



## FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - AUGUST 2018

# LIVER FLUKE UPDATE

Fluke has a multistage lifecycle. The life cycle starts when eggs are laid by adult fluke in the livers of infected animals and pass out in the dung to contaminate pasture. When conditions are suitable (damp and warm for about three weeks) the eggs hatch to form mobile larvae that seek out mud snails to complete the next stage of their life cycle. The presence of the amphibious mud snails determines the distribution of fluke so, the highest risk grazing are wet areas and around pools of water.

This year the eggs started to hatch in May however as it was so dry there were few mud snails in the environment. The infective miracidiae (the form of fluke which hatches from the egg) need to meet a mud snail within 6 hours of hatching or will not survive. The unusually dry weather that we have been experiencing this summer, whilst causing problems in terms of plant growth, has been brilliant for reducing the fluke risk, as eggs have hatched but there have not been mud snails present for the miracidia to infect.

Blood testing of lambs for antibody to fluke is a good way to determine if they have come across the parasite yet, and therefore the timing of first exposure to fluke on the pasture. Testing that we have recently carried out has not shown any antibody yet, therefore it appears to be too early to dose for immature fluke just yet.

A word of warning however – if the summer continues to be dry, and the fluke forecast is low or average, do not assume that

there is no risk to your stock. In dry conditions the best grazing is often found adjacent to watercourses and around permanently wet areas of fields. Unfortunately, this is also where snail habitats and fluke cysts will be found. Fencing off these areas is particularly worthwhile in a dry year.

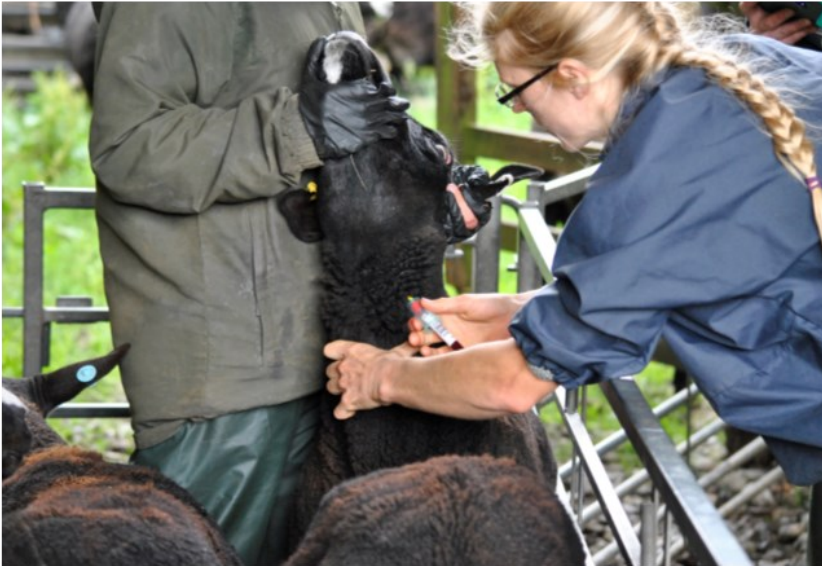
We have had some reports of sheep showing signs of chronic fluke. This is likely to be a problem if you used an adulticide too early in the year and the animals treated still had some younger fluke which were not killed by the drug. If in doubt it is worthwhile bringing in samples from 10 ewes for us to pool together to test for fluke eggs and treat if necessary.





# New Blood Test To Detect Sheep Scab

If sheep pick up sheep scab mites it can often take 4-5 months before the mites have multiplied up enough to cause the typical symptoms of rubbing and wool loss. This can allow infection to spread within a flock for several months before any signs are noticed. Up until now we have relied on taking skin scrapings from the edge of lesions in clinically affected sheep to confirm a diagnosis. In the early stages of infection it can be difficult to find mites, even if they are present. This method cannot be used to identify animals which are infected but not yet displaying any clinical signs.



Recently a blood test has been developed for sheep scab which allows us to detect antibodies which the sheep produces in response to infestation. These antibodies are only produced following sheep scab infection and can be detected as quickly as 2 weeks following exposure. To perform a 12 sheep screen, the laboratory fees would work out at £6.00 (plus VAT) per sample.

Traditionally many farmers have injected sheep with Dectomax or Cydectin in the autumn as insurance against a scab outbreak or 'just in case' the sheep have been infected but if sheep have not been exposed to scab (negative on blood sampling) it may not only be a costly exercise for a disease that isn't present but because these injections are also wormers it can also lead to further development of worm resistance to these categories of injection. In the last 12 months there has

also been confirmation of resistance of scab mites to these injections.

To discuss scab control and how best to protect your flock or to see whether a blood test screen for scab would be appropriate for your flock please speak to one of the farm vets.

## CIDR Ovis Alternative to Sheep Sponges

For those of you who use progestogen impregnated sheep sponges to synchronise ewes for early lambing, AI or embryo transfer, an alternative to the traditional intravaginal sponge has been launched, CIDR Ovis which is a T shaped intravaginal progesterone releasing device which claims fewer problems on inserting and removing as well as significantly less vaginitis and discharge when the devices are removed.

As with the traditional sponges the CIDR Ovis devices are left in for 12 days, the ewes injected with PMSG at the time of device removal and ovulation occurring approximately 52 hours later.

We currently have CIDR Ovis in stock as well as Chronogest sponges.

For more information or to discuss with a vet please contact the surgery.



## NADIS Blowfly Alert Update



"Populations of blowflies are still relatively low compared to a typical year because of the late start to spring and the very dry conditions. However fly populations are currently increasing rapidly and weather conditions are also now ideal for blowfly strike with warm, humid conditions encouraging the flies to lay eggs and maximising their survival of maggots. As a result a high and rapidly escalating strike risk is predicted throughout August."

This warning is taken from the NADIS website which gives regular updates on fluke, parasite gastroenteritis (PGE), blowfly strike and lungworm challenge according to regional weather conditions.

The local NADIS summary is available on our website [www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk/farm/farm-nadis-parasite-forecasts.aspx](http://www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk/farm/farm-nadis-parasite-forecasts.aspx) and updated monthly and on Dalehead Farm Animal Facebook Page.

## PRODUCT NEWS



Last week the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) imposed an immediate halt to the supply of Finadyne and Flunixin to veterinary practices amid concerns over an excipient (stabilising agent) that both products contain which could potentially be harmful if it entered the food chain. Combination products containing Finadyne/Flunixin such as Hexasol LA and Resflor are not affected by the ban.

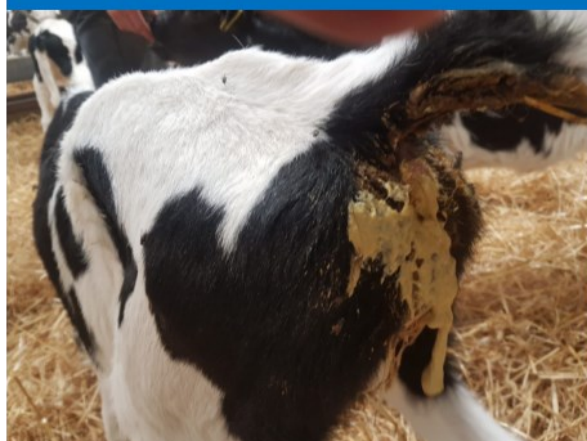
We are allowed to sell what stocks of Finadyne/Flunixin we currently have on our shelves (and you are allowed to use it!) but it is likely that further supplies will not be available for the foreseeable future (months).

Finadyne and Flunixin are NSAID's (non-steroidal anti inflammatory drugs) commonly used for their anti-inflammatory, pain killing and antipyretic (reducing the temperature if animals are running a fever) properties and are often used in cases of mastitis, lameness, pneumonia etc. to improve success of treatment.

Meloxicam based products (e.g. Metacam) and Ketaprofen based products (e.g. Kelaprogen) are alternative NSAID's which can be used during the period of Finadyne/Flunixin unavailability. Metacam will last for 2 days following a single injection while Kelaprogen has a nil milk withhold if given intravenously (48 hours following intramuscular injection). For further discussion on use of NSAID's and alternatives to Finadyne/Flunixin please speak to one of the farm vets.



## Calf Scour Vaccine



A new calf scour vaccine has been launched Bovigen Scour Emulsion licensed to be administered as a single 3ml injection into the muscle of cows and heifers between 12 and 3 weeks prior to calving to confer immunity to their offspring when they receive their mother's colostrum.

The vaccine will provide antibodies to protect calves against Rotavirus, Coronavirus and K99 EColi infections. If you are currently experiencing scour problems in calves or have batches of cows coming up to calving, contact the surgery for details of the introductory offer.



# Toxoplasma and Enzoitic Abortion Vaccine Order

Toxovax is the only vaccine available to protect ewes against Toxoplasma abortion. The vaccine should be administered at least 3 weeks prior to tupping and needs to be ordered on a special prescription by us from the manufacturers stating the approximate date that the vaccine will be required. Once the vaccine is delivered to us it needs to be used within approximately 7 days.



**MSD are offering an additional 5% discount on Toxovax orders delivered before the end of August (approximately 25p additional discount per dose).**

Enzoitic abortion vaccine (Enzovax or Cevac Chlamyophila) needs to be given at least 4 weeks prior to tupping and can be given at the same time as Toxovax.

## SHOW TIME

We will be supporting our local agricultural communities again this year attending several local shows:

Malham (25th August)

Bentham (1st September)

Hodder Valley (8th September)

Please come along to the Dalehead stand for some complimentary refreshments, and to chat with our friendly farm team. Good luck to everyone entering this year's shows!



## UNDERSTANDING VETERINARY MEDICINES COURSE

Our Understanding Veterinary Medicines Course is proving to be very popular. It is now a recommendation under the Red Tractor Standards and for the Farm Assurance Scheme for at least one member of staff responsible for administering medicines to hold a certificate of competence and this is issued to each delegate upon completion of our course.

We will be holding further courses in the near future so if you would like to attend, please contact the surgery and speak to either Anne or Louise who will take your details and contact you when the next dates are scheduled.



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[www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk](http://www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk)

