



It is December already and what a year 2020 has been. From a livestock point of view prices have been good and the general public has never bought as much British meat and dairy products. Let us hope they keep this up after realising what great food is produced on their doorstep and that it does not need to be shipped from afar to them. Now we are into winter we are seeing plenty of pneumonia and scour problems which we are talking about in this issue. I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and peaceful New Year. Let us see what 2021 has in store for us all!!!!!!!



Jim McKinstry

What you need to know about IBR.

Infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR) is described as one of the top health and welfare concerns in the UK costing the cattle industry £36.6 million annually. It is caused by the virus bovine herpes virus 1 (BHV-1) and affects the upper respiratory tract which in some cases can lead to

- fever
- discharge from the eyes and nose
- Pneumonia, which can be fatal

More commonly, herds are chronically affected with infected individuals shedding the virus throughout their lives at times of stress. The chronic, long term effects are

- a reduction in milk yield
- decreased fertility
- increased number of animals with pneumonia.

It is spread between cattle via nose to nose contact, coughing and infected bull semen. It can easily be brought onto farm from purchasing carrier animals, borrowing a bull or nose to nose contact across boundary fences. To check if your herd has been exposed, bulk milk samples should be tested regularly. Blood testing can also be done on replacement stock or individuals within the herd. As it is a virus antibiotics are of limited use as they will only treat secondary infections. The most effective way to control the virus is through vaccination, strict biosecurity and monitoring through testing. If you want to discuss IBR further please contact one of the vets.



David Weir



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Our survey says...

In September and October we asked some of our dairy farmers to take part in a practice bulk milk survey to assess what the levels of infection were for three of the most common infectious diseases in herds, BVD, IBR and Leptospirosis. Tests were mostly taken from non vaccinating herds but where a farm vaccinated we didn't test for that disease, as vaccine antibody would skew the results. Of the 24 farms tested we had **positive** results as follows-

76% BVD

50% IBR

70% Leptospirosis

This indicates that all 3 diseases are pretty active in herds in this area. Although we are not often seeing raging infection in terms of clinical disease, there is no doubt these diseases will be contributing to **POOR FERTILITY**, **MILK YIELD REDUCTION**, **ABORTIONS**, **SLOWER GROWTH RATES** and **SUPPRESSED IMMUNE SYSTEMS** (especially with BVD).

For **Leptospirosis** please remember that this disease is zoonotic which means it can spread to humans causing a flu like disease which isn't very pleasant.

Spread is mostly via urine so working in a milking parlour is a high risk environment. The vaccine (Leptavoid H) reduces shedding along with controlling the disease so vaccinating not only helps to protect your cows but your family and staff too.

With regards to **BVD**, there has never been a better time to get on top of BVD with the government funded scheme **BVD Stamp it out**. We will be running a final sign up meeting in January, please look out for this.

David has already talked about IBR on the previous page.

Please speak to us for advice on your own herd situation regarding infectious disease.

Linda Dawson



Barren ewes

Efficiency in all sheep flocks hinges on a number of measurements. Scanning percentage being one of the key points to assess a flock's performance. There are many factors that feed into a good or a bad scanning, but one area to look at are empty sheep.

Certain diseases can lead to an increase in barren ewes. If your empty rate is at or above 5% there may be an infectious cause which you may be able to find with blood samples.



If you have had a disappointing scanning or more barren ewes than you were expecting, please book a flock health visit now so that we can begin to identify the cause and aim to improve performance for future years.

For more information see: The Flockmasters Guide to Abortion and Vaccination

<https://www.msd-animal-health-hub.co.uk/DNOMF/ProjectLAMB/SheepHealth>

Dealing with calf scour caused by *Cryptosporidium*

Cryptosporidiosis is the main infectious cause of scour in young calves. It is caused by the ingestion of a microscopic parasite *Cryptosporidium parvum*. As it is caused by a parasite, antibiotics **DO NOT work** against it.



- Usually affects calves less than 4 weeks old.
- The same species can affect lambs and humans – so wash your hands after handling calves!
- **Highly infectious** -At peak shedding, there may be up to 10 million oocysts (eggs) per gram of faeces, yet it takes as little as 10 oocysts to cause disease.
- Oocysts can survive many months in the environment in cool, moist conditions.
- Most disinfectants **won't kill** the parasite in the environment. **Kenocox** will – please speak to us for more info. Good mucking out and pressure washing of pens is essential.

Control & prevention

- Colostrum is the best way to help calves protect themselves.
- Good hygiene is key - clean out buildings between batches of calves and clean feeding equipment after each use.
- Avoid overstocking.
- Isolate scouring calves for at least a week after scour has stopped. Feed isolated calves last.

Diagnosis

A 10-minute dipstick test can be performed on farm or at the surgery.

Treatment

Keep any scouring calf well hydrated with oral electrolytes.

Continue milk feeding. Rehydration therapies should be **IN ADDITION** to milk feeding.

Intravenous fluids are required if the calf can't stand.

Antibiotics will not work.

Halocur can be used to help reduce diarrhoea and reduce excretion of oocysts, however it is not a cure. **Halocur** can be used to aid prevention of diarrhoea on farms with a known history of cryptosporidiosis. There are guidelines to using these products safely so speak to a vet before using either product.



Becky Inman

Dates for your diary

17th December 2020 1pm-2.30pm Understanding Veterinary Medicines (Online)

This is the Red Tractor approved medicine course, a requirement for dairy farmers and highly recommended for sheep and beef. Course cost is £30 plus VAT which includes the course handbook. To book, please phone the practice or email linda@farmgatevets.com



Various dates - Small Holder Online Training Events including sheep, cattle, goats, camelids and poultry, for more info please visit - www.farmgatevets.com/practice-info/events.aspx. These events can be booked online.

Beth's Festive Crossword Competition !!

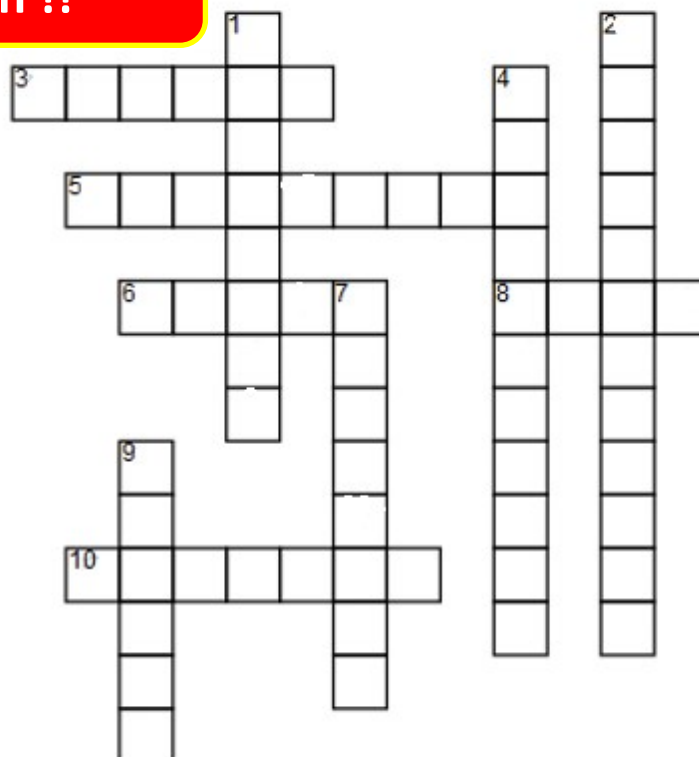


Name

.....

Farm Name

.....



Win a box of Chocolates!!

Across

- 3. What is the furry skin that covers reindeer antlers called?
- 5. Which animal is the biggest in the world?
- 6. What sign of disease does coronavirus (not the human one!) cause in calves?
- 8. Which parasite transmits Louping ill, Fever and Babesiosis (Red Water)?
- 10. What are Reindeer also known as in North America?

Down

- 1. Which breed of beef cattle originates from a county in the West Midlands and is known for its quiet temperament, white face and good mothering ability?
- 2. Which disease of cattle do we test for by injecting into the skin and then measuring 3 days afterwards?
- 4. How many animals in total were gifted in the 12 days of Christmas carol?
- 7. Which fungal skin disease often appears in growing calves and can pass to humans?
- 9. The dried version of which fruit often used in Christmas cake and pudding is toxic to dogs?

Drop your entries off at the practice or photograph and e mail to vet@farmgatevets.com

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