

Well February was a bit on the chilly side. We have been busy with sick calves that have struggled with the cold temperatures. Pneumonia in all ages of cattle has been common in the last month and so it is so important to prevent this as cattle probably never completely get over it and it may flare up again when they are older.

Lambing and calving is just starting to get going and scanning results show that there is a good crop of lambs out there. We just all need to work together to get as many as possible to the auction!!!

Jim

LAMBING PROBLEMS

Lambing time is upon us and with it comes all the usual ups and downs. These are some of the problems that you may encounter, how to deal with them and when to ring a vet!

Vaginal Prolapse: Before lambing the vagina can prolapse. This can quickly become swollen and damaged, so it is important they are dealt with quickly. The longer the prolapse is out the harder it is to replace and the more contaminated it will get. Ewes that have a vaginal prolapse will nearly always do it again, so they need to be identified and culled before next lambing.

If a ewe is just starting to prolapse then quickly getting a harness onto her will often be enough to stop it progressing. If the prolapse has been out for any length of time then this is a veterinary procedure to replace. An epidural will be given to provide pain relief and to stop her pushing and the vulva will be stitched to prevent any further pushing.



Lambs misrepresented: There are a variety of ways that lambs can present abnormally. All offer a challenge and correcting them can be very satisfying! However, if you haven't made any progress in 15 minutes it is better to stop before you cause damage to the sheep or lamb and ring for a vet to help.



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Lambing Problems Cont.. Ringwomb:

This is when the cervix (circled) doesn't open up enough to allow the lamb to pass into the birth canal. The ewe may not strain when she has ringwomb, so it is difficult to tell if she is lambing. When you feel in you will come against a layer of tissue and you may be able to get a couple of fingers through the opening of the cervix to feel the lamb. You can try to gently encourage the cervix to dilate but be careful as excess pressure will cause tearing. If no progress is made after 10 minutes of doing this then you should ring a vet as a caesarean may be required.

Full Term Ewe with Lamb in Normal Presentation



Uterine Prolapse: After lambing the whole uterus can prolapse, often this is after a ewe has had big lambs. Again this needs replacing quickly to prevent damage and contamination. A vet will give an epidural and ensure that the uterus is returned into its normal position to prevent her pushing. Antibiotics and anti-inflammatories will be given to try and prevent her getting sick. It's unusual for a ewe to do this again, so it is fine to keep her for breeding again if desired.



Hannah Tatham

SUCKLER COW TO DO LIST

Every year we see preventable problems in suckler cows. This can also be applied to dairy heifers as they get the poorer forage and a lot less proven and minerals compared to dairy cows. So have a read and please do these things to make calving time a lot easier.

- **Clean out feed troughs.** Mouldy forage allows a bug called *Bacillus licheniformis* to grow. This causes cows to abort in the last 2 months of pregnancy by causing an inflammation of the cleansing.
- **Bolus cows and heifers with a High iodine bolus.** Calves need iodine in the last third of pregnancy to help their thyroid develop. Iodine deficiency causes still born and calves that are slow to get going. 2 ALL TRACE HIGH IODINE boluses will give cows and heifers all the iodine and the other minerals they need for up to 6 months. There is a 10% discount on these boluses until the end of May so get them done!!!!
- **Jab in calf animals against scour.** There are few things in my job that are as disheartening as dealing with rotavirus or E.coli infection in calves. Beef calves are especially a problem as we have the mother who may start to reject the calf. The calves don't suck, need constant attention and if they do not die they are stunted. The worst thing is that it is completely preventable with an injection of BOVIGEN or ROTAVEC CORONA in the 3 months before calving. Please ask us about it as it is not expensive especially compared to the worth of a beef calf at the moment.



Jim McKinstry

LEARN FROM THIS WINTERS PNEUMONIA

Put mildly it has been a challenging winter for pneumonia in youngstock this year. This is frustrating for both vets and farmers alike. Once it takes hold it can be difficult to get on top of, often feeling like trying to make the best of a bad situation. This is because we have few tools to treat the primary viral causes of disease and losses both in terms of animals and profit inevitably occur regardless of how we manage the situation. But does it have to be this way? There are many areas to consider in the prevention of respiratory disease e.g. building design/modification and nutrition to name a few. This article however is going to focus on pre-turnout animal factors.

There are two questions I like to ask pre turnout.

If I had problems this year, do I know what caused it?

Is there anything I can do to ensure more resilient youngstock next winter?

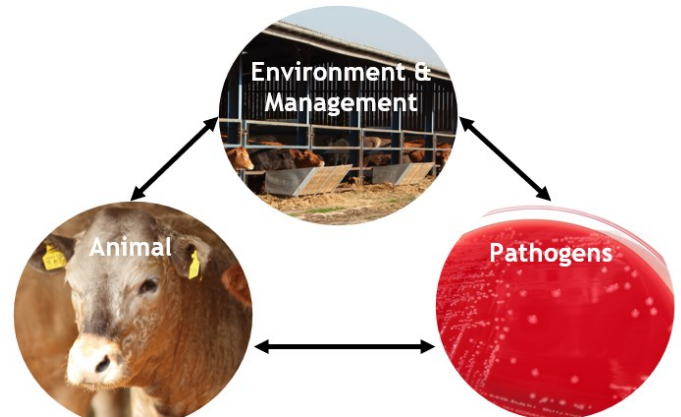
This is where blood testing and vaccines fit in.

Blood testing– what does it tell us and what animals do I need to test.

Serology or antibody testing is a cost-effective way of looking back in time and seeing which of the major respiratory pathogens have caused issues in the past winter. This allows us to advise what is likely to be the best vaccination programme for your farm and helps us reduce the risk of pneumonia in subsequent years. It is best to sample, unvaccinated groups that have had pneumonia issues, 6 -12 weeks after an outbreak. The spring is a busy time for all of us – Get your respiratory testing booked in before we lose the opportunity though turnout or sale.

We currently have an offer of £25 off the cost of serology investigations booked in before 1st April contact Lancaster or Kendal to get yours booked in.

Finbarr O Sullivan Greene



WHAT CAN YOU DO IF LAMBS START SCOURING?

Last month we talked about use of Spectam in new lambs with the message very much being “as little as possible, as much as necessary”. Without doubt good colostrum management and hygiene are the two main factors involved in reducing cases of watery mouth and scour in young lambs.

Regardless of the cause, lambs that are scouring require fluids and electrolytes. **Rehydion** is an oral rehydration product which can be mixed with milk or given by mouth directly, but at the same time maintaining the lambs milk intake and hence the necessary energy and vital nutrients.

Most oral rehydration products contain bicarbonate or citrate that interfere with milk clotting and so should not be fed within 2 hours of a milk.

One bottle of Rehydion Gel = 160 doses for a young lamb (2ml per dose). Dose each lamb 2 times a day until scour stops. Also helpful for lambs from ewes with poor colostrum, slow sucklers and lambs in contact with scouring lambs. For further info please visit <https://www.makingmilkmatter.co.uk> or speak to one of our vets.



MEET THE TEAM— AN INTERVIEW WITH VET FINBARR

What was your first ever job? If you don't count helping out on our family beef and sheep farm in the west of Ireland my first job was picking crab on a factory line.

What do you enjoy most about your current job?

I am a bit of a data nerd so I really enjoy studying how disease impacts on herd and flock performance. I get a lot of satisfaction from working with a farmer to identify why a problem happened and making a plan to reduce the risk in the future. Similarly working with a farm to identify bottle necks in health that are holding them back to find a bit more efficiency is very satisfying.



Where is your favourite holiday destination? Toss up between Finland or the Mediterranean coast. There is something about grilled fish and cold wine that I get a hankering for every now and then.

Who would you most like to have dinner with and why? (this could be a famous/real or fictional person) - Food and travel float my boat so I think an evening with Michael Palin and Rick Stein would be pretty entertaining.

How do you relax after a hard days work? I enjoy open water swimming or good food and a bottle of wine.

HOME SCHOOLING PHOTO COMPETITION

Last month we ran a competition on facebook, "Not all classrooms have 4 walls" where we asked you to post pictures of our next generation out on the farm learning valuable life skills.

Our winner of the prize goodie bag was this walling lesson entry from Valerie Gornall, congratulations to you and of course the stars in the picture! Thank you to everyone who entered we really had some super pictures.



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