

August 2024

# NEWSLETTER



**Black Sheep Farm Health**  
Dedicated farm vets

## £££ Funding Available £££

The second phase of Animal Health & Welfare Pathway, the 'endemic disease follow up', has now opened.

The 'endemic disease follow up' is completed in the same species as the animal health and welfare review, within 10 months of completing the review.

In beef herds, regardless of BVD status, the follow up covers a biosecurity assessment with a focus on BVD. In BVD positive herds, the follow up covers a full herd PI hunt in addition to a biosecurity assessment.

In sheep flocks, the funding is more flexible; each flock can choose to pursue the most appropriate sheep health package.

The options include ewe condition, reproductive performance, lamb performance, neonatal lamb performance, external parasites and lameness.

The payment rates for this support vary by species:

Species	Animal health and welfare review funding	Endemic disease follow-up funding
Pigs	£557	£923
Sheep	£436	£639
Beef cattle	£522	£837 if review result is positive £215 if review result is negative

Please contact the practice if you would like more information.

Link to apply for phase 2:

<https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/endemics/start>

## Tup Testing Time!

With autumn fast approaching, it is time to begin preparations for tupping. Preparation should begin 10 weeks before tupping to allow time to correct any problems and possibly buy replacement animals if required.

Examination and preparation of tups for breeding should centre around the **5T's; Toes, Teeth, Testicles, Tone and Treat.**

New tups should be quarantined for 3 weeks. During this time tups should be monitored for signs of disease, particularly lameness, and receive appropriate quarantine treatments against worms, fluke and scab.

Fertility testing tups, involving physical examinations, semen collection and assessment, provides valuable information used to determine if tups can cope with solo mating group or would be better used in groups or not used at all.

## When is it time for a novel wormer?

Zolvix (Group 4) and Startect (Group 5) are often used in the autumn as 'break drenches' for lambs in order to remove the resistant worms that have survived exposure to other wormer groups through the grazing season.

For this reason, it is important that we use these 'break drenches' late in the grazing season; weaning is usually too soon.

As with worming at other times of year, collect dung samples for WEC to determine if treatment is necessary.

When lambs will be moved to fresh pasture after dosing, aim to leave **at least** 10% untreated. Strong, clean lambs are good candidates to leave untreated.

Please get in touch to discuss how best to use a novel wormer in your flock.

## BE VIGILANT: Bluetongue High Risk Period

With warmer temperatures, we are entering a high risk period for bluetongue virus (BTV). Both the activity of the biting midges that spread BTV and replication of the virus within midges are dependant on warm temperatures.

Advice remains the same, be aware of area of origin when buying animals in, particularly with tup and breeding sales not far away, animals will start moving between the lengths of the country. Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Kent and East Sussex should be considered high risk. It is important to take action to report any signs, and always, remain vigilant and monitor livestock closely. Signs associated with BTV are listed below:

### In sheep:

- Lethargy, reluctance to move
- Crusty lesions around the nostrils/muzzle
- Discharge of mucus and drooling from mouth and nose
- Swelling of the muzzle, face and above the hoof
- Redness of the mouth, eyes, nose and skin above the hoof
- Breathing problems
- Lesions on the teats

### In cattle:

- Crusty lesions around the nostrils and muzzle
- Redness of the mouth, eyes, nose
- Redding of the skin above the hoof
- Nasal discharge
- Reddening and lesions on the teats

Please get in touch with any concerns. More information about bluetongue virus can be found at <https://ruminanthw.org.uk/bluetongue-virus/>

## Efficient Culling Decisions Pre-Tupping

Culling decisions pre-tupping have the potential to reduce problems throughout the rest of the year, and priorities vary from farm to farm. There is no end of reasons that a ewe may be culled, but key reasons include:

- Body condition – ewes not in adequate body condition at tupping they are likely to have reduced fertility and to rear fewer lambs, and so should be considered for culling.
- Age / teeth – older ewes are more prone to dental disease and more susceptible to other disease and infection, and they are less likely to rear lambs effectively.
- Udders – ewes with large teats, or large / low hanging udders are at greater risk of mastitis and cause extra work at lambing time. Ewes with lumpy or hard udders should be culled.
- Lameness – culling for lameness should be based on a 'two strikes and you're out' policy.
- Barren ewes - ewes that have not reared a lamb should be culled.
- Prolapse – a ewe that prolapses once is very likely to do it again, cull affected ewes and do not retain ewe lambs from ewes that have prolapsed.

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