

Black Sheep Farm Health

May 2022 Newsletter



The Field Report

With the weather warming up and the grass starting to grow we hope you are all getting towards the end of lambing and calving and starting to think about the upcoming breeding season!

Updated Opening Hours

After opening on Saturday mornings for the busy month of April, we are now returning to normal opening hours for May, with the office being closed on a Saturday morning. If you require any medications over the weekend just call and the on call vet will arrange for these to be left in the drop box at the practice.



Pre Turn Out Jobs –

with the weather improving it is a good time to consider important jobs to be done prior to turn out: :

- Castrate and dehorn calves
- BVD check test calves – more information overleaf
- PD autumn calvers
- Bolus and vaccinate at risk animals according to your herd health plan
- Bull breeding soundness examination – Ideally completed 6 weeks prior to the breeding season to give opportunity for retesting if required. This is also an ideal time to consider foot trimming and to insert nose rings if required (health and safety are now advising bull rings).



What 3 Words

We are trying to build a client map to help Claire and new vets in the future to find you all. If you could download the “what3words” app and message Kaz with the location of your farm and any other sites that we visit it would be much appreciated. Thank you to those of you who have already done so!

Bird Flu Housing Measures To Lift

The 2nd May will see the end of the housing restrictions for birds in the UK. The Avian Influenza Prevention Zone, which requires increased biosecurity around captive birds will remain in place. Prior to birds going outside; hard surfaces in enclosures should be cleaned and disinfected, ponds should be fenced off and deterring wild birds is encouraged.



NOAH Compendium App

Remember you can use the NOAH Compendium App in order to search for any medications on your invoices and find the most up to date withdrawal periods. The app also allows you to check dose rates and route of administration pen side.



Nematodirus In Lambs - As the temperature increases it is an important time to check the NADIS and SCOPS parasite forecast to check the risk level in your area. The SCOPS forecast can be found [here](https://www.scops.org.uk/forecasts/nematodirus-forecast/), by googling SCOPS nematodirus forecast or using the link below.

<https://www.scops.org.uk/forecasts/nematodirus-forecast/>



Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) Virus

BVD is one of the biggest diseases facing the UK cattle industry and is estimated to cost the industry £61 million per year. Currently there is a voluntary scheme to eliminate BVD in England but this is set to change with legislation being discussed imminently. Red Tractor have made it a requirement for BVD eradication to be occurring and this must be detailed in the health plan.

BVD is a highly contagious disease of cattle either spread through nose to nose contact or indirect fomite spread (for example on equipment and clothing). The main source of virus is from a PI animal (Persistently Infected). PI animals are born when a non immune cow is infected in the first trimester of pregnancy and the calf survives but never forms a response to the virus. These animals are often stunted and poor doers but this isn't always the case.

Other clinical signs of BVD include abortion, congenital defects, still born or stunted calves, infertility and immunosuppression leading to an increase in other diseases present on the farm.

Testing for BVD can be done in a few ways but the most common is to complete a check test. This samples a proportion of the youngstock on the farm and tests for antibody to BVD which gives an indication if they have been exposed to the virus.

The check test should ideally take place when animals are 9-18 months old and have been in stable, preferably housed, groups for 2 months. This makes pre turn out the ideal time to complete this test. 5 animals should be sampled per management group (that is a group with nose to nose contact). There are other testing methods for BVD so if this doesn't suit your herd get in touch and we can find an alternative.



It is important to avoid bringing BVD into your herd and the key way to prevent this is through good biosecurity including ensuring good boundaries with a 3 meter border, maintaining a closed herd and ensuring visitors clean and disinfect. If animals are being bought in they should be quarantined and bought from accredited free herds or tested on arrival at the farm. Vaccination is essential to reduce risks and is a requirement as part of red tractor membership.



Coccidiosis In Calves

Coccidiosis is a disease caused by Eimeria parasites which generally affects calves between 6 and 12 weeks of age. Coccidiosis typically causes black/bloody scour, abdominal pain, straining, chronic wasting/gaunt appearance and a poor appetite. But can also present as mild pasty scour and a dull coat in suckled beef calves at grass.

Diagnosis is based on age of animals and their clinical signs. Faecal samples can be taken to look for eggs of the Eimeria, however many Eimeria species are non harmful and clinical signs can be seen prior to egg production so interpretation can be difficult.

Treatment of clinical cases involves giving Toltrazuril or Diclazuril to treat the coccidiosis along with fluids and other symptomatic treatment. Calves can be dosed preventatively with the previously mentioned oral drenches.

