



## Welcome

There is no getting away from it, we are ruled by the weather. But for the first time in a long time I have been talking to farmers who want rain. We always complain about getting too much but you definitely can't farm with out it. It has been good for getting hay and silage but yields have been lower so we will be needing some decent crops in the coming months to fill the pits and bale pads. With the hot weather grass is in short supply and this can lead to worm problems in lambs as there are more worms close to the ground. Regular faecal egg counting to check worm levels is very important. When the rain comes after the dry weather, worms, especially lung worm will come out of the cow pats so keep an ear out for coughing in cattle at grass.

Jim McKinstry

## Heat Stress in Cows

I know how stressed we get working in waterproofs in the hot weather so cows must feel pretty grumpy when it is hot as well. Whether cows are inside or out, they will start to use energy to keep cool when the ambient temperature rises above 24°C. We forget about the amount of heat the rumen produces as it is a big fermentation tank breaking down the food they have been eating. Cows in heat stress give less milk, have an increased risk of late embryonic death, and do not come bulling.

**Water**—Cows can drink up to 150 litres a day in hot weather so making sure they have enough trough space and there is enough water pressure to keep the troughs filled is very important. You need 10cm of trough space per cow, 10m per 100 cows.

**Feed**—Intakes drop due to feed heating up in troughs and cows preferring to lie down and stay cool. Feeding twice a day can improve intakes and increasing energy density of diets so that cows get more energy with every mouthful.

**Ventilation and Shade**—If cows are at grass, try to give them a field with plenty of shelter so that they can get out of the sun. We have more and more clients installing fans in buildings and it is surprising that these are used all year round. Getting the correct advice

on size of fan and where to put them is really important. There are a few specialist companies out there like HYDOR and PROCTOR that can give you the proper advice.

**KEXXTONE** boluses for summer calving cows can also help. They are designed to improve the efficiency of the rumen so it will help to limit the negative energy balance of high yielding cows.

Jim McKinstry

### Included this month

- Heat Stress in Cows - Jim McKinstry
- There's no money in Sucklers or is there? Amy Hughes AHDB
- Early Summer weather and Liver fluke — Sarah Harker
- Worm and Pasture management —Gill Lumb
- Show Sheep—Rebekah Carling
- News and Diary Dates



Test Don't Guess, we may sound like a stuck record but doing Faecal Worm Egg Counts through out summer will save time and money on unnecessary wormer treatments. Please ask to find out more



## “There’s no money in sucklers”... Or is there?

Amy Hughes from AHDB, a beef farmers daughter from near Skipton spoke at our Suckler client meeting at Low Bank Side, Cartmel last month and left us with some no nonsense Yorkshire food for thought on the UK suckler industry - summarised by Amy herself below..



The statement in the title above is something I hear all the time. And whilst I’d never disagree that times are hard with things beyond our control changing left, right and centre, I would also argue that there are plenty of things that are in our control and that we can alter to make our suckler systems more profitable, if we want to.

In January, we had a fella over from Canada to speak at the British Cattle Breeders conference and then at some on farm events all over England. His name was Arron Nerbas. Arron talked about cows that worked for him within the system that he chose to run, that were efficient, got in calf and produced a marketable calf every year, without him faffing about with them constantly and, most importantly, without him feeding them anything but grass and forage.

Now I can hear some of you already telling me that things are totally different in Canada; Weather, cost of land etc etc. And yes, you’re not wrong. But how about we think about what we can learn from Arron, rather than what we can point out as being the barrier. Let’s change our mindset a bit.

One of Arron’s main take aways from being over here was that **“we love our cows too much”**, a statement that I initially took great offence to. But is he right? How many of us can put our hands up and say that our cows work for us? How many of us can say we’ve got 100% the right cow to thrive on our farms with minimal inputs? We’ve been led by market signals for so many years that we’ve forgotten what a suckler cow is there to do – **produce one, marketable calf every year**. And she needs to be able to do that with as little bought in feed as possible, if we’re ever going to have a cat in hell’s chance of making money.

So, my questions to you are. Do you have to sell into the market that you’re selling in to? Can you produce a different ‘type’ of animal that better fits your farm and take them somewhere else? Or sell them straight off farm? How much feed do you have to put into your cows to get them to get in calf and calve at 2? Rear a calf? Hold body condition? If the answer to this is “a lot” then do you have the right genetics for your farm? Finding a bull that’s what you want is bloody hard work, I’ll give you that. But try and find a breeder that you like, that’s running the same system as you, or one that’s where you’re trying to get to, and stick with them.

EBVs are there to be used, but the breeder and type of animal is just as important. Another question for you. Is your culling policy hard enough? Are you a farmer that will keep an empty cow because she’s your favourite? Changing a herd takes years, and unless you’ve got a strict set of “none-negotiables” for your culling policy, you’ll take one step forward and 3 back.

My final point, and by far the most important in my opinion is, **you’ve got to want to do it**. What do you want from your farm, life, family? Figure that out first. There’s no joy in doing something that you don’t really want to do or believe in. Money can be made from suckler farming, I’m lucky enough to see it every day in my job. And it can be fairly easy and stress free, it’s the getting there that’s maybe not so straight forward. Change takes time, focus and the want to do it. You’re in the driving seat in your business, so where are you off to?

Amy Hughes, AHDB



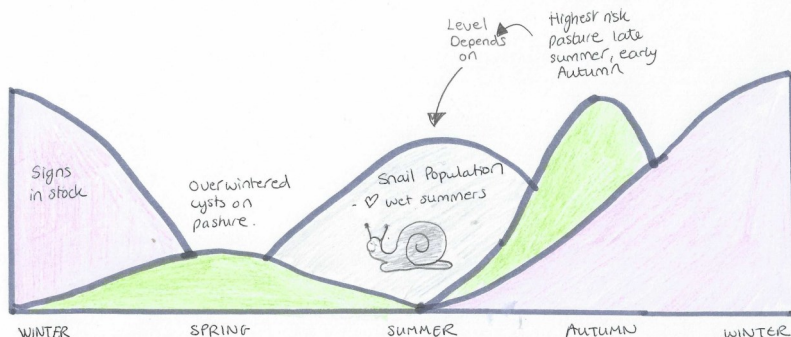
## Early Summer Weather and Liver Fluke

You may wonder why I am choosing to talk about liver fluke when it's been so hot and dry recently, but please bear with me, I do have a point to make.....

Think of the liver fluke lifecycle as beginning in late spring with the hatching of eggs onto pasture. This stage only lives for about 3 hours and must find a mud snail within that time. Once in the mud snail, the fluke continues its development and over the next few weeks, multiplies many times over until released onto pasture in autumn. This is the infective stage to grazing livestock, causing acute or more chronic problems depending on the numbers ingested and over what timescale.

We typically hear farmers worrying about liver fluke in autumn when it is raining relentlessly and it is certainly true that the lifecycle requires waterlogged pasture, providing survival for its intermediate stages and the mud snail. However, if we get several weeks of hot dry weather in May and June as we have this year, the fluke don't get a good start and even if it is wet

later in the year, they aren't there in huge numbers. For the last few years, this has been the pattern and the cumulative effects of sequential hot, dry periods in late spring and early summer has meant a much lower incidence of fluke in autumn and winter. So when you are wading through mud this backend and thinking you should be fluking sheep, remember the dust and heat of May and June. It should be a year when we can reduce and delay the need for fluke treatments on many farms, but as we always say, circumstances vary so please continue to ask our advice.



**Sarah Harker**

## Worm and Pasture Management

By using grazing management we can try to help lower the pasture worm burden, reducing the need to use wormers. Things to consider are -

- On mixed farms, alternating grazing with Cattle and Sheep helps reduce the worm burden.
- Weaning Lambs onto fields that are newly cleared for silage, aftermath.
- Using fit and healthy Ewes to graze heavily contaminated pastures in early Autumn. The immune system of fit ewes prevents worms from establishing in their gut, therefore reducing the egg laying capacity of the ones that are present.
- And remember, protect pastures by strict Quarantine for all incoming Sheep, including purchased and those returning to the farm.



Treat these sheep with Zolvix (Group 4 - Orange).

**Gill Lumb**

## Show Sheep

As we look forward to seeing a few of you at the various shows coming up over the next few weeks it is worth a reminder that for those of you displaying your hard work in the show ring, a few simple things when you bring them back will hopefully stop you bringing more than pride back with you.



The hope would be that any animals presented for showing should be in tip top condition and therefore not be carrying any diseases that could be passed on, however the stress of travelling and being in a strange environment will decrease their immune system and your own stock similarly.

- Keeping your show sheep isolated from the rest of the flock once you've brought them home for 3 weeks will mean that if they have picked up anything it should have raised its ugly head in that time and allow you to act on it
  - Footbathing your show sheep will remove any CODD they've picked up
  - If they've been grazing whilst away then Zolvix wormer should remove any resistant worms they may have picked up
- Scab treatment to remove any sheep scab they may have picked up (unless they have already been dipped or had a Cydectin injection and are still within their protection period)

Best of luck in the show ring!

**Rebekah Carling**



## Welcome Back Lindsay & Charlotte !

Last month we welcomed **Lindsay** back to our Reception team after a couple of years away from us working on the human medical side. Lindsay was straight back up to speed and is now splitting her time between Sedbergh and J36.



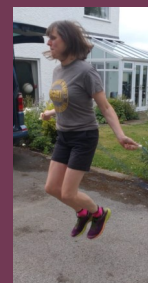
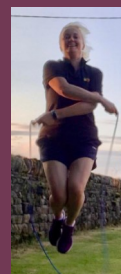
Lancaster clients will be pleased to know that **Charlotte** returns to work part time this month after 12 months of maternity leave with baby Jacob. It's great to have you both back in the Farm Gate team!



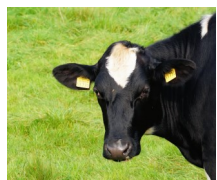
## Skipping for Cancer Research !

You may have seen this social media but a team of us at Farm Gate have been skipping our way through June in aid of Cancer Research, 100 skips a day challenge. This awful disease touches so many lives and we wanted to do our bit to raise some money. There's still time to donate so please if you can spare a few pounds do visit our team page -

<https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/team/farm-gate-vets>



## Dates For Your Diary



**Norbrook**  
**BESTICO**

**On Farm Dairy Client Meeting— Fly Control, including the use of Parasitic Wasps - at Lawsons Farm , Nether Kellet, LA6 1HA by kind permission of Chris Halhead.**

All dairy clients welcome.

**Tuesday 18th July 2023, 11am— 2pm.**

Lunch included and kindly sponsored by Norbrook (makers of Spotinor)

To book your place please call the office or e mail [linda@farmgatevets.com](mailto:linda@farmgatevets.com) by Fri 14th July.

**farmgate**  
**vets**  
**sheep club**

Apologies again for the cancellation of our trip to Shap, we are working on an alternative meeting so please watch this space and look out for details on e mail and social media over the next few weeks!



**Understanding Veterinary Medicines (Red Tractor Approved Course).** Thursday 27th July 2023, 1.30pm – 3.30pm at our J36 practice meeting room. Course cost £35 plus VAT which includes course book and certificate. **To book please call the office or e mail [linda@farmgatevets.com](mailto:linda@farmgatevets.com)**

### 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

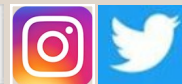
Monday-Friday

CLOSED Saturdays

CLOSED Sundays

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