

Newsletter February 2022



Welcome

Where is this year going? We are flying through January and the shortest month is here soon. Lambings are just starting to come in as many of our clients lamb between February and April. There is a lot of talk about watery mouth as the preventative antibiotics are in short supply. The upside to this is that we can have a good chat to farmers about nutrition, colostrum and hygiene as there is no safety net this year. Yes, it will be difficult for some to adopt to change but it is worth it so that when we go to hospital with a nasty infection there are still antibiotics to treat us!

Jim McKinstry

Lambing without a Safety Net

Our traditional methods of giving antibiotics at lambing to prevent watery mouth need to be reviewed as SPECTAM is in limited supply this year before it is completely removed from the market. THERE ARE NO LICENSED ALTERNATIVES to Spectam in the UK and Europe!

We have been successfully cutting use in sheep flocks over the past few years with more and more flocks not using any and not having any increase in watery mouth cases. So how are they doing it? Luck and lambing very few sheep I hear you say. No not at all, just by changing management practices and getting some good sound vet advice!

Breaking this cycle by **reducing bacteria in the environmental**, **preventing points of entry**, and **improving the lambs' immunity** all help to reduce watery mouth..

Reducing environmental load

- Don't overstock group pens
- Clean and disinfect individual pens between each sheep.

Tip don't use Spectam at all in first 2 weeks of lambing as the environmental load will not be that high.



Included this month

- **Lambing without a Safety Net** – Rebekah Carling
- **Suckler Cow to do List** - Jim McKinstry
- **Lepto in Suckler Herds** - Rebekah Carling
- **Calf Pneumonia Recap** - Hannah, Kathrine, Charlotte
- **News**
- **Diary Dates**



Ask us about **Rehydion Gel** - Indicated for use in calves and lambs as an aid in the correction of electrolyte imbalances resulting from digestive disturbances such as diarrhoea.



Lambing with out a Safety Net Continued..

Preventing points of entry

- Dip navels in strong iodine solution ASAP
- Keep Ewes' udders clean as possible
- Disinfect stomach tube after each use in a Milton solution used for babies

Improve lamb immunity

COLOSTRUM, COLOSTRUM, COLOSTRUM

- **Quality**

Ewes need to be in the correct condition and getting the correct amount of feeding. Feeding the correct amount and type of protein is also very important. Blood sampling some ewes 2-3 weeks before lambing to assess their nutritional status is very important

- **Quantity and Quickly**

- 50ml/kg ASAP after birth but certainly within 6 hours, 200ml/kg in first 24 hours. If supplementing triplets with artificial colostrum make sure all 3 get some of ewe's as well, even if that means supplementing all 3 with artificial, as her colostrum will always be better

- **sQueaky clean**

- Keep them warm, out of drafts, good level of bedding to allow 'nesting', lamb jackets if necessary

Rehydion

A difficult birth can cause acidosis in lambs. Acidosis results in weak lambs therefore impacting on sucking and colostrum intake. Rehydion contains an alkalisng agent that will help to reverse this acidosis. Therefore, giving 2ml orally in milk to lambs that have had a difficult birth may help to prevent watery mouth as a result.

Rehydion should also be given to scouring lambs to prevent them getting dehydrated.



Rebekah Carling

Suckler Cow to do List

Often thought as low maintenance, suckler cows plod on hopefully giving us a calf every year but this is the time of year they need a bit of attention

- **CONDITION SCORE COWS** If they are fit (BCS of over 3.5) they need to lose a bit of weight. If they are still sucking a calf, do not wean them until 6 weeks before they are due. If they are too thin (BCS of less than 2.5), wean them and give better feed. We want them calving down ideally at a BCS of 3.
- **LAMENESS** Get any lame cows sorted now so they get a bit of condition on. These cows have less colostrum and milk and this will impinge on the health and vigour of the calf.
- **MINERAL BOLUSES** Iodine is really important for calf vigour at birth and this needs to be in at 3 months before calving. We recommend the ALL TRACE HIGH IODINE BOLUS as it gives all the minerals and vitamins a cow needs before calving.
- **SCOUR VACCINE** Bovigen or Rotavec corona are a must. If suckler calves get bad scour they are difficult to manage on the cow and if they die you have lost all the income from the cow for the year. They need to be given from 3 weeks to 3 months before calving.
- **FEEDING** A little cake in the last 3 weeks of pregnancy will improve colostrum quality and milk. It will not grow the calf. Instead, it will make sure the calf has what it needs when it is born.



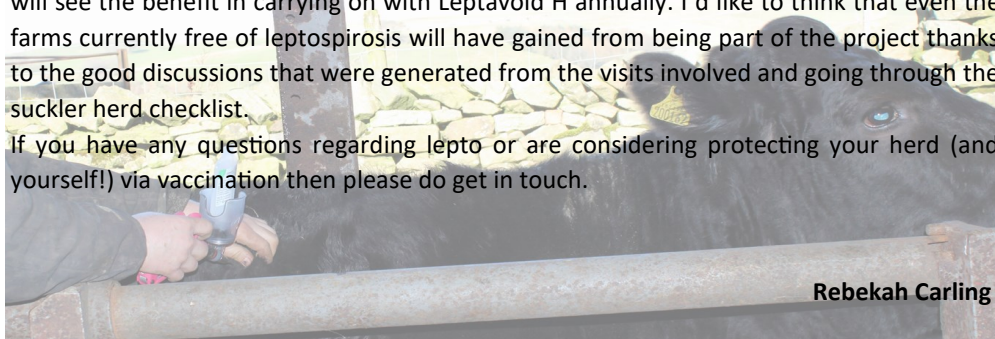
Jim McKinstry

Lepto in Suckler Herds - a Local Survey

Leptospirosis infection in cattle decreases milk production and causes poor fertility, abortion and stillborn or weak calves. It is also zoonotic which means it can spread to humans causing headaches and fever and in worst cases, meningitis. It is spread by urine, contact with cleansings and aborted fetuses and through contaminated water. The increased risk in the milking parlour of urine splashing is why much of the dairy herd are vaccinated. However, I think you'll agree that the production benefits of improving fertility and milk production speaks for itself and is just as important in the beef herd; hence this local surveillance project which we ran in conjunction with MSD.

14 farms were signed up in total from across our region and we did indeed discover **leptospirosis infection on 29%** of these farms. Hopefully, through vaccination, these farms will see an improvement in their fertility whether that be more cows in-calf, more cows calving down in first 3 weeks of the calving period, or a tighter calving period generally and will see the benefit in carrying on with Leptavoid H annually. I'd like to think that even the farms currently free of leptospirosis will have gained from being part of the project thanks to the good discussions that were generated from the visits involved and going through the suckler herd checklist.

If you have any questions regarding lepto or are considering protecting your herd (and yourself!) via vaccination then please do get in touch.



Rebekah Carling

Flock Check 2022

If your barren rate is above 2% or you are experiencing an uncomfortable level of abortions at lambing, you need to speak to us about Flock Check.

Flock Check is a scheme subsidised by MSD where bloods from up to 6 aborted or barren ewes can be tested for the two most common causes of abortion, Toxoplasmosis and EAE. We can then advise you on the best way forward, depending on your results.



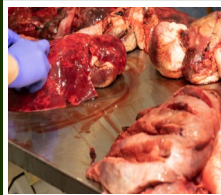
A Quick Re Cap from our Calf Pneumonia Meeting

As turnout is still some time away, here is quick re cap from the vets who ran our December Calf Pneumonia meeting...

Vaccines—There are a range of vaccines available and getting the right one for your farm will involve testing to find out what is causing issues in your calves – we have some funding available to help pay for this so speak to a vet today. Fridge temperature was another hot topic (literally!) – vaccines need to be stored in a fridge between 2 and 8 °C or else you could be killing off the vaccine before it is given. Vaccines are the icing on the cake after you have got nutrition and environment sorted, you will struggle to keep infections under control if these two factors aren't addressed as well.



Hannah Tatham



At the **post mortem table** Kathrine looked at some lungs saved from recent post mortems and compared them to what normal should look like. "We looked at sudden onset cases that cause massive fluid accumulation and red colouration of the lung tissue. One of the sets of lungs had lovely cheesy abscesses within the tissue, a brilliant example of what long term damage can result in. This really brought home to everyone the damage that a case of pneumonia will cause and that the lung tissue will never recover fully even with prompt treatment".

Kathrine Muller Jones

Housing and Environment Housing is an absolute paramount factor in calf rearing; these animals need to be kept in environments which are dry, warm, draught free and clean with plenty of fresh air removing pathogens in the atmosphere. Calves should 100% be housed away from other stock otherwise they will contract disease and become clinical ill or ill-thrifty. No amount of antibiotic will rectify the detrimental effects of poor calf accommodation.



Charlotte Chapman

Guess the Baby Photo Competition

As spring and new life will soon be all around us, we have brought back our guess the baby competition! Can you guess which staff member this baby grew into?



Good Luck Lindsay !!

We would like to wish our lovely colleague Lindsay best of luck in her new job as she leaves us to return to work in a human medical practice. Lindsay has worked on reception and on our delivery van at J36 for the last 2 years. We will miss her friendly smile and caring nature, she has been a such a great team mate to all of us!



Dates For Your Diary



Planning for Lambing- using less antibiotics, Sheep Club Meeting On Zoom—Wed 9th February 2022 at 7pm (ZOOM). We are joined by Kythe McKenzie, a vet from Ceva Animal Health to discuss preparation for lambing specifically addressing the delisting of Spectam Scour Halt. To register for the link please e mail linda@farmgatevets.com or phone the practice. If you are interested in joining the sheep club please ask.



Understanding Veterinary Medicines, Red Tractor course. Inspectors are now looking for certificates of attendance which became an official standard for Beef and Lamb in November 2021.

Wed 2nd February 2022 - 1.30pm—3.30pm - at the J36 practice.

Thurs 24th February 2022 - 1.30pm-3.30pm - at the J36 practice.

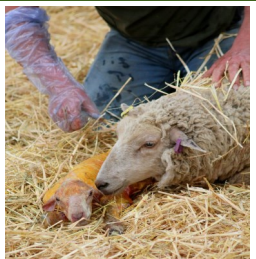
To book please e mail linda@farmgatevets.com or phone the practice. Cost £30 plus VAT inc. course book and certificate. **We don't plan to run courses in March and April so please don't miss this chance!**



Controlling BVD in UK Herds - Why do we need to bother and what are the options for testing?

Thursday 24th February 2022, 7pm, at Tynedale Farm Services, Crakeside Business Park,

Greenodd, Ulverston, LA12 7RT. Please join us for this joint meeting with a vet talk on BVD and tag demonstration, supper included and kindly sponsored by MSD. To book your pie and seat please call the office at J36 on **015395 67899** or e mail kendal@farmgatevets.com or speak to Tynedale. All welcome.



Practical Lambing Course - Cost £45.00 inc. VAT - one free place per farm for Sheep Club members. These popular half day or evening practical courses are filling fast, held at our J36 Practice (Unit 2B Rural Auction Centre).

Saturday 12th February 2022 9.30am - 12.30pm Fully Booked

Saturday 19th February 2022 9.30am - 12.30pm Fully Booked

Wednesday 2nd March 2022 5.30pm - 9.00pm

To book your place please call the practice on 015395 67899. Courses are run in small groups for Covid safety, please bring waterproofs and wellies, under 16's must be accompanied by an adult.

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

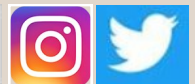
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