APHA (completed when we write your health plan)

So far we have found the process smooth and efficient. Clients who have taken advantage of the grant have informed us that payments are being made after approximately a week of submitting the required documentation.

If you are interesting in the grant and would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact the surgery.

LAB UPDATE

Another busy month in the lab, we are still seeing high results in lamb worm egg counts. We have taken the first round of samples from our 3 farms monitoring for liver fluke located in Slaidburn, Bentham and Ingleton, all of which came back negative. Many trace element bloods have been sent off in the last couple of months for both groups of sheep and lambs, some for monitoring and others to aid in diagnosis of ill thrift animals. Many of these have come back as being low cobalt (vitamin B12).

We have continued to diagnose positive lungworm in cattle.

We have been sending off lots of samples for the Animal Health and Welfare Pathways (AHWP) mentioned above, BVD bloods for beef, bulk milk samples for dairy and faecal egg counts for sheep. If you are bringing muck samples in to the surgery to be sent on the AHWP grant please note:

- The samples **MUST** be from lambs, **NOT** adult sheep
- The initial samples **MUST** be pre-dose samples, with a second round of samples sent post drench (1 week for 2-LV Yellow wormers and 2 weeks for all other classes of wormer)
- Minimum of 10 but ideally 15 individual samples, to be pooled in the lab, **pre pooled samples will not be accepted**
- Samples must be big enough to test in house first and then send off if the worm egg count is high enough to require dosing (ideally at least the equivalent of 2 heaped teaspoons per sample)
- Post drench samples must be from the same group as the pre dose samples were taken

If you have any questions about the AHWP, sample collection or trace elements, then please contact the surgery and speak to one of the farm vets.