



## Newsletter August 2021



### Welcome

In the words of The Sun, "Phew, Wat a Scorcha!". Compared to other parts of the world, the temperatures have been nothing special but we (man and beast) are not used to it. Wearing waterproofs on farm has resulted in us being wetter on the inside than out! Although we haven't seen huge amounts of clinical heat stress I'm sure the repercussions will be seen in the next few weeks with poor fertility and growth rates.

Would you believe, we're gearing up for tupping time? Folks are booking in tup MOTs and vasectomies in good time; sponges are being ordered and we're giving advice on ewe nutrition and health. Lets, if we can, enjoy the last weeks of summer and we hope to see many of you at Garstang and Westmorland Shows.

**Mark Stott**

### Worth It's Weight In Gold!

There is nothing like a traumatic caesarian to focus the mind and prompt some action.....!! After several discussions about the benefits of good handling facilities to animal, farmer and vet, this caesarian gate was finally ordered and delivered. However, it took the caesarian from hell to get it installed in a position where it was actually some use! A good handling gate facilitates easier and safer calvings and caesarians but is also good for management tasks such as milking the cow,



suckling the calf, administering calcium boluses or other treatments etc. If these management tasks are easier to perform, they are more likely to get done. This helps prevents problems related to inadequate colostrum intake, milk fever etc so the time and money spent on the investment is certainly warranted.

**Sarah Harker**

#### Included this month

- **Worth It's Weight in Gold**—Sarah Harker
- **Heat Stress in Dairy Cows**—Hannah Tatham
- **The Tup MOT** - Rebekah Carling
- **Warble or Giant Horse Fly?** Mark Stott
- **News and Diary Dates**



Time to think about sheep abortion vaccines. Cevac—at least 4 weeks before tupping, Toxovax at least 3 weeks before tupping.



### Impact of heat

- **Reduced Feed Intakes**
- **Lower Milk Yield**
- **Poor conception**
- **Increase in Mastitis**
- **Increase risk of sole ulcers due to more standing time.**
- **Increased risk of acidosis.**



Hannah Tatham

## Heat Stress in Dairy Cows

The weather being too hot isn't normally a common problem in the UK but it can be for our cows! There is increasing evidence that our cows are being affected causing decreased feed intakes, lower milk yields by up to 20%, poorer fertility, increased risk of mastitis, increased standing time leading to more sole ulcers and an increased risk of acidosis.

A dairy cow generates a huge amount of heat that she needs to lose into the environment to function properly. In hot weather the cow's ability to lose heat is overloaded, causing her to overheat. A cow's comfort zone for temperature ranges between -15°C and 25°C. At temperatures above/below this a cow will use extra energy to maintain a constant body temperature at the expense of producing milk or getting in calf. Humidity also plays a part – as this increases the ability for a cow to lose heat decreases. In summer humidity can often be over 80% which means cows may be suffering from heat stress at temperatures as low as 20°C.



### Steps to reduce the effects of heat stress

- Provide adequate shade from direct sunlight for all cows – consider grazing at night and housing during the day.
- Ensure constant access to cold water - a cow will not walk more than 250 metres to drink, there should be a minimum of 10cm drinking space allowance per cow.
- Keep feed as fresh as possible, cows will eat most early morning/in the evening so consider changing feeding times to encourage intakes.
- Avoid crowding of cows in collecting yards – try and increase space or reduce group size and minimise standing times. Putting fans in the collecting yard can help.
- Increase ventilation – ensure that fresh air can get into the building, this may require fans as well as increasing inlet area.
- Water sprinkler systems can be effective at cooling but beware they will increase humidity so they can only work with good air flow to allow evaporation.

Heat stress is going to become more of an issue in the UK as temperatures increase, so it is well worth investing in ways to keep your cows cool.

Hannah Tatham





## The Tup MOT

With summer seeming to fly by it won't be long before tupping time is upon us. Doing a Tup MOT at least 6 weeks before they're needed gives you time to make sure your boys are ready and raring to go when the time comes. The 5 T's of the tup MOT are

### Teeth

- Feel for any swellings
- Check for an under/over bite
- Open mouth and look for any broken teeth

### Tone/BCS

- BCS ideally 3.5 - 4 out of 5 - fit enough to allow for loss of condition (they can lose 15% during the tupping season) but if too fat and they can have a lower libido.

### Testicles

- Should be smooth with no lumps and bumps and able to move freely within scrotum.
- Consistency should be that of a flexed bicep.
- Size—Need to be the same size as each other, generally the larger the scrotum the more semen is produced. Minimum of 34cm for a ram lamb and 36cm for a mature ram.

### Toes/Feet

- If tups are lame they are unlikely to serve, walk them around and check for any lameness or turning-in of the feet.
- Feel along legs for any swellings, heat, discharge or crepitus from arthritis, tip them to check hooves for any cracks, pain, smell or discharge. DO NOT TRIM, walking around should wear hooves down naturally, trimming drives infections deeper into the foot and spreads bugs on trimmers from sheep to sheep.
- Shelly hoof and white line diseases are the only reasons to trim hooves. Trimming with shelly hoof can prevent mud and stones packing into the pocket it causes or with white line to drain the abscess - if already draining no need to trim.
- Whilst tipped extrude penis to make sure no issues.

### Treat

Tups need to be included in any vaccination policies on farm such as Heptavac P or footvax but avoid vaccination within 6 weeks of tupping. Most mature, healthy sheep do not need to be **wormed** but will likely need a fluke treatment if in a high risk area.

Bought-in rams will require quarantine treatments. Please check out SCOPS website for different treatment protocols -<https://www.scops.org.uk/internal-parasites/worms/quarantine-treatments/>

If there are any question marks with your tups, especially regarding tone or size of testicles then it would be very prudent to have a semen evaluation. Please contact your surgery for more details.

***"Sheep Club Members receive a 20% discount on tup MOT's and tup semen testing"***

## The 5 T's

- **Teeth**
- **Tone/ BCS**
- **Testicles**
- **Toes / feet**
- **Treat**



Rebekah Carling



## Warble or Giant Horsefly?

The heat has brought out a creature which caused a bit of confusion. Misidentified as a warble fly, the true horse fly is as big as your thumb and has the teeth of a Rottweiler. I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of times I've seen them previously in the UK, but they've been pretty common this year.



Photo courtesy of Gillian Sedgley

At the time of writing, we're heading into muggy weather - great for all flies and so look out for August bag.

Mark Stott

## #farm24

The team are looking forward to getting behind this Farmers Guardian campaign again on



August 5th, show casing everything great about British Farming to the public.

## Euro Final Social Media Competition!

Well done to 5 year old Charlie Smith, who won our decorated animal competition in the build up to the Euro final. Not the result we wanted in the football but a winning effort with the marker sprays!



## Dates For Your Diary



**GARSTANG SHOW**  
SATURDAY 7TH AUGUST 2021

Come and see us at **Garstang Show!** It seems like forever since we socialised in person with our clients, a warm welcome will await you on our stand on **Saturday 7th August 2021**, hopefully see you there!



We are pleased to announce two new dates for the Red Tractor **Understanding Veterinary Medicines** course. Inspectors are now looking for certificates of attendance which becomes an official standard for Beef and Lamb in November 2021. Please book early as these courses are filling up fast and our face to face meetings are running at reduced numbers for Covid Safety.

**Tuesday 24th August -1.30pm—3.30pm** at Junction 36 in the practice meeting room (10 spaces).

**Thursday 23rd September -1pm—2.30pm** online - Zoom.

To book please e mail [linda@farmgatevets.com](mailto:linda@farmgatevets.com) or phone the practice. Cost £30 plus VAT inc. course book and certificate.



**Sheep Club Members, Evening Farm visit to Mansergh Hall Farm**, Kirkby Lonsdale by kind permission of James and Catherine Hadwin. **Wednesday 1st September, 7pm 2021.**

Farm walk and talks on..

- **James Hadwin** –The enterprises at Mansergh Hall, plus new information on defra funding available for 1:1 consultations to prepare for future changes in farm support.

- **Sarah Harker** a discussion on the challenges this year with sheep mastitis.

Supper included and kindly sponsored by Hipra, the makers of Vimco—sheep mastitis vaccine.

**Members please book your place** by phoning the practice or e mail [linda@farmgatevets.com](mailto:linda@farmgatevets.com).

If you are interested in joining our Sheep Club please get in touch.



mansergh hall  
farm



**Westmorland Country Show, Wed 8th and Thurs 9th September 2021.** Looking forward to seeing lots of you on our stand at the County Show this year!

### 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

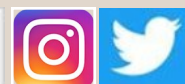
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