



Newsletter

August 2025



Welcome

Summertime is here. Lots of traffic to the lakes and dales and cyclists clogging the roads. Up to press we're getting a good summer. Grass growth is brilliant with many farmers saying they have never seen as good crops of grass. We had a slow start in the spring but we are doing better now. Other parts of the country have no grass and maize is looking sad so we are doing OK. Warm and wet conditions with plenty of grass can have its downside. We are seeing more cases of worms in sheep and it will not be long until we start hearing lungworm causing coughing in untreated youngstock. Lush grass is starting to cause Pasteurella in lambs. With the price store lambs are getting we need to prevent this if we can. Every silver lining has a cloud!

The show season is starting for us this month with Cartmel. Please pop in and say hello and there might even be some summer treats for you.

Jim McKinstry

Blue Tongue Cases this Vector Season



As many of you will know the whole country became a Bluetongue Restricted Zone at the start of July. This means you can move animals within England without a specific bluetongue licence or pre-movement testing. For movement to Scotland and Wales the rules are different, so do get in touch with us to discuss testing and vaccination requirements.

Ruminant Health & Welfare (RH&W) and AHDB have put together a new tool to help farmers find licensing requirements for moving animals within GB, which is situation and location dependent. This link will take you to the Movements Checker: <https://ruminanthw.org.uk/bluetongue-virus-hub/bluetongue-movements-checker/>

The number of cases so far for this 2025-2026 Bluetongue season is three. One sheep in Buckinghamshire and another in Oxfordshire have been confirmed positive in July after showing the typical clinical signs- nasal discharge, swollen muzzle and death, (which are typical in sheep but not cattle). We didn't see these cases of sick animals as much last year, but the scientific modelling predicts this year will be worse than the last. Therefore, if you have chosen to vaccinate with Bultavo-3, make sure stock is full vaccinated (one dose sheep, two doses in cattle) before the midges will be at peak activity, which is usually August/September time.

Sol Elliott

Included this month

- **Blue Tongue Cases**—Sol Elliott
- **Lambs and Lush Grass**—Alex Vayro
- **Total Proteins** - Ruby Allan
- **Best time for Tup testing**—Sol Elliott
- **The Elephant in the room**—Sarah Harker
- **Pasteurella and Clostridia**—Rebekah Clayton
- **News and Diary Dates**



Heptavac P and Abortion Vaccines — back in stock currently.
Don't miss Rebekah's article on Pasteurella and clostridia.



Lambs and Lush Grass

We are seeing an increase in cases of lambs with scour at the moment, and as always, the weather plays a huge role in parasite development on the ground.

Over the past few weeks there has been an increase in nematodirus detected on faecal worm egg counts from scouring lambs. This is uncharacteristically late in the season but could be explained by a second hatch of the worm eggs, as cold weather followed by a rise in temperature can generate a mass hatch. This mass hatch can cause a sudden onset of scour and ill thrift, sometimes before the eggs can even be detected on a worm egg count. Treatment of diagnosed nematodirus can be done with a white drench, but if you



have any queries, please contact us or **drop an egg count in.**

It is also worth mentioning that the diet change associated with the flush in pasture we are seeing recently can contribute to mucky bums without a worm burden, reiterating the need for egg counts prior to drenching. If you notice lambs with mucky tails it is worth considering fly strike prevention with the weather being as balmy as it is- feel free to contact the practice for available products.



Alex Vayro

Importance of Good Total Proteins in Calves

A lot of you will be thinking what on earth is a total protein? This is where calves are blood tested from 1-7 days old to measure the absorption of antibodies across the calf's small intestine, during the first 24 hours after birth. Calves that fail this test are much more likely to develop disease such as scour and pneumonia, affecting their Daily Live Weight Gains. So this is why it is so important to think of the 5 Q's when feeding calves colostrum.

Quality – Measure with Brix Refractometer, only feed the best! (Above 22% can be used or frozen for further use, below that should be discarded)

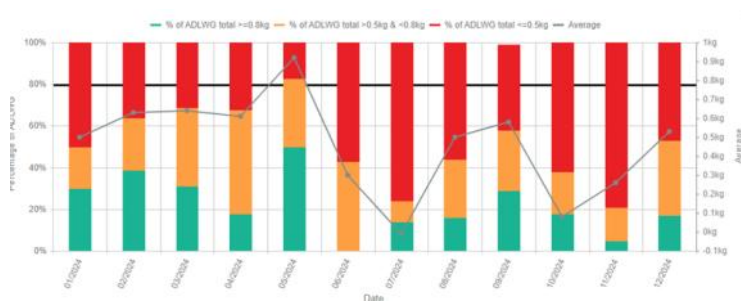
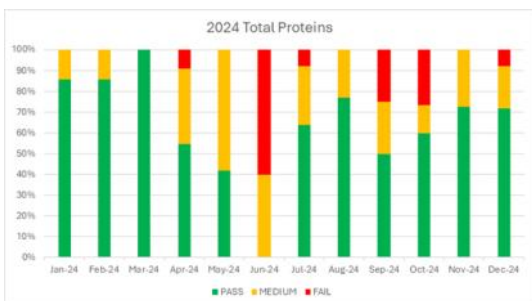
Quantity – Roughly 10-12% of the calf's bodyweight, the more feeds of colostrum the better, some feed up to 5 days of transition milk.

Quickly – within the first 4 hours of birth to allow maximum absorption.

sQueaky clean – say no more!! Teats when collecting colostrum, dump bucket, Feeding Equipment, the colostrum itself, you...

Quantify – Evaluate the calf's immunity. Measuring the total protein transfer of your calves can be a massive eye opener, and can really get some clear answers. Get in touch with one of us today if you are interested in knowing how your total proteins are in your calves and how the data can really help with your overall herd health!

The tables below show an example farm last year and how their total protein levels affected their overall Daily Live Weight



Gain
averages.

Ruby Allan

Best Time for Tup Testing

We will soon be thinking about testing tups, vasectomising teasers and deciding which ewes we keep to breed from next year. Ideally, we want tups tested 6-8 weeks before you plan to put them in with the ewes. A few common issues we hear include “my tup lamb isn’t interested in the ewes” – depending on the breed of the tup, he might not have reached puberty yet and so if you are using a young tup, always have a back up option! We also see tups not producing samples on tup testing – this might happen for a number of reasons, not just infertility; other reasons include testing the tup outside of his mating season (too early), the tup has not been rested away from ewes for 3 days before coming to us for testing or some tups just don’t give a good sample with our method of testing so we can retry again the following week (note that some tups may not take to this method of testing at all, in which case a teaser ewe might be needed).

As always when picking tups for breeding we will perform a Ram MOT checking toes (lameness will affect fertility), teeth, testicles (ensuring no lumps or bumps), tone (we want a body condition score of between 3.5–4.0 (spine well covered) at 10 weeks before tugging) and treat (making sure all his vaccines/fluke/worming have been completed as necessary). These are all things you can check yourselves in tups you’re not planning to bring to us for testing.

Sol Elliott



The Elephant in the Room

As I write, the new season of bluetongue cases are just being reported in the Midlands and by the time you read this, we will have a better idea of it’s rate of spread. Although we try to keep our newsletter topical and current, it’s hardly fast enough for the modern world so please keep an eye on our social media posts for more up-to-the minute information. We need to stay vigilant for new and emerging diseases and where effective vaccines are available, as there are for bluetongue, seriously consider protecting our herds and flocks. This represents an insurance as we don’t know the level of challenge we will experience, but it sounds like its on its way.....

In amongst these new threats, we mustn’t lose sight of the old ones as they definitely don’t go away. BVD is an ever-present threat still causing infertility, abortions, calf disease and deaths in many dairy and beef herds. Footrot and enzootic abortion are also still perennial and significant problems on plenty of sheep farms. Perhaps we get used to living with these diseases and become blind to the level of loss that they actually represent. Plenty of our farms already benefit from effective vaccines against these diseases but others still fail to see the ‘elephant in the room’. We need to remain vigilant to the threat of new diseases without forgetting those that we live with but perhaps don’t need to.

Sarah Harker



Clostridia and Pasteurella

The changeable weather we’ve had in the last few weeks unfortunately means we’re also seeing some diseases we’d normally associate with autumn, now. Nematodirus counts are up (see Alex’s article on this) and I’ve found cases of pulpy kidney and systemic pasteurellosis in the most recent lamb post-mortems I’ve done.

Pulpy kidney is caused by a type of clostridia that is normally present in the gut but causes a problem when it overgrows. This overgrowth normally occurs when there has been a sudden diet change – I can’t say for certain, but I wonder whether the grass changing with each weather shift is having an impact.

Pasteurella is a different type of bacteria that would usually cause pneumonia, however, if the animal is under more pressure than normal it can get into the bloodstream and causes a spectrum of other issues. The weather stresses, combined with the likelihood of an increased worm burden, will definitely be a risk factor. **Heptavac P Plus** given before lambing does give Pulpy kidney and Pasteurella protection through the colostrum, but the Pasteurella protection is only for a few weeks, so it’s well out of their system by now. Therefore, I would recommend you bring your Ovivac/Heptavac P Plus that you would normally do at weaning, forward if possible. If you don’t use Heptavac P Plus at all, I would really recommend having a chat with a vet about the benefits. Sudden death is the main thing we’ll see with both diseases, and as Pasteurella is usually due to an underlying stressor, a post-mortem will be able to give you the most information as to how to help the remaining flock going forward.

Rebekah Clayton

An Interview with Beth Whitfield

You may have met Beth at any one of our branches, she is friendly face on reception.

What was your first ever job? My first job was working in a riding stables,

What do you enjoy most about working at Farm Gate Vets? I enjoy talking with farmer and meeting new people.

Where is your favourite holiday destination? Anywhere with sunshine!

Who would you most like to have dinner with? (a famous real or fictional person). I would love to have dinner with my whole family.

How do relax after a hard days work? I relax after a hard days work by



sitting down with my family with a large cup of coffee!

National Youngstock Conference Birmingham



Last month our Vet Tech team, Hannah and their honorary travel buddy Laoise, had a day out, without their wellies to attend the National Youngstock Conference in Birmingham. A great day was had by all and the points picked up were-

- Advancements in youngstock monitoring via tags.
- Genetic Testing
- Calf milk feeding - powder & quantities.
- Post weaning growth rate monitoring.
- Building placement and wind direction.

Plus lots more, please don't hesitate to ask the team about any areas where we can help with youngstock rearing.

Whatsapp Ordering Number

07442 862092

Please include-

- Name and Farm Name -
- Collection from Lancaster, J36, Sedbergh or Tynedale
- Medicine requested and quantity
- Reason for use - e.g. lame cows.



Cartmel Show - Wednesday 6th August 2025

We are proud to sponsor the cattle tent again this year, please join us for Strawberries and Cream on our stand. We'll also be in the education tent helping to share knowledge of livestock and agriculture with the general public.



Westmorland County Show - 10th and 11th of September 2025

A warm welcome awaits on our stand where we'll be serving brews, drinks, ice cream, cakes and biscuits. Please come and see us for a chat.



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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