

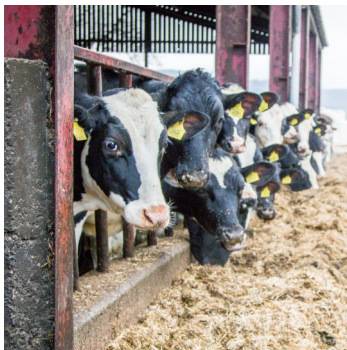


Happy New Year!

There's a Chinese proverb that goes "It's a curse to live in interesting times" and hasn't 2021 been interesting. The COVID roller coaster has affected all our lives but superimposed on that has been the agricultural issues. Farting cows; rewilding; veganism; fuel feed and fert prices; livestock and milk prices; and starlings (you dairy guys know what I mean) have all been talking points over this year. No doubt there will be many of you thinking hard about the direction your business will need to go. Bear in mind that demand for your high quality produce will increase as the world's population continues to grow at an eye-watering speed. You're good at what you do and we look forward to helping ensure that your livestock remain healthy, productive and efficient well into the future. Can we thank you for your support in 2021 and wish you all a happy, healthy, wealthy and "boring" 2022!

Mark Stott

Getting Cows Cycling Post Calving



In November we were joined at the Longlands by Prof Mark Crowe from University College Dublin to give us a talk on cattle fertility. Here, Becky Dean summarises the take away messages from that meeting.

After puberty the ovaries of female cattle are constantly cycling egg containing follicles in waves, some of these waves result in ovulation – the release of an egg. The control of this pathway starts within the brain of the animal, and the status of the whole animal affects her ability to ovulate.

Stress on the animal can greatly reduce her fertility by suppressing signals from the brain to the ovary. **So what do we mean by stress?**

This could be nutritional stress – when a cow is milking hard at the start of her lactation she more than likely will enter a 'negative energy balance' i.e. burning more energy than she can eat. Burning fat is not efficient and releases waste products into the blood that affect the whole cow. Prolonged nutritional stress and large drops in BCS (body condition score) will reduce the signals from the brain to the ovary, reducing chances of ovulation.

Continued....

Included this month

- **Getting Cows Cycling Post Calving**
- Rebecca Dean
- **Huskvac Update**
- **Lambing Courses 2022**
- **Tapeworm Part 2** - Sarah Harker
- **Staff 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.



Getting cows cycling post calving.. Continued..

This could be physical stress – pain from a calving injury, lameness or mastitis triggers release of stress hormones like cortisol, which are known to reduce fertility.

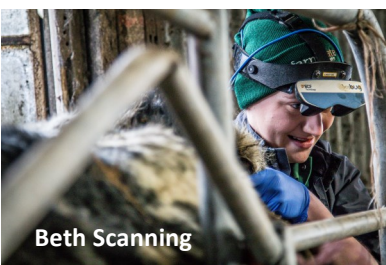
This could be mental stress – entering a new management group, being bullied by high ranking cows, too much competition for eating/drinking and lying space, and even the experience of being milked for the first time in heifers are 'stressors' and can put enough pressure on the animal to also release stress hormones like cortisol.

This could also be health stress – The health of the animal is key to optimising ovulation both at a local (organ) level and systemic (whole cow) level. If there is a uterine infection (also called a pyometra) then the presence of pus in the uterus inhibits hormone secretions and thus inhibits ovulations. If there is systemic disease like severe mastitis or pneumonia putting pressure on the animal this will also delay return to ovulation, or cause a pause in cycling after a heat or two.

In short, any kind of stress on the cow bad for her fertility, resulting in poorer pregnancy rates and increased calving interval, which in turn will affect your stress levels too!

Another key element is **careful monitoring and recording** of which cows are cycling and which are not. Quickly spotting a cow who has not cycled or a cow who cycled once then gone quiet means we can intervene sooner. Cows which fail to start cycling after calving or who stop after the first heat are at a much higher risk of becoming problem cows down the line. So getting

your vet to scan the 'not seen bulling' cows and if necessary administer intervention early is the best way to head fertility problems off. This does mean making sure your heat detection and recording method is adequate, but a detailed discussion of the pros and cons of the various methods of heat detection are for another article. **Suffice to say more observation (digital or human) is better than less.**



As vets, when we scan a non-cycling cow we can intervene in the

hormonal cycle and manipulate ovulation in several ways

- **Clearing a CL** (corpus luteum – patch of cells on the ovary where ovulation has occurred which release hormones). Jabbing with prostaglandin (such as estrumate) can clear these cells, and restart a new follicular cycle, hopefully causing a new ovulation, within a predictable time frame.

This allows careful observation of standing heat, or fixed time AI

- **Synchronising a new follicular wave.** Using hormones that mimic signals from the brain (receptal/acegon) to clear an old or cystic follicle, and if necessary clear the CL this creates (estrumate) and select a fresh follicle with a fresh egg. This also allows for tighter timings and targeted observation for heat or fixed time AI.

- **Use of progesterone (PRID/CIDR) to regulate timings of a new follicle wave.** Often used in more difficult cases or cases with a suspicion of poor follicle production. Almost always used with hormonal injections at the start and the end of the protocol to clear out the old and stimulate the new waves of follicles.

There are countless different protocols and combinations of protocols, and your vet can work with you on fertility visits by scanning ovaries and discussing animal histories with you to select the protocol that best suits your farm, your animals and your schedule.



Longlands Hotel 18th Nov 2021

- STRESS OF ANY KIND HAS A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON FERTILITY
- ACURATE HEAT DETECTION AND RECORDING OF COWS WHICH ARE CYCLING AND SPOTTING THOSE WHO STOP CYCLING IS REALLY IMPORTANT
- HITTING GROWTH RATES TO HELP HEIFERS TO GO THROUGH PUBERTY AT THE RIGHT TIME OFTEN REQUIRES ADDITIONAL CONCENTRATE FEEDING
- VETS SCANNING AND IDENTIFYING PROBLEM COWS CAN ALLOW EARLY INTERVENTIONS

Rebecca Dean

Huskvac Delay in 2022

Huskvac is a live oral vaccine used to help protect young and adult cattle against lungworm (Husk). The dose regime is two doses approximately 4 weeks apart, 2 weeks prior to turnout from a minimum age of 8 weeks. Lungworm is the currently the only worm (parasite) that there is a vaccine for, so in the interest of reducing wormer use in livestock we are seeing an increasing interest in this very old product. For 2022 the manufacturers have made us aware that there will be a delay in manufacturing and we **will only see the first batches around the middle of February** (normally early January), for most of our clients this shouldn't be an issue as our biggest month for first doses is usually March. Please be aware when planning your 2022 lungworm vaccinations.



Practical Lambing Courses

We are very pleased to say these popular courses are back in 2022! Suitable for all experience levels course content includes -

- All aspects of ewe and lamb husbandry
- Lambing techniques
- Disease prevention and simple treatments
- Demonstrations and training in general skills including injections and stomach tubing

Held on Saturday mornings at our J36 surgery, please see diary dates for details.

Tapeworms in Cattle and Sheep: Part 2



In our first tapeworm article a couple of months ago, we described species where the adults live in the intestine, usually with little effect on health. Other tapeworms have carnivores (dogs, foxes etc) as their main host, their eggs passing onto pasture in faeces and then eaten by grazing animals. The intermediate cystic stages form in the tissues of cattle and sheep. The lifecycle is completed when carnivores scavenge ruminant carcasses.

Tissue cysts can form in the brain and spinal cord causing 'Gid'

or 'Sturdy'. This disease is less common now, but classically causes circling and other neurological signs. It is difficult to treat and generally fatal. Other cysts form in the muscle or internal organs and are generally harmless but are picked up at meat inspection in slaughter animals. This results in condemnation of some or all of the carcass with consequent financial loss. For those of you sending lambs deadweight, this will be detailed on your kill sheets and to give it its proper title, may be termed *Cysticercus ovis* or *Cysticercus tenuicollis* depending on the exact species involved.

There is no way of treating these intermediate stages, so control centres on worming farm dogs regularly and preventing scavenging of deadstock.

Slaughterhouse feedback is valuable in future health planning for your stock so please discuss any issues raised with one of our vets.

Sarah Harker

Lambing Time 2022—be prepared!

Lambing time is just around the corner or even here for some of us. Please pick up a copy of our 2022 lambing list which is out now and contains a handy checklist of all your lambing shed essentials. As normal each order placed using the list will receive a packet of biscuits with the order and an entry in our post lambing prize draw!

farmgate VETS Lambing List 2022

Get your lambing supplies ordered in to avoid those last minute panics!

Name- _____
Farm- _____
Date- _____

1. Browse through the list, write in numbers required for products you wish to order.
2. Drop it at the practice, phone or e-mail a photo to us.
3. Please allow at least 24 hours for us to pack your order for collection or FREE Delivery.

Special Offers!!

FREE packets of Chocolate digestive with every order and entry into a competition to win a pair of Botoua Wellies!

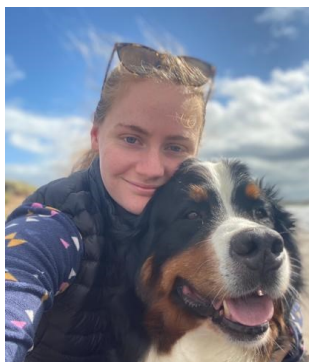
Buy 3kg of immuno colostrum and get a free lamb feeder

An Interview with Catriona Hoy

Catriona joined our Lancaster vet team in August this year after graduating from Glasgow University. Here we find out a bit more about what this Ayrshire girl does in her spare time.

1) What was your first ever job? My first ever job was working in a dog boarding kennels when I was 14, sometimes we looked after as many as 60 dogs. They walked the legs off me!

2) What do you enjoy most about working for Farm Gate



Vets? I have most enjoyed the variety of a day's work and the chance to explore the different farm systems in the area. Also, taking part in the FG Christmas video (Catriona didn't actually say this last bit!).

3) Where is your favourite holiday destination? I've been on some great holidays in the last few years

in Canada and New Zealand but my favourite place to explore is in Scotland for hill walking and mountain biking.

4) Who would you most like to have dinner with? (a famous, real or fictional person) - I'd most like to have dinner with Greg James because I listen to him all day on the radio anyway and he's spoken to so many interesting people.

5) How do you relax after a hard days work? I like to go out on my road bike for a spin - only if its sunny and dry though, I'm a fair weather road cyclist!

12 days of Christmas Vet Style!

Last month the team thoroughly enjoyed putting together this performance to brighten up another challenging year. Thank you all for watching!



Dates For Your Diary



Sheep Club January meeting - TBC, members are due to meet this month and we are reluctant to arrange visits or book face to face meetings for January until we see how Covid pans out over the Christmas period. We will be in touch in the new year with an offering of at least a Zoom meeting but hopefully a more exciting gathering!



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.

Tuesday January 25th 2022 — 1.00pm—2.30pm - On Zoom. To book please e mail linda@farmgatevets.com or phone the practice. Cost £30 plus VAT inc. course book and certificate.



Practical Lambing Course - Cost £45.00 inc. VAT - one free place per farm for Sheep Club members.

These popular half day practical courses are back! Held at our J36 Practice (Unit 2B Rural Auction Centre).

Saturday 15th January 2022 9.30am - 12.30pm

Saturday 12th February 2022 9.30am - 12.30pm

Light refreshments provided, to book your place please call the practice or e mail linda@farmgatevets.com, stating which date. Places limited to 12 per course so please book early!

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

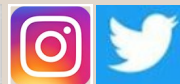
CLOSED Sundays

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