

## FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2020

### EARLY LAMBING IN EWES—REGULIN IMPLANTS



Although we are still seeing the occasional late lambing ewe requiring assistance at the surgery it is already time for early lambing flocks to start thinking of preparing ewes for the tup.

Regulin ear implants can be used to bring forward the natural breeding season by up to 2 months. In a treatment regime tups are kept away from the ewes (out of sight, sound and smell of the ewes) for at least 1 week prior to inserting the implants in the base of the ear until 5 weeks after implanting.



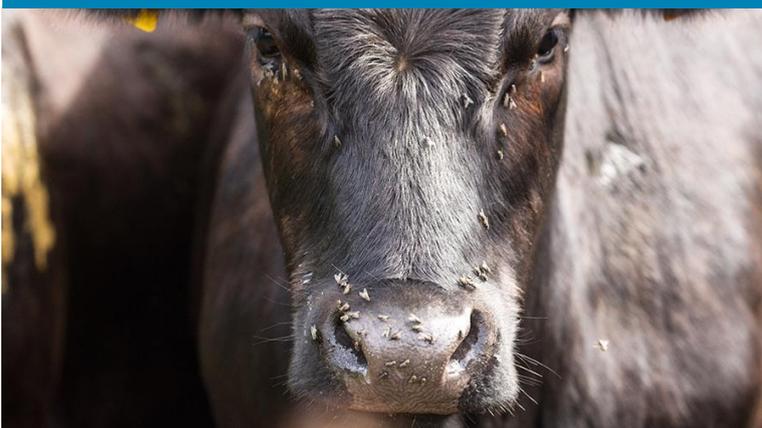
Peak mating takes place 60-70 days after implanting the ewes. To begin lambing at the start of February, Regulin should be administered at the start of July. We would recommend a tup/ewe ratio of 1:20 but we can also implant the tup to improve the quantity and quality of semen produced.

The advantages of using Regulin over sponging include:

- Conception rates are as good as to a totally natural service with no increase in multiple births.
- Sheep that don't conceive to their first mating will continue to cycle normally and not return to anoestrus.

For more information about Regulin please speak to one of the farm vets.

### CATTLE POUR— ON FLY CONTROL



Early season fly numbers may seem low but they will be laying large numbers of eggs so that when conditions become suitable, a low fly count can become a big problem in just a few weeks! Treating cows early in the season before their numbers have multiplied rapidly is optimal for control of fly numbers.

This year we are stocking **Spotinor** in the surgery with the option of supplying **Flypor** or **Butox Swish** for next day collection.

For more information please contact the surgery on 01729 823538.

# BLOWFLY STRIKE



Blowfly strike is the result of opportunistic invasion of living tissues by larvae (maggots) of bluebottle, greenbottle and blackbottle flies. Adult female flies deposit eggs on dead animals or areas of soiled fleece or where the skin is broken. Eggs hatch into first stage larvae within 12 hours and become mature maggots in 3-10 days depending on temperature and humidity. Blowfly populations are greatest during the summer months.

Affected sheep can be treated by plunge dipping using an organophosphate preparation but it is more usual to treat individual infested sheep with a pour-on product (e.g. **Crovect**, **Dysect**, **Ectofly** which can be used to prevent as well as treat blowfly strike) applied directly to the struck area after first clipping away the overlying wool. Dicyclanil preparations (**CLik**, **CLik-extra**, **CLikzin**) provide longer lasting protection to prevent blowfly strikes but do not treat existing strikes.

## Length Of Protection

	Meat Withdrawal	Approx Cost/Week For 10-20kg Lamb	June	July	August	September	October	November
	40 Days	7p	19 Weeks					
	40 Days	6.9p	16 Weeks					
	7 Days	7.3p	8 Weeks					
	8 Days	4.9p	6 Weeks					
	49 Days	3.8p	8 Weeks					
	8 Days	3.3p	6 Weeks					

For more information or for a quote, please contact the surgery.

## CLOSTRIDIAL DISEASE IN LAMBS

Clostridial diseases (Pulpy Kidney, Braxy, Blackleg, Tetanus) are caused by bacteria found in the soil as well as in the gut of healthy animals and usually require a 'trigger' to cause clinical infection e.g. weaning, adverse weather conditions, moving etc.

Almost all cases are fatal with very few being successfully treated, finding a dead sheep is often the first sign of a problem. Lambs acquire immunity from their mother's colostrum which protects them for 10-12 weeks assuming the ewe herself is vaccinated and the lambs have taken sufficient colostrum. So, with March/April born lambs now is the time to start thinking about vaccinating replacement ewe lambs.



We recommend using **Heptavac P Plus** for breeding replacements and **Ovovac P Plus** for lambs intended for slaughter. The 'P' part of both vaccines provides protection against Pasteurellosis, the most common respiratory disease of sheep. **Covexin/Bravoxin** can be used to protect against clostridial disease but gives no cover for Pasteurellosis. Whichever vaccine is used, 2 doses 4-6 weeks apart are required to give full immunity.

If you wish to discuss clostridial vaccination, please contact the surgery.

## LAMENESS IN SHEEP—FREE FOOTROT VACCINE!

Lameness in sheep is a significant cause of financial losses to sheep farmers and can have serious welfare implications. Two thirds of antibiotic use in sheep is thought to be used in treating lameness.

Most outbreaks of lameness in sheep are caused by bacterial infections. Scald and footrot are caused by *Dichelobacter Nodosus*. **C**ontagious **O**vine **D**igital **D**ermatitis (Codd) is associated with Treponeme bacteria (similar to Digital Dermatitis in cattle) which enter flocks on infected sheep but many Codd lesions also contain footrot bacteria. Less common causes of lameness are non-infectious and include toe granulomas, white line or toe abscesses and shelly or overgrown hoof. Footrot vaccine (**Footvax**) is an extremely important part of any control plan to reduce the incidence of lameness of footrot as well as scald and Codd.

We have been contacted by Merck (manufacturers of **Footvax**) who have a quantity of short dated (August expiry) vaccine which they are looking to provide free of charge to a limited number of flocks to vaccinate all breeding sheep twice, 6 weeks apart and to monitor the incidence of lameness as well as the reduction in antibiotic usage after vaccination. If you are interested in participating please contact the surgery ASAP as we are limited in the number of farms who can enrol for free vaccine. Farms taking part in the project must **not** have used **Footvax** in the previous two years.



## TRACE ELEMENTS DEFICIENCY IN GROWING LAMBS

The clinical signs associated with trace element deficiencies in sheep are often gradual in onset and usually present as poorly grown lambs during the summer months. There is considerable interplay between worm burdens and trace element deficiencies and it is important to deal with both problems.

### Cobalt Deficiency (Pine)

Cobalt has an important biological role as a constituent of vitamin B12 which is manufactured by micro-organisms in the first stomach (rumen). Cobalt deficiency (pine) occurs where there are low soil cobalt concentrations which may be further complicated by worm burdens which cause diarrhoea thereby interfering with the absorption of vitamin B12 from the gut.

Clinical signs of cobalt deficiency are most commonly seen in weaned lambs at pasture during late summer/autumn. Signs include lethargy, reduced appetite, poor quality wool with open fleece, small size and poor body condition despite adequate nutrition. Cobalt deficient lambs may fail to respond well to vaccinations and be more susceptible to clostridial disease (e.g. Pulpy Kidney) and Pasturellosis (pneumonia.)

Diagnosis of cobalt deficiency is based upon clinical signs in areas with known cobalt deficient soils supported by blood testing lambs for vitamin B12 levels.

### Treatment

Treatment of cobalt/vitamin B12 deficient lambs is by either vitamin B12 injection and/or drenching with cobalt sulphate. Monthly dosing of lambs from about 3 months of age with cobalt sulphate drenches should supply sufficient cobalt and therefore vitamin B12 to growing lambs in most situations. Alternatively we can provide long acting Vitamin B12 injections which will provide 3-6 months supply of vitamin B12 to growing lambs (**Smartshot**) **or** **Tracesure Lamb Finisher** boluses which provide 4-5 months supply of cobalt, iodine and selenium with the option of additional copper supplementation as well.

### Copper Deficiency

In growing lambs copper deficiency may result in a poor fleece without its natural crimp, poor growth rates, anaemia and increased susceptibility to bacterial infections. Copper deficiency is common when sheep graze pastures either low in copper or high in molybdenum, iron and/or sulphur.

If copper deficiency is suspected blood samples or liver samples can be checked to assess the copper status of the lambs and copper supplementation given if required. As well as being susceptible to copper deficiency sheep can also be prone to copper accumulation and toxicity. There is considerable breed variation with respect to copper absorption and therefore to copper deficiency and toxicity. **Veterinary advice is essential before copper supplementations are given to sheep.**



Copper oxide

Cobalt

Iodine

Selenium



# PARASITE UPDATE

A summary of the parasite situation in the last month:

## Fluke

We have been seeing variably positive and negative sample results through our lab. Because of weather conditions we have had a very late fluke season but it has extended later than traditionally.

## Our advice is:

For those of you not testing, fluke dose 8-10 weeks after your last dose with a different product than you have used this season, keeping your drug resistance in mind. It is not appropriate to use a triclabendazole or closantel product at this time, use an adalticide. After that, our recommendation is to do a Faecal Egg Count (FEC) 8-10 weeks later to see if you still have fluke contamination.

## Coccidiosis

We have seen some huge coccidiosis counts on some farms, but not on every farm that has had problems in previous years. The cocci infection has not affected every group of lambs to a point where they need treatment or preventative doses. This means that doing a FEC can save you a lot of time and money in target treating the lambs that require medication.

## Nematodirosis

The *Nematodirus Battus* risk was high in the middle of April. Lambs that were old enough to be grazing at that time should have been dosed by now to prevent disease and deaths.

## Parasitic Gastroenteritis, PGE

We have been seeing a variable level of these 'summer worms' in the last weeks. We recommend sampling from 4 weeks old.

Most summer worms are resistant to white drenches. Knowing what parasites you have saves time, money and provides a targeted treatment to keep lambs thriving!

## Blow Fly

The forecast is high risk at this time in this lovely spell of weather. There is a forecasting service for blowfly on NADIS and SCOPS websites.

## SHORT DATED DRUGS

We do have a small quantity of the following products which are short dated and being sold at a reduced price if they are appropriate for use on your farm. Please phone the surgery for more information on 01729 823538.

### Levafas Diamond 5 litre (sheep)

For treatment of adult fluke and worms susceptible to levamisole

### Tracesure Lamb Finisher Boluses

4-5 month supply of cobalt, iodine and selenium for growing lambs over 20kg bodyweight, with additional copper if required

### Footvax

Footvax vaccine for sheep available in 20, 50 and 250 dose bottles.

## GISBURN AUCTION—DELIVERIES RESUME!

We are pleased to be able to recommence taking your parcels to Gisburn Auction Mart on **Thursday mornings for collection between 11.00am and 11.30am.**

Please ensure that you telephone your order in to the surgery before 3pm on Wednesday.

JUNE  
2020



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