

FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2022

Beef Fertility Meetings

At our recent beef fertility meetings we discussed the importance of having a 365 day calving interval, carrying out **pre-breeding soundness examinations on stock bulls** and the benefits of **pelvic measuring replacement heifers** before they are served.

We also discussed the use of artificial insemination in beef cattle. Many beef farmers are aware of the potential benefits of using artificial Insemination in commercial suckler herds such as:

- Access to superior sires
- Being able to serve heifers with an easy calving bull
- Fewer bulls needed to be kept on farm
- Increasing the number of cows served at the start of the breeding period thereby tightening the calving pattern, but people are put off using artificial insemination due to the problems of heat detection and handling for AI, particularly when cows have been turned out in the summer months.

These problems can be avoided by the use of **synchronization programmes** allowing groups of synchronized cattle all to be served on the same day without the need for heat detection. With good management beef cows can achieve a first service

conception rate of 65% or better using fixed time AI following a synchronization programme.

To embark on a synchronization programme maiden heifers should be at least 65% of their mature weight (e.g. 420kg if their adult weight is to be 650kg) and adult cows should be at least 40 days calved.

Animals are examined per rectum by us and a progesterone releasing device (*PRID* or *CIDR*) inserted. They then receive a prostaglandin injection before the *PRID*s/*CIDR*s are removed and the cattle served 2 days after the device is removed without the need for heat detection. The length of time from inserting the *PRID*/*CIDR*s to AI is usually approximately 10 days.

For more information about synchronization and AI in suckler herds or to discuss bull fertility testing or pelvic measuring replacement heifers please speak to one of the farm team.



BENTHAM PARCELS

We kindly ask that medicine orders which are to be collected from the Bentham surgery are rung in for authorisation by the vet prior to 2.30pm Monday—Friday. This will then allow the farm team to prepare your parcel prior to the vet leaving for Bentham to start their consultations.



JUNE
2022



www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk



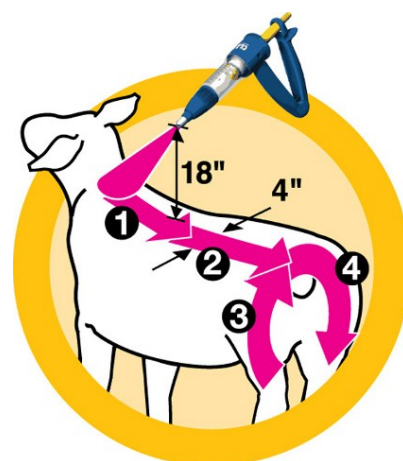
BLOWFLY STRIKE—ARE YOU PREPARED?



Blowfly strike in the UK results from the opportunistic invasion of living tissues by the larvae of *Lucilia sericata* (greenbottles), *Phormia terraenovae* (blackbottles) and *Calliphora erythrocephala* (bluebottles). Carcasses, dirty back ends, foot-rot lesions and open wounds are all attractive egg laying sites.

The blowfly life cycle typically takes 3 – 4 weeks depending on the species. The life cycle is broken up into three distinct stages, the egg, the larvae and the adult. Adult female flies deposit eggs on dead animals or soiled fleeces. Eggs hatch into first stage larvae within about 12 hours. These larvae feed on tissue, grow and moult twice, becoming

mature maggots in 3 to 10 days, depending on temperature and humidity. Third stage maggots then drop to the ground and pupate, mature flies emerging between May and September after 3 to 7 days. Flies over-winter in the soil as pupae, and emerge as soil temperatures rise during the spring. Blowfly populations are greatest during the summer months. The entire life cycle from egg to adult can occur in less than 10 days. Primary flies including greenbottles and blackbottles can initiate strike on living sheep, while secondary flies including bluebottles only attack areas which are already struck or damaged. Maggots are active and voracious, causing skin and muscle liquefaction as they develop attracting secondary blowflies. Toxins released by decomposing tissues and ammonia secreted by the maggots are absorbed through the lesions into the sheep's blood, causing systemic illness which result in death.



‘Dagging’ or ‘crutching’ decreases the amount of faecal matter build up which will help reduce the risk of blowfly strike. Hooves which are in good health and are free from foot-rot or severe scald will also assist in reducing the risk of blowflies becoming attracted and laying eggs. Managing worm burdens help to prevent dirty backsides through scouring.

In addition to the above points there are chemical based products which can be applied onto the fleece that will prevent the incidence of blowfly strike. Dicyclanil based products (**Clik: 16 weeks protection, Clik extra: 19 weeks protection**) will prevent blowfly strike but will not treat active blowfly strike.

OP dips can will treat and prevent blowfly strike as well as other external parasite infections for 60 days.

It is advised not to shear sheep for 3 months post treatment.

Cypermethrin based products can also be used to prevent blowfly strike and treat active blowfly strike infections. These provide a shorter protection window of up to 6-8 weeks and have a shorter meat withdrawal period with no restriction as to when a sheep can be clipped.

When using any products it is essential that all the manufacturers instructions are followed. Not doing so will affect the protection and may result in sheep becoming infested.

We advise that sheep severely affected by blowfly strike are given antibiotics and NSAIDs.

	Meat Withdrawal	June	July	August	September	October	November
Clik Extra	40 Days	19 Weeks					
Clik	40 Days	16 Weeks					
Crovect	8 Days	6 Weeks					
Dysect	49 Days	8 Weeks					
Ectofly	8 Days	6 Weeks					

We have a full range of blowfly prevention products in stock.

For more information or for a quote please contact the surgery on 01729 823538

Collecting Samples For Worm Egg Counts

With increasing awareness about resistance developing to the commonly used wormers, more and more of our farm clients are having worm egg counts carried out on pooled dung samples to determine whether groups of animals actually need worming before treatment. If the animals do require worming it is also worthwhile re-sampling the group post treatment; 7 days after levamisole (yellow) treatment or 14 days after a white drench or ivermectin (clear) dose, to see how effective the treatment has been. We would hope for a 95% reduction in the worm egg count post treatment, any less than this could be an indication of resistance on your farm.

To get the most accurate information from worm egg counts it is important the samples are collected correctly.

1. At least **10 animals** (and preferably up to 20) in the group should be sampled with a minimum of a teaspoonful of faeces collected from each animal.
2. Samples should be **fresh** when collected (**less than 1 hour old**), stored in **individual** plastic bags and kept cool (not frozen) and delivered to us within 24 hours. If the samples are too old or have warmed up some of the worm eggs may have hatched resulting in an artificially low egg count. Samples should be delivered to us as individual samples-do not pre-pool them before bringing to the surgery.
3. The **animals tested should be healthy** and have had full access to pasture and/or feed before sampling because faecal consistency and feed intake can affect the count. Any animals that are not eating due to illness or scouring badly should not be included in the sample.
4. When bringing samples to the surgery we ask for the samples to be **clearly labeled with your surname and farm name**. We will also ask you when the animals were last dosed, what product they were dosed with, the age of the animals, species of the animals (e.g. 3 month old lambs, adult ewes, 6 month old calves etc). Do not mix different age groups-sample lambs and ewes separately.

The procedure is the same when collecting samples from calves as for lambs or adult sheep. The same sampling procedure can be used for carrying out a coccidial oocyst count or a fluke egg count (although a larger volume of faeces from each animal would be required for a fluke egg count).

We are producing a short video on correct collection of samples for worm egg counting which will shortly appear on our website.

We will usually have the results available within one working day from receiving the samples. Please contact the surgery first



In House Laboratory Update

Sheep

Throughout May we have continued to receive and diagnose various amounts of 'summer worms' along with seasonal nematodirus and coccidiosis in faecal egg counts from this year's lambs. We recommend performing a worm egg count every 3-4 weeks for lambs which will show the quantity and species of internal parasites which may be affecting your lambs causing a negative impact on production. We have also had a couple of positive samples for fluke in adult sheep.

Cattle

A test which is routinely run in-house is on calf scour samples. Within 15 minutes we can identify Rotavirus, EColi (K99), Corona virus and Cryptosporidium, these being the most common causing agents of scours in calves. This month we have investigated several cases of calf scours further via blood testing to measure the antibodies via colostrum intake. Again, this can be done in-house allowing a quick turnaround and same day results.

Other bloods which we run in the surgery on a regular basis are from downer cows. We can test for calcium, phosphorus and magnesium levels which then allows the correct treatment to be administered.

Prior to cattle being turned out, several clients requested faecal egg counts to check for the presence of worms and fluke burdens. Testing allowed confirmation that the product applied earlier in the winter had worked thereby avoiding unnecessary treatments in the spring.

We continue to receive milk samples for somatic cell count testing and bacteriology from our dairy clients. We have seen various causing agents for mastitis which allowed targeted treatment for the specific pathogens.



VET TECH ON FARM SERVICES

Stress Free Disbudding

Disbudding calves is one of those jobs we see gets pushed back due to time constraints and other jobs taking priority. But if left too long the task becomes more difficult, more painful and more time consuming. Our Vet Tech service offers a "Stress Free" approach to disbudding which has proved very popular. Each calf receives local anaesthetic and a long acting pain relief injection included in the price per calf.



Mobility Scoring

Anna Ashworth and Karen Gardner offer independent mobility scoring and are both RoMS (Register of Mobility Scoring) accredited. Herd and individual cow data can be recorded and results reported to ensure compliance with the milk contract requirements.



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.

We have several products available for your requirements—please contact the surgery for more information.

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.

Using **Heptavac P Plus** for breeding replacements is recommended and **Ovivac 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. **Ovipast Plus** is used as an aid in the control of pasteurellosis only. Whichever vaccine is used, 2 doses 4-6 weeks apart are required to give full immunity.

As many of you know, Heptavac P is unfortunately difficult to source at present so if you wish to discuss clostridial vaccination protocol options, please contact the surgery.



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 spinging 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.