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FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - FEBRUARY 2026

WE WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE..... KATHERINE!

"After spending my first years as a vet in Northumberland my partner and I decided we needed a change of scenery and what better place to experience a different side to the industry and incredible landscapes than New Zealand!

To retain a family-run practice feel, we chose to work on the North Island in the Waikato region, however a dairy cow to person ratio of 1:1 seems like an awful lot of cows for the family.

This resulted in a quick uptake of work with thousands of cows to be pregnancy scanned, metricchecked and assisted when calving! Our calving season came with some new challenges. Gone were the 80kg calf c-sections and along came the embryotomies, schistomes and all sorts of unusual presentations. We were happy to have pulled our weight within the team and managed to take home the 2025 calving cup - with a joint highest number of calvings for the season!

After a year of hard graft, three months of travelling provided us with some well needed down time. We spent six weeks travelling round the South Island followed by relaxing on the beaches in the Pacific islands before coming home for Christmas.

We've relocated back to the North West, where my partner was based. Although adjusting back to the UK weather has been challenging, I'm looking forward to settling into the team and getting to know this beautiful area."

Written by Katherine Williams



LAMBING MEETING SUMMARISED

The lambing meeting topic was young lamb scours – we touched on lots of areas from the importance of colostrum, hygiene, vaccines, parasite control and ensuring a good Body Condition Score in the ewe. Too much to summarise in the newsletter! This month we will highlight two of the products that are relatively new to the market. Next month we will summarise the coccidiosis section of the meeting – stay tuned!

Arkguard



This is a supplement for newborn lambs, however it is not an energy or probiotic supplement like others available. Whilst probiotics are useful in establishing a good bacterial load in the gut and energy is important in giving the lamb help with keeping warm and getting up to suck, immunity is crucial in preventing disease. Arkguard uses concentrated IgY antibodies derived from egg yolks to coat the gut lining, providing immunity in the gut hence protecting against bacterial invasion. It is not a replacement for colostrum but we feel it is a game changer in preventing watery mouth in lambs where colostrum intake may be compromised and later in the season when contamination builds up.



Nobacz

Is a navel treatment which in addition to drying the navel provides a physical protective coating, cleanses the area and has a bitter taste to deter the ewe from licking—all the ingredients we need in a navel treatment! A recent trial on the protection provided showed it to be superior to iodine with 18 more lambs surviving per 1000 born in the NoBACZ treated group versus the iodine treated group. Nobacz can be applied via spraying or dipping the navel, but we strongly recommend the dipping method to ensure the entire navel is covered.

Written by Karen Swindlehurst

LAMBING TIME PREPARATION

As we head into February, preparations for lambing are well under way!

Our vet tech team and farm vets are here to support you with your pre-lambing checks. One of the most important areas to review at this stage is the worm status of your ewes. We have found that ewes carrying multiple lambs are at an increased risk of higher worm egg counts, as they are under greater metabolic stress. Muck samples need to be collected at the point of lambing (10 samples from a minimum of 10 ewes) from 2-3 different groups (hoggs, shearlings, triplet-bearing ewes, and thinner ewes under pressure).

Our vet tech team carries out in-house faecal egg counts (FECs) and results are usually obtained the same day. Once your FEC results are available, our vets will work with you to target treatment at higher-risk groups. This targeted approach helps reduce unnecessary wormer use and lowers the risk of developing anthelmintic resistance.

Accurate dosing is crucial to reduce the number of worm eggs being shed onto pasture, helping to protect your 2026 lamb crop during this critical period.

The Flock Club continues to be a great asset to Dalehead clients. As part of your annual membership, a pre-lambing visit is included. During this visit we can:

- Assess ewe body condition score (BCS)
- Carry out ketone blood testing
- Review scanning results
- Discuss forage analysis and supplementation plans
- Check pre-lambing vaccine boosters
- and tailor advice specifically to your flock's needs.

The Animal Health and Welfare Pathway also offers funding towards lambing time preparation or if you experience an issue which needs to be investigated further during lambing time. Please get in touch with the surgery to arrange your pre-lambing support or to discuss government funding through the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway.

NEW PAYMENT RATES SHEEP				
	PREVIOUS	NEW	PREVIOUS	NEW
SHEEP	£436	£574	£639	£658
NEW PAYMENT RATES CATTLE				
			BVD POSITIVE	BVD POSITIVE
BEEF CATTLE	£552	£647	£837	£954
DAIRY CATTLE	£372	£447	£1714	£1844
BIOSECURITY	-	-	£215	£258

SCAN TO VIEW
SHEEP FOLLOW UP
PACKAGES.



REHYDION

rehydion®
Gel



Share your feedback on Rehydion
to enter our competition



Ceva is looking for the best farmer testimonial for Rehydion. The winning testimonial will receive a GOODY BAG including TWO bottles of Rehydion Gel, a doser pump and a pair of fun sheep or cow special Ceva socks. 10 runners up will receive a free bottle and pump.

HOW TO ENTER

1. Scan the QR code or use link below to open the entry form <https://forms.office.com/e/kgb0vTuM6i>
2. Complete the form including your testimonial
3. Prefer to handwrite it? Please use a printed form and pass entry to store/vet or send to Ceva using the address below.
4. Optional: create a short video (30 - 60 seconds) of your experience of using Rehydion and share on Facebook, using the #rehydion and @cevaruminantruk. Please submit the form to complete your entry if sharing a video testimonial.



Rehydion is an oral rehydration therapy gel that provides sufficient essential electrolytes to correct acidosis.

Can be given without removing milk feed. Allows continued milk feeding (when given at the recommended levels), as it does not disturb milk clot formation or delay abomasal emptying.

Easy to use. Rehydion can be mixed (and stays mixed) with milk or water, using the dosing cap, or it can be administered directly using a dosing pump/syringe.

HOW TO USE WITH LAMB

- 1ml per kg, per feed
- 1 x 2ml pump per 2kg lamb, per feed
- 1 bottle = up to 160 feeds
- If mixed with water, mix 20ml with 1 litre

HOW TO USE WITH CALVES

- 2 feeds a day for 2 days
- 20ml per 1 litre of milk, per feed
- 4 x 10ml pumps per feed
- 1 bottle = 8 feeds

For more information, please speak to one of our farm vets.

LEPTOSPIROSIS AND YOUR DOG

It is unusual for us to be discussing dog vaccines in the farm newsletter, but we want to make you aware and advise you of the risks to your dogs from Leptospirosis and encourage you to vaccinate.

In the practice we have been seeing an increasing number of Leptospirosis cases in farm dogs over the years, in most cases the disease is advanced by the time the symptoms are noticed and the majority of dogs diagnosed die of liver and kidney failure. If we catch the disease early, and provide intensive antibiotic and fluid therapy, there is reportedly an 80% chance of survival although there can be permanent liver or kidney damage. The symptoms to look out for include fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, jaundice, increased thirst, and lethargy.

The bacteria are spread in the urine of carrier animals that are not affected and show no symptoms these are known as maintenance hosts. Infected urine contaminates the environment resulting in high-risk areas such as stagnant water, farm yards, and areas with high rodent populations. The maintenance hosts are typically wild or domestic mammals (e.g., rats, mice, dogs, cattle, pigs, sheep, horses) These hosts act as long-term environmental reservoirs, causing infection and disease in incidental hosts. Different strains of the *Leptospira* bacteria affect different animals as incidental or maintenance hosts. Over 200 strains of *Leptospira* exist globally, in the UK 14 types have been identified by APHA in dog urine samples, There are 4 key strains identified as causing the majority of disease in dog; *L. Canicola* (dog-adapted), *L. Australis* (coastal/woodland rodents), and *L. Grippotyphosa* (small mammals).



Modern vaccines (L4) typically protect against these four main strains. There is no evidence that a leptospirosis vaccination strain will provide any cross protection to other leptospirosis strains, for example *L. Hardjo* which is very widespread in cattle. It is however speculated that the more strains of leptospirosis there are in a vaccination, the more likely it is to provide some cross reactivity, particularly within a serogroup. This is the reason we have been recommending the 4 strain Lepto vaccine for many years rather than the older 2 strain vaccine.

The immunity from a Lepto vaccine is not long lived so to provide immunity we must vaccinate dogs every year. The other diseases we vaccine dogs for –Distemper, Parvovirus and Hepatitis have a three-year cover; hence we booster these diseases on a 3 year cycle.

The takeaway message is please ensure your farm and pet dogs are vaccinated for Lepto; its a fatal and very unpleasant disease that we can prevent.

We are aiming to set up a vaccine service where a vet will be in your area to vaccinate on farm and several drop in clinics specifically for farm dogs. We will be in touch to let you know about these but please contact the surgery to express your interest.

NEIL'S KNEES



As many of you will be aware I recently (19th January) underwent a knee replacement surgery and have just (3rd February) had the dressing removed off the wound and I'm pleased to report that everything is progressing well.

For 5 days prior to the surgery I was instructed to shower in a special antibacterial wash to reduce the chances of me carrying multi-resistant bacteria (standard procedure) and I was booked in to have surgery under epidural anaesthesia and light sedation to allow a quicker recovery time. Unfortunately the epidural didn't work fully so I ended up having a general anaesthetic but was still back on the ward within 2 hours of going down to theatre and discharged home the following day.

I was not put on any antibiotics post operatively which made me think of cows and sheep which routinely receive antibiotics post-op because our on farm operating theatres aren't as sterile as a hospital environment!

The main focus of attention now seems to be forced extension and flexion of the knee to achieve a good range of movement in the joint. The physio that I have seen is brilliant but does seem to take the attitude 'no pain no gain!' and appears keen to force me though the pain barrier to flex and extend the joint.

I managed to stop away from the surgery for 12 days (a record for me) but then had to call in due to severe withdrawal symptoms. Many thanks to everyone who has phoned me to see how the recovery is going or enquired at the surgery—your good wishes are very much appreciated!



WORKWEAR FOR THE FARM AND BEYOND

We are now stocking **Xpert Workwear** — workwear built to withstand real working conditions. Known for high-quality protective footwear and clothing, Xpert equips farmers and outdoor industries with gear that truly stands the test of time.

Designed using innovative technology, every product features purpose-driven details that balance practicality with modern style. From the toughest terrains to the harshest weather, Xpert workwear keeps you safe, dry, and comfortable.

We currently have a stocks of waterproof jackets, leggings, bib and braces, and parlour tops available in the surgery, with additional orders offered on short delivery times.



YOUR LAMBING & CALVING ESSENTIALS



Have any of you heard Tom Carlise (@dalesfarmer) on Instagram with his viral parody lambing song inspired by the theme tune to Only fools and Horses? If you haven't, go and have a listen and you will get VIP access to the tune playing in my head when restocking the lambing time shelves! Due to regulations, we can't advertise our antibiotics available, but the rest of the essential gear we can! So if you need:

- Colostrum
- Milk powder
- Arkguard
- Rubber rings & castrators
- Lube
- Marker spray
- Rehydration support gel and sachets
- Twin lamb drenches
- Feeding equipment
- Dosing guns
- Injector guns
- Ewe prolapse harness & Truss
- Navel treatments
- Calf jacket
- Lambing ropes and snares

Please contact the surgery to place your order. If we don't have what you need in stock, please let us know and we will try and get it in for next day delivery.

Written by Ruth Parker

DRUG COLLECTIONS

As we start to enter our busy period, we kindly ask remind you of our 24 hour notice on drug collections.

We require 24 hours notice for all drug collections, allowing time for prescription authorisation and preparation.

All veterinary practices are required to adhere strictly to current legislation. We may only prescribe POM-V medication for animals under our care. It is a legal requirement that before we can prescribe medication to your animal/animals, we must ensure that we have seen them, at least within the last 12 months. If you require a repeat prescription, please telephone the office, stating the target species and intended use of the medication and giving a minimum of 24 hours notice.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

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2026



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