

# FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2021

## PASTEURELLA SEASON IS UPON US!!

Pasteurella season is upon us! The bacteria responsible are always present in the tonsils of healthy animals however, under certain conditions the bacteria grow resulting in a build up of toxins and in most cases death. Stress is the initiator as it causes the immune system to weaken. Transportation, gathering, mixing vaccinated and unvaccinated sheep, high worm burdens, weaning and the good old fluctuating British weather will increase incidence of pastuerellosis and unfortunately sheep and lambs of any age are at risk. Initial signs to look out for are pneumonia symptoms including laboured breathing, increased respiratory rate, runny nose and eyes, coughing, decreased appetite and raised temperature. It is also common to find animals dead without any obvious signs.

### Treatment

Antibiotics are prescribed for the infection and anti-inflammatories for the pain.

### Prevention

As many of you are aware, vaccines are available which aid in the prevention of Pasteurella. For breeding sheep, Heptavac-P is well known for protecting ewes against Pasteurella and many clostridial diseases. The initial course is two doses 4-6 weeks apart with a pre-lambing booster 4-6 weeks before lambing which ensures maximum passive transfer of immunity to lambs through colostrum. If you are currently purchasing breeding sheep which are not in the Heptavac-P system the initial course can be incorporated with the pre-lambing dose if desired and don't forget the tups!

For store or fattening lambs Ovivac-P is a good choice, the first dose can be given from 3 weeks of age with the second dose given 4-6 weeks later. If purchasing store lambs ensure they are fully vaccinated to reduce the risk of sudden death. A booster vaccine can be given which will provide additional cover.

If you are concerned about pasteurellosis please contact the surgery to speak to one of the farm vets.



## SHEEP LIVER FLUKE UPDATE

The fluke lifecycle outside the sheep begins in the spring/summer when temperatures are above 12° C and the weather conditions are wet. There is a time lag from fluke eggs hatching, finding a mud snail host, developing and reaching maturity to cause infection, which is approximately 12 weeks. This will take longer if we have a dry or cold summer. When the winter weather arrives, and the temperature drops, the fluke lifecycle is sent into hibernation.

Once inside the sheep it takes 10-12 weeks for the immature flukes to become egg laying adults.

The drug in a fluke dose varies as to what age of fluke they target. Triclabendazole kills down to 2 day old immature fluke, Closantel kills down to 6 week old fluke, Zaniol and white drenches only kill fluke over 10 weeks of age. There are tests available which allow us to diagnose fluke. A faecal egg count identifies mature fluke 10 week after ingestion, a copro-antigen test identifies fluke from 7 week after ingestion and lastly a blood antibody test can be detect fluke 2 weeks after ingestion.

We have selected 4 monitor farms for 2021, where we are using the blood antibody test to assist with timings of doses. The samples which were taken a couple of weeks ago have shown that:

5 out of the 6 lambs sampled on Rathmell bottoms came back positive indicating that they have picked up this season's fluke at least 2 weeks before the test was taken. 1 out of the remaining 18 lambs sampled came back positive. This indicates it is too early to dose for fluke on most farms but if you have stock grazing pastures in high risk areas with standing water, please speak to us about your fluke risk.

We will keep you up to date with sampling results in our newsletters, Facebook page or speak to one of the farm team.

# CALF JACKET PROTOCOLS

The last few years have seen the majority of dairy farms using calf jackets on their young calves during the winter months to keep them warm. It is accepted that when a calf is cold it uses energy to keep warm resulting in reduced weight gains and increased susceptibility to scours and other infections. As we enter the winter months and temperatures begin to drop it is time to prepare! We have put together a few pointers as to when jackets should be used and how long to leave them on for. In the first week of life a calf is likely to use extra energy to keep warm below an air temperature of 10°C. The actual lower critical temperature for any one calf will depend on all aspects that will influence the energy dynamics of their system:

Genetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jersey calf will feel 'cold' before Charolais calf or Aberdeen Angus (for example)</li> </ul>
Birth Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Normal vs. prolonged labour</li> <li>Premature/ low birth weight</li> <li>Single calf vs. twins</li> </ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vigour/ health vs. apathetic/ low feed intake</li> </ul>
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality/ quantity and timing of colostrum</li> <li>Energy density and dilution of milk powder</li> <li>Adequate intake</li> </ul>
Air Speed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less than 1m/s is good</li> <li>A draft is negative</li> </ul>
Dry Bedding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keeping moisture/ humidity levels as low as possible in calf housing is essential for good health.</li> <li>Damp bedding extracts energy from the calf</li> </ul>

## MONITOR TEMPERATURES IN THE CALF BUILDING

- Fit a max/min thermometer in the calf building.
- This should be reset every morning during autumn/winter housing.

## WHEN TO PUT CALF JACKETS ON

- Create a protocol which decides a set temperature for the calf building e.g. 10°C.
- Decide when to put on calf jackets e.g. 3 consecutive night time minimum temperatures below 10°C.

## THE CALF JACKET

- Must be made of a breathable fabric
- Calves must be dry before fitting a jacket
- Use a clean jacket on every calf below one week of age or on entry to the calf housing

## REMOVING JACKETS

The removal of a calf jacket depends entirely on the energy dynamics listed above; what is the condition and appetite of each calf? What are the expected weather conditions? Or keep the calf jacket on the calf until 4 weeks of age.

- Know the weather forecast. Steady or rising temperatures, mean that its okay to remove the jacket, but if the temperatures are going to fall, beware of removing the jackets too early.
- Agree on a protocol for healthy calves. e.g. One week old temperature >10°C=okay. Two week old Temperature >5°C=okay.
- Refer to recent night time minimum temperatures.
- Consider individual calf condition; feed intake, health, growth rate.
- Remove the jacket in the morning not the afternoon.
- Remove dirt from the jacket with a hose/light power wash or pre-soak.
- Wash jacket at 40-50°C with detergent and dry.

**After removal if jackets are not effectively cleaned, washed and dried before being used on another calf, transmission of scour bugs e.g. Cryptosporidia, Rotavirus can occur from one calf to the next.**

For more information or to place an order, please contact us at the surgery.





# TUP UROLITHS

## What are they?

Uroliths are mineral deposits that form crystals and stones in the urinary tract of both entire or castrated male sheep. These can lead to partial or complete obstruction of the urethra which obstructs urination.

## How can I prevent it?

- Feeding a correct diet, concentrate which is specific for male sheep will prevent the build-up of crystals. Do not feed ewe nuts to tups and/or wethers.
- If you are feeding for intense performance, ab-lib or feeding more than once or twice a day can reduce the incidence.
- Ensure to include adequate forage.
- Access to a constant clean water supply is imperative.



## What does it look like?

Early detection is vital; initially the animal may show a lack of appetite and separate themselves from the rest of the group, as well as grinding their teeth. In most cases the site affected is at the vermiform appendage (also known as the urethral process) which is a small string of tissue at the end of the penis. At the end of the tissue, small stones like grit gather causing the sheep abdominal discomfort, swelling underneath the abdomen and straining to pass urine can be observed along with blood stains or crystals in the hairs at the end of the penis.

## Treatment

Changing or reducing the amount of concentrate fed.

Ensuring plenty of water is accessible e.g. rain water and mains, some tups prefer one or the other.

Supply salt (NaCl). This can be done in several ways:

- As a lick
- <3% in ration
- <10% in drinking water
- Add 2% ammonium chloride to the ration

## Future Prevention

- Ensure no magnesium added to concentrates (do not exceed 200g mg/ tonne)
- Ensure calcium/ phosphorus ratio is approximately 2:1
- Include 1.5% ground limestone in diet
- Ensure minimum of 1% salt in concentrate
- Ensure plenty of fresh drinking water

If you suspect one of your male sheep to be suffering with this condition, then it is **essential** to seek immediate veterinary care.

# ANTIBIOTIC FOOTBATHS

We are all aware of the need to use antibiotics responsibly and reduce the overall amount of antibiotics that we use, targeting individual animals which need treating rather than blanket preventive therapies of whole groups. Therefore...

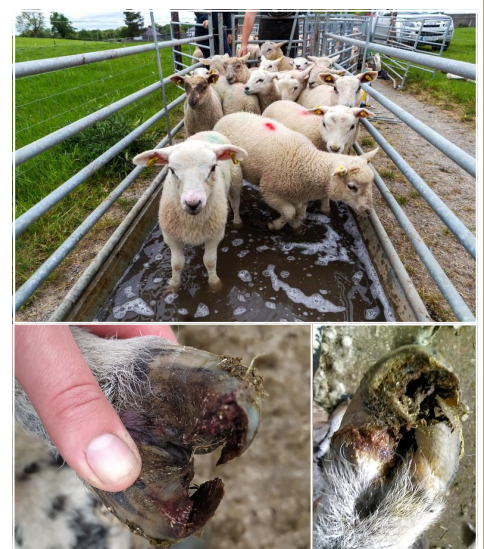
**Anyone requesting an antibiotic footbath (e.g. Lincospectin, Pharmasin, Tylan) will need to speak to a vet.**

**This is due to the products not being licensed for use in footbaths.**

There are other chemicals which can be used to footbath livestock including zinc sulphate, copper sulphate and Formalin. Ensuring the manufacturer's instructions are followed will result in better outcomes.

In addition to foot bathing, sheep flocks can gain additional protection by using a footrot vaccination (*Footvax*) and adoption of the 5 Point Plan.

For further advice on lameness control please speak to one of the farm vets.



## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### FACE TO FACE MEDICINES COURSE

Red Tractor have announced that from the 1st November 2021 at least one person is required, for beef and sheep farms, to have undertaken a medicine training course to help raise awareness of antimicrobial resistance and drive medicine use best practice. Dairy farmers are also required to have attended a medicines course.

**Date & Time:** Wednesday 3rd November at 7pm

**Venue:** The Farm Building, Settle Surgery, BD24 9AA

**Price:** £25.00



### BEEF DISCUSSION GROUP

**Date & Time:** Wednesday 13th October at 7pm

**Venue:** The Farm Building, Settle Surgery, BD24 9AA

We will have an external speaker talking on: **'Parasite Control at Housing'**

The speaker will cover the best practice to ensure our cattle are clean from worms, fluke, lice and mites to maintain productivity. As well as enjoying pies, peas and pints we are hoping to have an open discussion on what you would like from the Beef Group - such as future topics for meetings, a Beef Club like the Flock Club, trips to other farms etc. Please contact the surgery to book your place.

**Leptospirosis Offer for Beef Discussion Group:** In addition to the *Beef Check* blood sampling, MSD have kindly added complimentary Leptospirosis blood testing. Leptospirosis can lead to infertility, abortion and poor milk yield. You may find your heifers are struggling to hold or your cows are aborting in late gestation - this can have a massive impact on your rearing percentage, this could be a rumbling problem or if your herd has never experienced Lepto it can hit suddenly have a big impact in one year. MSD, the makers of Leptavoid, offer free blood testing to diagnose if Lepto is present in your herd and for a short time are going to offer some additional benefits to encourage beef herds to test for and potentially vaccinate against Leptospirosis.

For more information please contact the practice.



## PRODUCT NEWS

### TOXOVAX

MSD are experiencing difficulties with supply of Toxovax at the moment. Any orders received now will not be supplied until approximately week commencing the 25th October. Toxovax can be used up to 3 weeks before tupping. For up to date information on availability please contact the surgery.



### SHEEP SPONGES, CIDR'S AND PMSG INJECTION

For those of you wanting to use sheep sponges or CIDR's to synchronise ewes for AI or just to achieve a compact lambing there are limited supplies of sponges, CIDR's and PMSG injection available.

We would advise you to contact the surgery **ASAP** to order the products required to avoid interruption or delay to your sheep's breeding programme.

**LIMITED STOCK**

OCTOBER  
2021



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



LIKE US ON  
**facebook**

