

FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2019

SHEEP SCAB

Sheep scab is caused by the mite *Psoroptes Ovis*. The whole life cycle of the scab mite takes place on the sheep but the mite can survive off the sheep in the environment for up to 17 days. We are currently confirming numerous diagnoses of sheep scab and/or lice infestations in skin scrapings taken from outbreaks of itchy sheep. Where scab is present it is always important to clear up the infestation before lambing starts so that newborn lambs don't become infected.

Sheep scab can be introduced to a flock via carriers including:

- Purchased sheep
- Sheep returning from grazing
- Stray sheep (Especially on common grazing).

Recently infected sheep may not show signs of the disease, so sheep which appear healthy which are introduced to the flock should always be considered as a potential source of infection. Exposure to mites in the environment, including contaminated fields, handling facilities, trailers and clothing of staff can also result in the disease. It is important to confirm a diagnosis of what is causing the sheep to itch as lice infestations can easily be confused with scab. Other than plunge dipping with O/P dips no treatment will provide complete control for both scab and lice.

How can you treat and control scab with injectable products?

It is essential that every animal in the group is treated with Moxidectin (**Cydectin 1%** or **Cydectin 2%**), Doramectin (**Dectomax**) or Ivermectin (e.g. **Bimectin**, **Ivomec**). Whereas O/P dips will kill mites on contact the injectable products require scab mites on the sheep to feed off skin debris to be killed off (scab mites on the sheep may only feed once every 2 weeks) so shorter acting preparations (e.g. **Bimectin**, **Ivomec**) require 2 injections 7 days apart. In addition, because scab mites can survive for up to 17 days off the sheep only the longer acting preparations (**Cydectin 1%** or **Cydectin 2%**) persist long enough to allow treated sheep to be returned back to 'dirty' fields and buildings after treatment without risk of becoming re-infected.

Ivermectin Injections (e.g. Bimectin, Ivomec)

2 injections required (1ml/50kg under skin) 7 days apart. Move to clean pastures/buildings where there have been no infected animals in the preceding 17 days.

Doramectin Injection (Dectomax)

Single injection of 1ml/33kg into the muscle will treat scab but treated sheep must be moved to clean pasture.

Moxidectin Injection (Cydectin 1% or 2%)

Cydectin 1% is licensed to treat scab with 2 injections of 1ml/50kg under the skin 10 days apart and sheep can be returned to 'dirty' fields or buildings. Cydectin 1% injection is **not** recommended if the animals to be treated have ever received **Footvax** footrot vaccine.

Cydectin 2% injection (1ml/20kg behind the ear) is licensed to treat scab with a single injection and will persist for 60 days so treated animals can return to a scab contaminated environment.

Sheep showers and ecto-parasiticide pour-ons are not effective for sheep scab treatment or control.

For further information on sheep scab control options or to arrange a skin scraping on itchy sheep please speak to one of the Farm vets or SQP's.



#COLOSTRUMISGOLD

The #ColostrumIsGold campaign, created by the Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture (RUMA) Alliance, is emphasising that responsible use of antibiotics starts with new-born calves, lambs and piglets receiving the right amount of colostrum within a couple of hours of birth – something all farmers have the potential to achieve.

Colostrum Facts

- Colostrum provides protection for a new-born animal from disease before it forms its own antibodies. This can reduce or prevent the need for antibiotic treatments in the new-born or older animal.
- The new-born animal has little body fat, which means it is highly dependent on the fats and carbohydrates in colostrum as a source of energy to maintain body temperature and growth. hypothermia.
- Colostrum provides lots of important nutrients as well as energy.



Insufficient energy at birth can lead to

Remember the 5 Q's

- **Quantity:** Increased Quantity leads to better immune protection. See below for amounts to feed.
- **Quality:** Use the best colostrum you can. Good colostrum contains at least 50g/L of IgG antibodies.
- **Quickly:** A new-born's gut is porous and ready to absorb antibodies from the colostrum; this ability only lasts a few hours. If bacteria get ingested before the colostrum it will also take advantage of this capability causing disease.
- **SQueaky clean:** Good hygiene is essential when harvesting, feeding or storing colostrum. Bacterial growth in colostrum can double every 20 minutes when left at room temperature! If storing colostrum, you can keep it in the fridge for 2 days or keep it frozen.
- **Quantify:** Measure the quality of the colostrum using a colostrometer or BRIX refractometer. Calves can be tested to evaluate transfer of antibodies by blood testing for serum protein levels. You want results over 5.5g/dl.

Calves

- Give a first feed of **4 litres or 10% of bodyweight within 4 or preferably 2 hours of birth.**
- **This should then be followed up by a further 2 litres within 12 hours of birth.**
- A calf requires approximately 20 minutes of continuous suckling to consume enough colostrum in the first feed. Good quality cow colostrum has IgG levels of greater than 50mg/ml.
- Calves fed enough colostrum (at least 120g) more than halve their risk of pneumonia. Over 30% of dairy farmers now test the quality of colostrum before feeding it.

Lambs

- **Rule of thumb is 210–290 ml/kg body weight, so a 5kg lamb at birth needs 1 litre of colostrum in its first 24 hours of life to give it essential levels of natural immunity. The first feed of 60mls/kg should be within 2 hours of birth.**
- Adequate colostrum fed at birth could eliminate watery mouth in lambs. Half of UK lambs are currently estimated to receive unnecessary oral antibiotics as protection.
- 50% of neonatal lamb E coli are resistant to spectinomycin (most commonly used Watery Mouth treatment) VARRSS 2016, VMD

WE'RE SUPPORTING

#ColostrumIsGold

www.colostrumisgold.org

- Over 80% of lambs dying in the first 48 hours of life are found to have received either no colostrum or to have inadequate colostrum uptake showing how important it is to ensure that lambs get their quota of good quality colostrum.

The best colostrum you can use is that from the mother as it contains the antibodies needed for your specific farm. If you're vaccinating breeding stock for disease prevention in newborns i.e. for Rotavirus and Clostridial Disease this protection is transferred in the antibodies carried in the colostrum. Don't forget though, unwanted disease can also be transferred in colostrum from infected dams i.e. Johnes, Maedi Visna and Mycoplasma. Take care with cleanliness and check the disease status of the animals/farm that the colostrum comes from.

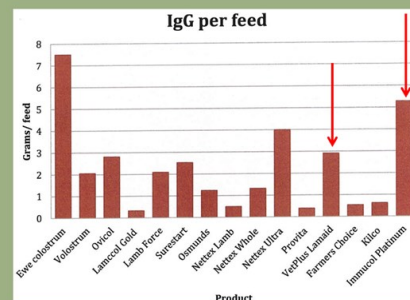
If feeding artificial colostrum to lambs (if the ewe has an insufficient supply) then choose a good quality colostrum which has a high antibody and fat content. The two powdered colostrums which we stock are those with the highest antibody contents (**Immucol Platinum** and **Lamaid**) and have fat (energy) contents comparable to good quality ewe colostrum. Because the antibody content of any supplement is less than the ewe's own colostrum they should be used to top up the colostrum from the mother rather than replace it.

Nutrition in the last couple of months pregnancy is vital to colostrum quality. A mother in good condition with sufficient levels of energy and protein in her diet will have good udder development and should supply plenty. Keep an eye on body condition score and check what you are feeding.

COLOSTRUM

	Ig G level
Lamb Requires	20g
Good Ewe Colostrum	50g/l
Ewe Colostrum 6 hrs Lamed	30 g/l
Good Holstein Colostrum	35g/l
Good Quality Artificial Colostrum	20g/l

COLOSTRUM



Mass of IgG contained in recommended feed volumes of colostrum supplements.

CALVES IN COLD WEATHER

We have started to see some real winter weather over the last week or so. We put on our big coats and woolly hats to keep warm and fill up on hot stews and soups, upping our calorie intake to give us plenty of energy for working outside in the cold. The cold weather is felt by animals on the farm as well as by ourselves and in particular younger ones such as calves. In cold weather calves require more energy to keep warm. They need enough milk and concentrate to provide them with extra energy to maintain their body temperature, grow and remain healthy.

Calves less than 3 weeks of age are the most vulnerable to temperature changes.

FEED MORE ENERGY

Additional milk replacer or whole milk is needed to achieve optimal growth rate of 0.75kg/day.

New-born to 3 weeks	Older than 3 weeks
Feed an extra 50g of milk replacer or 0.33l whole milk per day for each 5°C drop below 15°C	Feed an extra 50g of milk replacer or 0.33l whole milk per day for each 5°C drop below 10°C

This is best fed as more litres rather than increasing the concentration. If your wanting to increase concentration it is important not to go over 160g of milk replacer in 1 litre.

KEEPING WARM

- Feed milk at calf's body temperature—38°C
- Use a milk replacer with a fat content of at least 18 % (think how much you appreciate a good cream cake with your afternoon brew!)
- Dry newborns to reduce heat loss
- Supply plenty of clean dry bedding, straw is ideal in winter and calves should have enough to be able to 'nest'. When nesting the calves' legs should not be visible
- Use calf jackets, make sure the calf is dry
- Heat lamps can be used
- Calves do need fresh air even in cold weather but avoid draughts at calf level, so they don't get wind chill. Temporary adaptations for housing such as wind breakers or a strategically positioned board can be an inexpensive way to protect calves at different times of year.



HEPTAVAC P Plus Booster Vaccination for Ewes

Giving ewes their Pasteurella and Clostridial booster 4-6 weeks prior to lambing not only continues their protection against these killer bacteria, but also ensures that their lambs are protected by antibodies in the ewe's colostrum. The pre-lambing booster vaccination must be given 4-6 weeks before lambing because this is when the ewe is starting to make her colostrum. The ewe produces an immune response to the vaccine which increases the concentration of protective antibodies in her colostrum. These pass to the newborn lamb when it suckles giving it 'passive' protection to these diseases which last until the lamb itself can be vaccinated.

For optimum protection it is important that the interval between the primary course of **Heptavac P Plus** (2 injections of 2mls 4-6 weeks apart) and the annual booster or between boosters does not exceed 12 months. Vaccination should take place on a dry day and care taken that every sheep is correctly vaccinated subcutaneously. Vaccines should be correctly stored in fridge between 2-8 degrees C until ready to use.

Dalehead Practical Lambing Course

Wednesday 13th February 2019, 6.30pm (Supper Provided)

Gisburn Auction Mart, BB7 4ES

We are holding another 'Practical Lambing Course' where a range of topics will be covered including: Ewe management up to lambing, normal and abnormal lambing presentations and how to correct them, lamb and ewe diseases seen around lambing time and how to recognise and treat each one. We have two practical lambing simulators which are used to demonstrate lambing techniques and instruction will be given on administering intra-peritoneal glucose injections (into the abdomen), stomach tubing lambs, advising where best to inject a lamb, as well as the use of rubber rings. These meetings are very popular so to reserve your place please contact the surgery on 01729 823538.



BARREN EWE CHECK



Toxoplasmosis is a protozoal (coccidial type organism) infection caused by eating hay, straw, grass or concentrates contaminated with infected cat faeces. Depending on the stage of pregnancy that ewes are exposed, infection can result in barren ewes at scanning, re-absorptions, mummified lambs, stillbirths or weakly live lambs. Often the first indication of a problem can be a higher barren rate at scanning than expected (target less than 2-3% geld). With this in mind we are able to take blood samples from barren ewes to check for evidence of exposure to Toxoplasmosis in sheep that have not already been vaccinated against the disease. The laboratory fees for the Toxoplasma testing can be processed free of charge. Please contact the surgery for details of the subsidised scheme.

Health and Safety Notice For Farm Clients

At this time of year we would like to remind our sheep farm clients to be aware of the risk of abortion to pregnant women who come into contact with newborn lambs or aborted fetuses and placental material. We have a responsibility to our members of staff and to members of the public entering our premises and their safety and that of their unborn child is of paramount importance.

Please ensure that your hands and clothing are clean when entering the surgery.

Please DO NOT bring any abortion samples into the surgery.

Sheep abortion samples must be packaged in leak proof containers and labelled with your surname and the farm name. They **MUST** be left **OUTSIDE** in the yellow salt bin by the Portakabin and a member of reception informed.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

FEBRUARY 2019



www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk

