

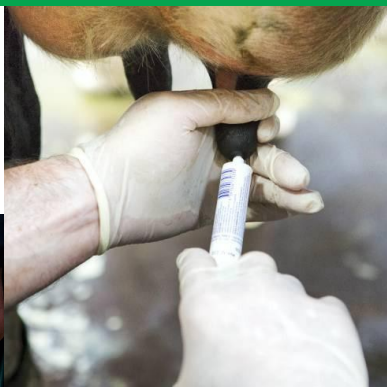
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FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2025

NEW VETERINARY MEDICINE REGULATIONS



Veterinary
Medicines
Directorate



As mentioned in last month's newsletter, from 1st February 2025 the use of antibiotics for prophylaxis (preventative use of antibiotics such as antibiotic footbaths, blanket use of antibiotic dry cow tubes on all cows at dry off or blanket use of antibiotics on all lambs at birth to prevent rattlebelly) **is now prohibited other than in exceptional circumstances.**

If required, a vet will need to provide a clear rationale, which must be documented, for every prescription of antibiotic for preventative use (prophylaxis) and that a management review

including a premises visit should be carried out as close to the time of prescription as possible and definitely within 3 months. **The same protocols will need to be applied whether your farm is Red Tractor assured or not.**

To help with the new regulations we would like to remind our clients of the need to give **at least 24 hours notice when placing orders for prescription only medicines (e.g. antibiotics) so that appropriate checks and approvals can be made before collection to comply with legislation.**

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE PATHWAY MARCH 2025 UPDATE

The Animal Health and Welfare Pathway is a long term project partnership, co-designed by government and industry, across cattle (beef and dairy), sheep, pig and poultry (layer and broiler) sectors to support continual improvement in health and welfare.

The Animal Health and Welfare Review offers farmers in England funded annual visits. During a review, a vet will conduct disease testing for conditions including Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) in cattle and worming resistance in sheep. They will also assess biosecurity measures, identify potential risks and deliver tailored advice to not only improve health and welfare of your livestock but also productivity.

The endemic disease follow up is the second stage of the review. Further assessments will be carried out by the vet, based on the findings of the initial review.

Previously, farmers could only claim for a review and follow up for a single herd or flock. However, **the review has now been expanded, allowing livestock keepers to include more than one species in their review and follow up.** For those of you who have taken advantage of this government funded scheme and have an agreement number which starts with IAHW, the updates will automatically be changed. Those of you with AHWK agreement numbers, you will need to reapply. Those of you who haven't taken advantage, please do not hesitate to get in touch!

Funding Available

Species	Review Funding	Endemic Disease Follow Up Funding
Sheep	£436	£639
Beef Cattle	£522	Negative for BVD: £215 BVD present in the herd: £837
Dairy Cattle	£372	Negative for BVD: £215 BVD present in the herd: £1,714

MYCOPLASMA BOVIS INFECTION IN CALVES



As discussed at the recent farmer meeting which was held at the Craven Arms Hotel, Giggleswick, **Mycoplasma Bovis** is a significant cause of respiratory disease in both dairy and beef calves which can be chronic, leading to high treatment costs, reduced weight gains and even mortalities.

Spread

M Bovis enters the upper respiratory tract, where the pathogen can reside without showing clinical symptoms, and sheds through nasal secretions. Calf pneumonia caused by **M Bovis** is known to have vague early symptoms with a gradual onset of clinical signs. Additional infections from other pathogens (e.g. RSV, PI3, salmonella) combined with **M Bovis** may increase the severity of disease.

In dairy calves **M Bovis** may spread in a variety of ways including ingesting infected colostrum and milk. Additionally multi-age calf housing, shared teats on automatic milk feeders, transportation and transition stress around weaning can increase the number of clinical cases and their severity.

Symptoms

Clinical symptoms of **M Bovis** pneumonia can be difficult to spot because it has a subtle onset or can occur with other infections at the same time.

General signs of respiratory disease caused by **M Bovis** include:

- Low grade fever
- Dry hacking cough
- Nasal or eye discharge
- Decreased appetite

Signs that can occur with chronic **M Bovis** infection include:

- Poor weight gain
- Shallow difficult breathing
- **Head tilt including indicating that the infection has resulted in an ear infection**
- Arthritis (Swollen Joints)
- Lung abscesses resulting in permanent lung damage.

Diagnosis Screening

We have been carrying out free screening for evidence of **M Bovis** on numerous farm within the practice. Up to now **we have tested 39 farms with over 50% of those showing evidence of exposure to the infection through blood samples.**

Treatment

M. Bovis is resistant to many antibiotics. Delays in early diagnosis also lead to poor treatment outcomes.

Vaccination

Zoetis have recently launched **Protivity**, the first modified live vaccine for **M Bovis** protection. Calves can be vaccinated from 1 week of age to reduce clinical signs and lung lesions associated with **M Bovis** with a course of 2 injections 21 days apart.

Trials have shown significant increases in average daily weight gains and reduced antibiotic usage in infected herds when calves are protected through vaccination.

Please contact the surgery to discuss **M Bovis** screening in your herd to see if the disease is present and control strategies including vaccination.



ANTIBIOTIC USE IN NEWBORN LAMBS

Think about the facts.

When we consider the fascinating facts listed below it becomes obvious that blanket treatment with antibiotics of newborn lambs often has no effect at the required time, can be a waste of money and is causing long term problems for livestock and human health.

Resistance to Watery Mouth—E. coli		
Product	Antibiotics	Resistance
Terramycin	Oxytetracyclines	52.5%
Spectam	Spectinomycin	29.8%
Synulox	Amoxycillin clavulanate	23.7%
Norodine	Trimethoprim sulphonamide	13.9%
25% of isolates resistant to four or more antibiotics		

Resistance to Joint Ill
The bacteria that cause most joint ill cases, <i>Strep. Dysgalactiae</i> , has shown almost 90% resistance to Oxytetracycline

There is alarming widespread resistance of bacteria to antibiotics, particularly the bacteria that cause watery mouth (E. Coli).

The bacteria that cause watery mouth or joint ill often infect that lamb after an antibiotic given at birth has stopped working.

Joint ill often gains entry at tagging, tailing or dosing, not necessarily during the 2 days a long-acting antibiotic is active for after injection. The antibiotics typically in oral dosers will only last 12-24 hours. E. Coli will be ingested causing disease after this time.

There is a huge concern in the scientific world over the level of antibiotic resistance that is developing in humans, livestock and domestic pets.

In the UK the Veterinary and Livestock Regulators are insisting on responsible use of antibiotics. In several parts of the world such as Holland, there are much stricter legislations over the amount and types of antibiotics which can be used. Fines are charged when a farm and vet exceed the limit.

What is responsible use of antibiotics in the lambing shed?

The use of preventative antibiotics ONLY in groups of sheep where bacterial infection is significant and can be halted by antibiotic use, e.g.

- *In lambing sheds where there is a watery mouth outbreak*
- *In triplets, twins or vulnerable lambs where colostrum is insufficient and watery mouth is a risk.*

Using a more appropriate drug or management practice

- *Joint ill is best controlled by using disinfectants and managing hygiene rather than by blanket antibiotic use*
- *Bacteria will not grow in a navel that is dried and covered in effective disinfectants*
- *A hard lambing will not have a bacterial infection that requires antibiotics, she will however benefit from an anti-inflammatory pain killer rather than an antibiotic.*

Treatment of bacterial infections with an antibiotic that is not resistant

This will involve sampling the bacteria on your farm to see which antibiotics are effective.

How do we control infections?

There are many practical and achievable ways we can prevent infections in newborn lambs that are far more effective than using antibiotics:

- **COLOSTRUM**
- **EWE NUTRITION**
- **HYGIENE IN SHEDS**
- **TREATMENT OF NAVELS**

Please speak to a vet or visit advice in your health plan for more information.



PRODUCT NEWS

SCABIGARD

We currently have good supplies of Scabigard orf vaccine and do not anticipate shortages as the season progresses but if you know your likely requirement it may still be worth ordering early just in case!

ARKGUARD LAMB



As an alternative to antibiotics being used as a rattlebelly prevention for targeted lambs we now have a supply of ArkGuard Lamb which is a concentrated antibody source which can be administered by mouth to vulnerable lambs at birth as an aid in the prevention of neonatal infections. The product comes in 100ml bottles with a dose of 2.4ml per lamb by mouth. The product does not need to be refrigerated and can be used for up to 1 year after the bottle is first opened so is a practical alternative to use in the lambing shed!

HEPTAVAC P

Please find below information regarding Heptavac P and when we are hoping to receive stock:

- Heptavac P 100ml: End of March/early April
- Heptavac P 250ml: End of March/early April
- Heptavac P 500ml: March/April.



We currently have no Heptavac P in stock. Please contact the surgery to be placed on our waiting list.

PRE TURNOUT CATTLE VACCINES

We have been informed there are no current issues with cattle vaccines:

- Bovilis Leptavoid—H
- Bovilis BVD
- Bovilis Huskvac

Some vaccines require 2 doses at the initial course. Please contact the surgery to place your order or discuss your cattle's vaccination regime.

HUSKVAC (Lungworm Vaccine) FOR CALVES

The best way to protect first season grazers is through lungworm vaccination with **Huskvac**. Calves should be at least 8 weeks of age before vaccination, and 2 doses of vaccine are required with 4 weeks between the first and second dose. The second dose should be administered at least 2 weeks prior to turnout. If you could let us know sooner rather than later how many doses you require and for when, we will try our best to order in your first and second doses, all depending on the expiry dates of that batch.

Please contact the surgery to place your order or to discuss using Huskvac.



THE NATIONAL JOHNE'S MANAGEMENT PLAN (NJMP) UPDATE

The National Johnes Management Plan (NJMP) will launch phase 3 on Monday 31st March 2025. Phases 1 and 2 sought to control and reduce the incidence of Johnes's disease. The objective for phase 3 is unchanged and keeps the basic structure of the NJMP, which requires regular vet/farmer dialogue focusing on risk management and implementation of an appropriate control strategy. This will continue to be backed up by annual certification. Key changes for phase 3 include:

- All herds must obtain an Average Test Value (ATV) for their herd to help assess the level of disease present and allow progress to be tracked over time

The minimum requirement to generate an ATV will be a [60 cow random screen](#). **The 30 cow targeted screen is no longer an acceptable option**

- The creation of a national Johnes's Control Index target of ATV 5.5 with a goal to achieve this by 2030

The ability, through the creation of a national Johnes's Tracker database, to track progress nationally using ATV, % incidence and other drivers of infection within herds. From 31st March 2025, any farm undergoing their annual NJMP review must adhere to phase 3 requirements and a new declaration form must be signed. This remains a Red Tractor requirement.

For more information, please speak to one of the farm vets.

