



Welcome

March is supposed to come "in like a lion and out like a lamb". However, if I was asked to sum up the spring so far in one word, it would be wet! The up side is that, where it's not under water, the grass is growing. Turnout time will soon be upon us along with all those jobs such as vaccinating, mineral and wormer bolusing etc. Sometimes it can be a bit of a rushed job but the way supply chains have been going recently, we may not have what you want sitting on the shelf. So please plan ahead and get meds ordered in advance.



Mark Stott

The Animal Health and Welfare Pathway

The Animal Health and Welfare Pathway is part of a new funding structure from Government open to anyone eligible for BPS. It aims to support improved health and welfare and sustainable food production on our sheep, beef, dairy, poultry and pig farms. In the first year money is available for a vet visit and advice on health and production issues relevant to your farm. For cattle, it must also include testing for BVD, and for sheep, wormer resistance testing. Levels of funding are:

Sheep £436

Dairy £372

Beef £522

Visits will be undertaken by vets from the practice and backed up with a written report. Reimbursement requires a simple form completed by vet and farmer. In year 2, capital grants will be available and in year 3, money for disease eradication and control programmes. To apply, first register an interest on the Government website which requires your Customer Reference Number (CRN), your SBI number and email address. This only takes 5 minutes but the website can be difficult to navigate; we can help with this! Work needs to be completed within 6 months of application. Applications are now open but please look out for details of client meetings to discuss further details of how we can use this scheme to benefit you and your business.



[Home](#) > [Environment](#) >



[Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs](#)

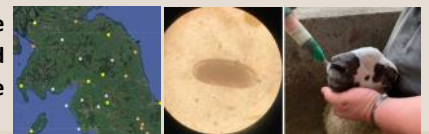
Sarah Harker

Included this month

- **The Animal Health Pathway**— Sarah Harker
- **Fixed Time AI in Suckler cows** - Rebekah Carling
- **Sheep Abortion Vaccine**
- **Eye Infections in Sheep** - Becky Dean
- **Calf Meeting Summary**- Hannah Tatham
- **Healthy Heifer update**— Vet Techs
- **News and Diary Dates**



Keep an eye on the nematodirus forecast this spring. This forecast predicts the hatch date based on data from weather stations across the UK, which can be used along with knowledge of your farm to come up with a plan for this parasite. Please speak to us. <https://www.scops.org.uk/forecasts/nematodirus-forecast/>



Fixed Time AI in Suckler Cows

This isn't for everyone, mainly due to the cost of drugs and semen and the issue of extra handling; plus, with conception rates averaging at 60% might give you poorer fertility. However, for those of you with smaller numbers of cattle (or those that keep a bull purely for use on heifers) this could be a more economically viable option than keeping a bull, plus you get the added benefits of being able to choose a bull based on EBVs (estimated breeding values) instead of the one that's currently not lame/best you could afford at the time.

EBVs give you more scope to influence your future herd, whether that's easier calving ease so you don't wreck your heifers (and decreases likelihood of a vet bill for a caesar); good 200d milk to improve your heifer replacements; or simply better growth potential in your store calves.

Things to think about that will improve your conception rates if using FTAI:

- Cows need to have been calved for at least 50 days, and heifers need to be at least 65% of their mature bodyweight to ensure they are cycling effectively
- BCS of around 3 - too skinny <2 and too fat >4 affect cycling ability
- Ability to handle cattle - cattle will require a minimum of 3 handlings, and being able to keep to strict timings is very important

If this sounds like something you might want to explore in your beef herd, then please do get in touch!

Rebekah Carling



Sheep Abortion Vaccines

For those clients who can, we urge you to vaccinate your sheep with Cevac before the **end of July** this year. Ceva, the manufacturers have given us a warning that their last delivery may arrive too late for the season meaning supply from August—October might be tight. They do however have plenty of a batch that expires at the end of July (26.07.2023). Getting home bred replacements done early will ensure they get vaccinated and potentially mean more vaccine will be available for the peak sheep buying in months later on. Please call us to place your orders.



Eye Infections in Sheep

With lots of sheep crowded indoors for lambing or feeding cheek by jowl, eye infections can be common and can spread very easily. Early intervention with an effective antibiotic is key.

The trap you need to avoid falling into is assuming sheep are just small cows and reaching for trusty tubes of antibiotics. These tubes are designed to treat the bug found in cattle, and they do this really well, however, the bugs that cause eye infections in sheep are much more varied.

Some of these bugs will be successfully treated with eye tubes, but quite a few of them are not affected at all by the action of the antibiotic in these tubes, and it just won't work. Which means that often you will find yourself putting tube after tube in and getting nowhere.

The vast majority of the bugs in sheep can be effectively treated with oxytetracyclin injections, such as Alamycin LA, and by far the easiest method is to give a full dose for the sheep's weight into the muscle, sometimes repeating at 48hrs. Carefully observing the group and separating off any with red/white eyes, but also looking for sheep which are squinting, blinking a lot, or have tear staining down their face and treating these too. (these are almost certainly early infections). If possible that group should be housed separately to keep the infection pressure away from healthy sheep, and any new cases you spot moved in with them.

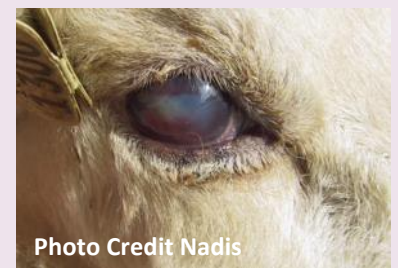


Photo Credit Nadis

Becky Dean

Farm Walk and Calf Rehydration

Last month our Healthy Heifer scheme members were invited to a meeting on Calf Rehydration, hosted very kindly by Chris and Kath Halhead at Newlands Farm.



We enjoyed a tour around the farm concentrating on the youngstock housing but also having a good discussion around the milking robots. Attention to detail was the key message on the



farm and making the most out of the buildings both old and new to maximise health and productivity. We were all impressed with how well grown and healthy the calves are which is reflected in the farms growth rate figures with calves consistently achieving 0.7kg/day and above. All calves are regularly weighed, vaccinated and assessed for disease by our vet tech team. Colostrum is tested for quality on the farm and spare colostrum is frozen to ensure that all calves receive enough. Calves are diligently fed by Kath and are paired up with a mate at a couple of weeks old to learn from each other, this has increased starter intake and has great social benefits. Calves are kept in stable groups as they get older and are weaned, again greatly benefiting welfare and reducing disease risk. The addition of a space hopper toy for the older calves is a lovely example of enrichment - happy calves means a happy farmer!



John Henderson of Forte Healthcare was our guest speaker and focused on the importance of rehydration in scouring calves. It is essential that all calves that show any signs of scour receive extra fluid and electrolytes in addition to milk feeding. He highlighted how important oral rehydration therapy has been in the developing world for the treatment of cholera and

the exact same principle applies to calves. Forte's product hydrafast supplies more glucose than some other electrolyte products meaning the calves gut has extra energy to repair. Be aware that not all electrolyte products are the same and we can happily talk you through the best product for your farm. Any calves that have lost their suck reflex, are obviously quiet or have sunken eyes will benefit from prompt vet attention and fluids in the vein - taking this action quickly will save calves before they are too dehydrated so don't wait until the damage is too great.

If you are interested in joining our healthy heifer scheme and making calf health a priority on your farm please speak to us today.

Healthy Heifer Update



The farms that have enrolled on the Healthy Heifer Scheme for weighing, taking total protein bloods and calf scoring have now got some results. We've been able to benchmark our farms as the data is uploaded onto a Calf Tracking system, keeping farms anonymous.

There has been some useful information gathered and now, under the guidance of the routine vet, tiny changes are being implemented to improve things for growing calves. Keeping calves on the right track before weaning is the most cost effective time to push them and to keep them on target for calving down at 24 months. Keeping calves at the right temperature (a jacket if you need one), hydrated, clean and dry with plenty of straw to nest in, concentrate available and with good quality air over winter will mean these calves are really going to bounce! Sharing the other members passion for calves, Mary joined the team at the end of last year and has hit the ground running.



Our Vet Tech Dream Team!
Ruby, Gill & Mary

Gill, Ruby and Mary



Hannah Tatham

Happy Easter!

farmgate
vets

Please note our opening hours for the Easter Bank Holiday Weekend

Lancaster and Kendal

April 7th Good Friday - 09.00 - 13.00pm hrs

April 8th - 09.00 - 12.00pm hrs

April 9th Easter Sunday - Closed

April 10th Easter Monday - 09.00 - 13.00pm hrs

Sedbergh

April 7th Good Friday - Closed

April 8th - Closed

April 9th Easter Sunday - Closed

April 10th Easter Monday - Closed

Our out of hours service 24hrs a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year

Lancaster – 01524 60006

Kendal – 015395 67899

Sedbergh – 015396 20335



Farm Vet Network




Those of you on social media may have seen last month a new page from Farm Vet Network. This is a

group of Vet practices in the Northwest of which we are a member. We have been working together since 2013 using our combined resources for buying medicines and supplies competitively and other valuable resources such as staff training and CPD.

Although all members (Dalehead at Settle, Belle Vue at Wigton and ourselves) are staunchly independent (and highly likely to remain so!), we hope by raising the profile of Farm Vet Network we become more attractive to Vet Students who have the benefit of working for an independent practice but with training and colleague support from the wider group. The group is coordinated by Linda Dawson who is based with us. On the picture you will recognised Jim and Mark then centre left we have Alistair Reid from Belle Vue Vets in Wigton and centre right, Neil Roberts, Dalehead Veterinary Group, Settle. www.farmvetnetwork.co.uk

Dates For Your Diary

Animal Health and Welfare Pathway

 Please look out for details of meetings we will be holding early summer on the Defra Animal health and Welfare Pathway including what funding can be applied for, how to apply and how you can use the money most appropriately on your farm. Details of the funding can be found here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/animal-health-and-welfare-pathway/animal-health-and-welfare-pathway>

Lancaster Office

Tel: 01524 60006

Open 8:30am-5pm

Monday-Friday

9am—12noon Saturdays

CLOSED Sundays

J36 Kendal Office

Tel: 015395 67899

Open 8:30am-5pm

Monday-Friday

9am—12noon Saturdays

CLOSED Sundays

Sedbergh Office

Tel: 015396 20335

Open 8:30--5pm

Monday-Friday

CLOSED Saturdays

CLOSED Sundays

farmgate
vets

www.farmgatevets.com



PLUS 24 hour emergency service 7 days a week