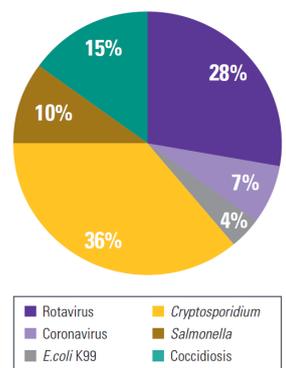


FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2024

CRYPTOSPORIDIOSIS IN CALVES

Current figures of calf scour prevalence in the UK (and in our practice laboratory) demonstrate that 'Crypto' is a major cause of infectious scours in young calves either by itself or in conjunction with other scour pathogens such as Rotavirus, Coronavirus and K99 EColi. Up to 50% of calf deaths in calves under 4 weeks of age are thought to be scour related.

Causes of calf scour found between 2012-2020 in GB.²



Key Points

- Cryptosporidiosis is caused by the protozoal parasite [Cryptosporidium Parvum](#). As with other protozoal organisms infecting livestock such as Coccidiosis, Neospora and Toxoplasmosis, Cryptosporidiosis cannot be effectively controlled by antibiotic or anthelmintic treatments.
- Cryptosporidiosis usually affects calves between 5 days and 3 weeks of age. Symptoms in calves include watery scours and dehydration. The same species of Cryptosporidia will also infect lambs and humans.
- Scour material from affected calves can contain millions of oocysts per gram of faeces and the oocysts can survive for months in the environment in cool, damp conditions.
- Calves become infected by ingesting oocysts from their environment, the most likely source being from other infected calves, their mothers, contaminated feeding utensils e.g. buckets, handlers, troughs, pens etc.
- Many routinely used disinfectants will not kill Cryptosporidia in the environment. Quaternary ammonium disinfectants will kill 99% of oocysts after 2 hours of contact time. We are trialling 'Teccare' which has proven efficacy against protozoal oocysts. Steam cleaning to above 60°C will also destroy oocysts
- There are no vaccines available to protect against Crypto although vaccinating cows with Rotavirus/Coronavirus/K99 E Coli vaccines e.g. **Rotavec**, **Fencovis** and good colostrum management for their calves will help by protecting against other infectious causes of scours.
- Treatment of infected calves involves electrolyte therapies to ensure that calves don't become dehydrated and good nursing e.g. keeping calves warm. Products such as **Halocur**, **Kriptazen** and **Parofor Crypto** are licensed for the treatment and control of Crypto, requiring a 7 day course of treatment.

For more information about Crypto how to prevent, control and treatment options, please speak to one of our farm vets.



Annual Sheep Meeting 2024

MANAGEMENT OF ABORTION AND STILL BIRTHS AT LAMBING TIME.

MONDAY 22ND
JAN. 7PM



Extra discounts will be available on our lambing list products for attendees on the night.

Hotpot supper provided.

Please RSVP by Friday 19th January 2024

COPPER DEFICIENCY IN PREGNANT EWES

Swayback in lambs occurs as a consequence of a severe copper deficiency in ewes during mid to late pregnancy. The breed of sheep and the nature of the feed can have a big influence on the likelihood of copper deficiency.

Suffolks and texels are very efficient at absorbing copper from the diet and therefore less likely to become copper deficient than other breeds. If you are unsure of the copper status of your ewes, and are wondering whether there is a need to supplement the dietary copper, a blood test can help. Sampling 6 pregnant ewes can give an indication of the copper status of your flock.

If copper supplementation is required, there are a few options available:

Copper Drench

'Newhouse' or 'Swayback' drench. The amount of copper which can be given in one dose is limited because of the potential toxicity. These drenches can therefore only give a short term boost to the liver levels. Ewes may need to be drenched twice. Firstly in mid pregnancy and again one month later. **It is not advisable to treat for liver fluke at the same time as giving a copper drench.**

Copper Capsules

These are a gelatine capsule containing copper oxide needles. They are administered orally to ewes either before tupping or during the first half of pregnancy. The copper needles attach to the wall of the abomasum and dissolve slowly over 3-4 weeks allowing efficient uptake and storage of copper in the liver with minimal risk of toxicity. Liver copper levels can remain increased for at least 6 months.



Copper injections

Copper injections give a rapid, short term (2-4 month) increase in copper levels. The injection is administered as a single 2ml subcutaneous injection during mid-pregnancy.

Please talk to one of the farm vets if you would like to discuss blood testing ewes for copper status or about the various product options available.

BARREN EWE CHECK



Toxoplasmosis is a protozoal (coccidial type organism) infection of sheep caused by eating hay, straw, grass or concentrates contaminated by infected cat faeces. Infection can result in barren ewes, re-absorptions, abortions, still births, mummified lambs or weakly live lambs.

With this in mind, MSD are running a 'Barren Ewe Check' service from the 1st February 2024. During this time MSD will provide free laboratory testing of blood samples taken from geld or aborted ewes to check whether they have been exposed to Toxoplasmosis.

The visit and blood sampling costs are not included in the scheme but sampling can be performed at the surgery to save a visit charge.

LAB NEWS

Well we have managed to see out 2023 with no signs of fluke! Egg counts in the lab have been negative which suggest no presence of adult fluke, and the latest blood samples on our monitor farms all came back negative. We will be blood sampling again in the next week or so, keep an eye out on our Facebook page or contact the surgery for an update on the results.

We have had milk bacteriology samples with positive results for E. coli. We also have our new milk test available which can give a result the same day to aid in treatment decisions in time for the next milking (samples must be at the surgery first thing for a same day result). For more information please speak with one of the farm vets.

With lambing time started for some and fast approaching for many others, a reminder that any abortion samples brought to the surgery must be in sealed bags/tubs, clearly labelled and left in the yellow grit bin in the bottom car park. Please don't bring the samples in to the surgery but do let us know when you have dropped them off so we know it is there to be dealt with.



January



www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk

