



24 hour
dedicated
farm cover

Dalehead
Veterinary Group Ltd

STATION ROAD, SETTLE BD24 9AA

MOUNT PLEASANT, HIGH BENTHAM LA2 7LE

GISBURN AUCTION MART, GISBURN BB7 4ES



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FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 2021

VACCINATIONS AT HOUSING



Housing is a stressful time for both cattle and you. Daily routines are altered and the work load increases. However, forward planning to ensure herds are up to date with vaccinations and other routine treatments can prevent production loss over the winter. Closer contact between animals, reduced ventilation and damp environments are the perfect ingredients for viral replication and disease in cattle. Vaccinations should be administered when cattle are healthy, this ensures a successful immune response is stimulated. Vaccinations should be planned to ensure maximum protection for cattle when they are most at risk from disease. Some vaccines require two doses followed by a period of several weeks before full immunity develops. Ensure datasheets are read prior to administration as this details how vaccinations should be administered (intramuscularly, intranasally or subcutaneously), dosage

rates and contra-indications. Cleanliness is important to reduce the risk of introducing infection at the vaccination site and to ensure efficacy of the vaccine given.

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD)

Vaccines for BVD have been available for over 15 years, but the disease is still commonly found on UK farms. Recent testing schemes, such as BVD Stamp It Out, have raised the profile of this disease making us all more aware of the disease status. The main motivation for vaccinating against BVD is to prevent persistently infected (PI) calves being born. PI calves are created when dams are infected with BVD in the first third of pregnancy. These calves will continually shed virus throughout their life, so will spread disease to the rest of the herd.

Bovilis BVD primary vaccination programme requires two doses. **Bovela** requires a single dose primary course. Boosters are required either 6 monthly or annually – the details of which should be checked on the vaccine datasheet. To ensure full protection against BVD, cattle must have completed the primary course before their first service. The timing of administration should aim for full protection several weeks before the service date, to ensure foetal protection and prevent the production of persistently infected calves.

Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR)

IBR is a highly contagious viral infection, once an animal has been infected with the virus it carries the disease for the rest of its life and may spread the virus intermittently during times of stress or immune suppression. There are multiple vaccines available, with inactivated ones generally better at producing longer-term immunity. Live vaccines have a rapid onset of immunity, so can be used in a disease outbreak scenario to create immunity quickly. Marker vaccines enable vaccinated and naturally infected animals to be differentiated through laboratory testing.

Pneumonia vaccinations

There are several vaccines available against common respiratory pathogens in various combinations. The common viral causes of pneumonia in cattle include IBR, P13, RSV and BVD. Some pneumonia vaccinations may need to be started before housing to give adequate time for second doses and full immunity to develop before cattle are housed. Vaccinations are only part of a preventative programme for respiratory disease in cattle. Space, ventilation and protection from bad weather are also incredibly important.

Protocols should be discussed with one of the farm vets, to ensure time and money are not being wasted through incorrect use of vaccines. Disease control is most valuable when tailored to the specifics of your farm as a better understanding of the herd's disease status, through sampling and testing creates the most effective vaccine protocol.

DIGITAL DERMATITIS IN CATTLE

With the majority of herds now housed for winter we start to see a rise in the number of cases of digital dermatitis in cattle. Digital dermatitis is caused by a group of bacteria called Treponemes. It is a highly contagious condition which affects the feet of cows and sheep. Digital dermatitis spreads via the environment as well as hoof trimming equipment.

Prevention is the best cure when it comes to Digital Dermatitis:

- Keeping passageways clear of slurry. Slurry irritates the skin and increases the chances of bacterial infection. Slurry also harbors infectious bacteria.
- Regular foot-bathing is the key to control. Herds that foot bath daily in a 3% formalin solution have the lowest levels of Digital Dermatitis. Herds that only start foot bathing when levels of DD increase struggle to get on top of it. Starting early will keep levels low. Cattle which are housed all year round should have continuous access to a footbath. At present there are difficulties in sourcing formalin, to discuss an alternative, please contact the surgery.



Affected animals should be put in a separate group to be treated and to stop them spreading it to others. Cleaning off lesions and spraying with oxytetracycline spray is the best treatment but it needs to be done for 5 days. If the cow's foot is swollen antibiotics and pain relief will need to be administered in addition to the oxytetracycline spray.

For more information please contact the surgery.

'HAVE YA LOOSED YA TUPS??'

Some of you may not have loosed your tup yet, some of you may have just so put them in, some of you may be half way through and the rest of you may have finished tugging time! Whatever stage you are at ensuring your tups are in tip top health will promote a successful tugging time.

Examining all tups at least 8 weeks before they are introduced to the ewes is best practice. This gives you and the tups enough time to address and ideally overcome any problems that you may find.

Body Condition: Tugging is hard work! (well it looks it from a distance). It is recommended that tups have a body condition score of 4 when they are set to work.

Testicles: Size does matter! A minimum of 35cm circumference around the widest part of the scrotum is desired, however there are variations in breed and age. When examining the testes, both should be firm with no lumps, swellings or heat. Turn the tup over and check his penis and prepuce for any signs of injury or infection. These steps are routinely carried out by our vets during a tup fertility visits.

Feet: Lameness has a huge impact on a tup and how well he can work. Check all feet for any issues. If we check tups 8 weeks before tugging time we can treat the issue and all being well cure the problem before he is introduced to the ewes. If a ram is persistently lame, we would advise not to breed from him. Conditions such as footrot, CODD, or an abscess can cause a raised temperature which can affect sperm production for up to six weeks. Including an anti-inflammatory as part of the treatment protocol will dramatically help reduce fevers.

Although this article is a little late for the majority of you it may assist in identifying an issue if you have sheep coming over. To be certain of your tup's fertility Dalehead provide a full tup fertility and semen assessment by a farm vet. This includes a thorough examination of the tup, covering all points mentioned above and if required assessing a semen sample under a microscope for quantity, quality, activity and sperm structure.

For more information or to discuss your sheep coming over, please contact the surgery to speak to one of the farm vets.



SOLANTEL POUR-ON FOR CATTLE



Solantel Pour-on is a closantel based flukicide which is licensed for the treatment of late immature (older than 7 weeks) and adult liver fluke in cattle. The benefit of Solantel Pour-on is that it allows a targeted treatment for fluke only with a stress free, easy to administer application rather than a combination fluke and worm treatment.

Solantel Pour-on is available in 3 different pack sizes (1 litre, 2.5 litre and 5 litre) and an appropriate dosing applicator is also available.

Please telephone the surgery for more information.

Control of Parasites at Housing Time

Housing time is a great way to clear out parasites from cattle – We need to think about:

Endoparasites	Ectoparasites
Gut worms	Mange
Lungworms	Lice
Fluke	

Not all ages of cattle need to be treated, and by reducing the use of some products we will slow the development of resistance so we can use those products in the future.

Calves and Stores

- Youngstock, in the first two grazing seasons, will not have gained immunity to either gut worms or lungworm – so are at risk of parasitic gastroenteritis in late summer, through housing and even at turnout if they are not treated properly.
- The best product to treat worms in youngstock is an avermectin (*ivermectin, doramectin or moxidectin*).
- Longer acting ivermectins are used to control mange and lice. If you are just treating for worms a short acting ivermectin is sufficient.
- However we should not to use the same protocol for adult cattle.

Adult Cattle

- Fit adult cattle will have immunity to gut worms and lungworms. They should not need to be wormed.
- If we can refrain from treating our adult cattle we can also reduce the chance of anthelmintic resistance developing.
- There is no immunity to mange and lice however – so our adult cattle do need dosing for this.
- Rather than using an ivermectin we should look to use a product specific to ectoparasites – cypermethrin or deltamethrin.

Fluke

- Fluke levels vary season to season – some years we are hit hard and some years we don't need to dose. The key message here is don't do the same thing at the same time every year. We need to test!
- Cattle aren't affected as much as sheep due to the size of their livers, but fluke can still have an impact on youngstocks growth rates.
- We have a limited range of flukicides. Triclabendazole is the only product that will kill fluke down to 2 weeks old but an increasing number of farms are now showing resistance to this drug. The remaining active ingredients only kill from 7 weeks of age or just adults. This means if we get our timing wrong we will not kill all the fluke in the animal.
- If you do not have triclabendazole resistance (we can test for this and should be doing) then this is the product of choice to treat growing stock two weeks after housing. However, this is only necessary when fluke are present. We can blood sample lambs or calves to check for the presence of fluke pre-housing. We do have an active monitoring system at Dalehead to give us an indication of the fluke levels each year.
- Adult Cattle do not need dosing with triclabendazole. A closantel flukicide e.g. Solantel Pour-on, used 7 weeks after housing is an ideal choice for adult cattle as it will ensure all fluke are old enough and will be killed.
- Due to the levels of resistance we should check cattle pre-turnout by performing a fluke egg count. If we have used triclabendazole or closantel and some fluke have survived it is essential that we dose prior to turn out to stop pasture contamination. Any fluke in the cattle at this stage will be adults and by using another product such as albendazole, oxclozanide or clorsulon will ensure they are clear when turned out.
- Treatment protocols will and should vary farm to farm and year by year. It is essential that we use the right products at the right time in the right animals to ensure maximum efficiency both of the product and to slow the development of resistance. Testing for parasites and also for resistance is essential.

At Dalehead we can carry out all the necessary testing and we can advise when and what to dose with based on the season and your farm conditions. Contact us for more details.



Red Tractor Beef & Lamb Revised Standards

From the 1st of November there have been significant changes to the Red Tractor farm assurance guidelines. Below is not a full list of the updates but those of which a vet involvement is required. The biggest change is that a veterinary review of the farm health plan is now a key requirement and not just a recommendation for beef and sheep producers as it has been for dairy for a number of years. This review should include...

- An annual health and performance review.
- Review of the current husbandry procedures on the farm.
- An annual collation and review of antibiotic usage.

Other key changes include...

- At least one member of farm staff must have attended a medicine course (Renewed every 3 years). Please contact the surgery for more information regarding our 'Responsible use of Medicines' Course.
- The guidelines are making a strong recommendation for analgesic (pain killer) to be used when performing routine management procedures with a potential to cause pain e.g. disbudding, castrating. This is detailed in an appendix of the Red Tractor guidelines.
- There is now a specific recommendation for the use of pain killers in calves being disbudded with caustic paste.
- A recommendation is in place that all cattle producers have a BVD eradication plan. This will become a full standard from October 2022.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

DAIRY FARMER MEETING-WEDNESDAY 17TH NOVEMBER

Venue: The Farm Building, Settle Surgery

Date: Wednesday 17th November

Time: 11.30am-2.30pm

To discuss: 'Optimising dairy cow fertility and effective synchronisation protocols'

The main speaker will be Mark Crowe, Professor of Animal Husbandry and Reproduction, University College Dublin.

We shall discuss practical management of cows from the dry period through to service to optimise fertility and how to get maximum benefit from veterinary fertility visits.

The meeting is kindly sponsored by Elanco Animal Health. To book a place please contact the surgery ASAP but definitely before Monday 15th November. Refreshments and lunch provided.

DALEHEAD AI COURSE



We are running a DEFRA approved artificial insemination course for cattle at the practice starting on Monday 6th December to Thursday

9th December. 10am-4pm. Each day will be split into two hours in the classroom followed by three hours of practical.

The cost is £400 per person and numbers are very limited. Small groups of 5 will allow us to deliver a high quality course enabling a more one on one approach setting you up with the confidence and skill to serve your own cows. If you are interested please contact the practice for more information.

MilkSure✓ COURSE

Date: Tuesday 23rd November 2021 **Time:** 11am-1pm

Venue: Part 1: The Farm Building, Settle Surgery

MilkSure is a training course for farmers to help reduce the likelihood of bulk tank failures. The course is split into two parts.

Part 1:

- Group discussion of medicine residues in milk and how to avoid them

Part 2:

- On farm to discuss medicine usage on your own farm.

Benefits of MilkSure training:

- Having fewer costly milk residue failures.
- Using medicines more efficiently.
- Demonstrating to customers a clear commitment to producing pure, safe milk.
- Many milk processors now insist on suppliers being MilkSure accredited.
- Satisfies Red Tractor requirement for attending a 'Use of Medicines Course'.

For more details or to register please contact the surgery before Wednesday 17th November.

TEL: 01729 823538
www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk