

Happy New Year to you all. It's been a nice change to have the year starting with crisp cold mornings instead of rain but I bet a few of you have had the white stuff as well! At the time of writing, the whole practice is in tier four with promises of stricter rules to come. I can assure you that we will endeavour to maintain our service but in order to do that, please try to keep our staff safe by keeping social distancing (one large cow length) and telling us if any of your family are ill. Our newsletter this month includes pneumonia, mastitis and fluke. None of which are new subjects but are well worth revisiting as they don't seem to want to go away. In addition, there's horses, fridges and old cows. Not what you'd usually expect from us but they are relevant, I promise. Mark

## Bacterial Pneumonia in Calves

I'm sure you are all heartily sick of hearing about viruses and viral pneumonia, the "disease-which-shall-not-be-named" has invaded our lives and minds to the exclusion of all else it seems. However, when considering pneumonia in calves viruses are not the only bug lurking in the shadows. There are some significant bacterial diseases that can cause problems too.

The pasteurella group of bacteria, often associated with pneumonia in sheep, can cause severe pneumonia in cattle too. In this group there are three different strains.

Top of the billing is **Mannheimia haemolytica**: This bug lives in the normal upper airway of healthy cattle/calves, however following a period of stress, (or a viral infection) the bug moves into and colonises the lungs. Here it causes a severe pneumonia, with severe pleurisy (jelly like inflammation of the membrane

lining of the chest as seen on this post mortem photo). This can happen quickly, and as the bacteria multiplies it releases toxins, sending the animal rapidly into shock, which can easily kill.

Early detection and treatment with antibiotics is key, and in severe outbreaks vaccination of youngsters may help. Post mortems of pneumonia cases and lab sampling of lung tissue can be invaluable for getting the right treatment protocols underway and reducing future losses.



Post mortem of a 3 month old dairy calf showing severe pleurisy caused by *Mannheimia haemolytica*.



Becky Dean



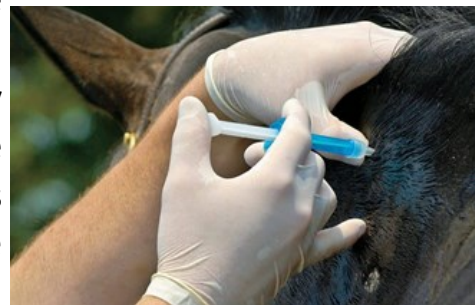
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## Horse Microchipping – The Law

From October 2020 it is now compulsory in law for all horse owners to microchip their horses, ponies and donkeys. The aim of this is to create a database of all the horses in the country making it easier to track down the owners of horses that are stolen, dumped or not receiving adequate care. If your horse is not microchipped then you can be issued with a compliance notice by the local authority and if this is not followed up then they can fine you up to £200. Speak to us today if your horse requires a microchip or if you're unsure whether one has been implanted as we can check for you.



**Hannah Tatham**

## Focus on Farm Fridges

The farm fridge is often viewed as a second rate citizen compared to the fridge in the kitchen which takes care of the yoghurts and milk, however when we consider the value of medicines stored in there, it is important to make sure that it is working correctly. Vaccines for example need to be stored between 2-8°C, outside this range vaccines lose potency and eventually stop working altogether. Freezing a vaccine destroys it completely.



This month in conjunction with one of our vaccine suppliers, MSD, we will be carrying out a fridge survey by placing data loggers in farm fridges across the practice (where clients agree to participate obviously). These data loggers will record fridge temperatures on an hourly basis over at least a 1 month period. We look forward to sharing the results with you and hopefully get you thinking about your own farm medicine storage.

**Linda Dawson**

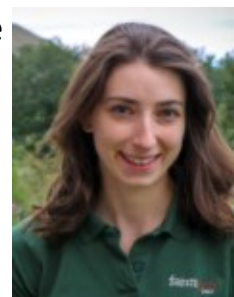
## Mastitis Meeting Summary

Thank you to those of you able to join us for our virtual dairy mastitis meeting on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November. We hope that it will encourage you all to record your mastitis cases, take clean samples and speak to us to help investigate where mastitis is coming from on your farm.

**Treatment choice** should be made based on knowledge of the mastitis pattern on your farm and treatments should be given as instructed on the datasheet unless we have identified a reason that a longer treatment is needed. Giving a treatment "off label" means we must use at least a 7 day milk withhold. Remember that mastitis is a painful condition so anti-inflammatories should be given and prevention is where we should be focusing our attention on farm. Thanks Boehringer Ingelheim for their support with cake and milk testing!



**Hannah Tatham**



## A strange year for fluke

Fluke has been a hot topic while I have been getting to know the farmers around Lancaster. The reason being that summer 2020 was largely dry with sheep not being exposed to fluke until very late in the year. On more than one occasion I heard the adage “My father used to say that a dry year was as bad as any for fluke, as the sheep graze the wetter parts they would normally avoid”. This is a good example where there is a lot of sense in past knowledge as I agree with the observation, however recent studies point to a different cause.



### Why does this matter?

If you dosed for fluke between August and October last year, chances are there were no fluke in your sheep to kill. Our sheep in the northwest (with rare localised exceptions) will only really come across fluke from November to January. So depending on what you dosed with, sheep dosed in December or even January may still be carrying a significant number of fluke into lambing. Fluky sheep at lambing are a disaster!

In 2017 I worked with a flock that dosed too early and had a horrendous lambing - with an excess of twin lamb, no colostrum and lambs dying both of starvation and pulpy kidney as early as 3 weeks of age. Ewes had no condition and no milk. The losses ran into thousands!

### What can I do?

- Monitor Body condition score – investigate any evidence that your flock are losing condition
- Test faecal samples (10 individuals) to screen for fluke at key stages e.g. scanning or if you have a concern on body condition.
- **Do not let a dead sheep leave your farm without it paying for itself.** Post mortems are going to be invaluable this year for monitoring the fluke status of your flock.

I think this is going to be a risky year like 2017 and I am certain that some farms are going to be caught out. Don't let it be your flock.

**Finbarr O'Sullivan-Greene**



## Stalwart Cow Competition Winner

The winner of our social media competition to find the practice's oldest and most productive cow was won last month by an entry from Arlene Fishwick from Bank House Farm in Silverdale. Heidi, who is a White Galloway (not a British White as wrongly stated in our first post!), was sold at age 19 after rearing 15 calves. Thank you to those who entered, many cows as well as being a good age showed good productivity and good general health.



## Dates for you diary

**Practical Lambing Course – Saturday 9th January 2021, CANCELLED FOR NOW** at J36, 9.30-12.30 OR 1.30-4.30pm. Numbers reduced for Covid safety, please call J36 to book on 015395 67899. Cost £45.00 inc. VAT

## Small Holder Online Events–

**Tuesday 14th January 2021, Online 7pm-8pm – Keeping sheep healthy, covering the basics.**

**Tuesday 19th January 2021, Online 7pm-8pm - Essential health knowledge for Cattle Keepers.**

**Thursday 4th February 2021, Online 7pm-8pm - Looking after the pregnant ewe before lambing.**

Events cost £15.00 inc. VAT each, to book and for further information on these and the rest of our small holder series including goats, poultry and camelids please visit our website [www.farmgatevets.com/practice-info/events.aspx](http://www.farmgatevets.com/practice-info/events.aspx)

**BVD Stamp It out**—Final scheme sign up meeting. **Wed 20th January 2021**, Online via Zoom 7pm. For all keepers of breeding cattle this is the last chance to sign up to the government funded scheme, please join this meeting to find out more. To register please e mail [linda@farmgatevets.com](mailto:linda@farmgatevets.com) or phone the practice.

## Lambing List 2021

Please look out for a copy of our 2021 lambing list so you are prepared for the busy season ahead! As well as the usual colostrum, gloves and prolapse harnesses, we also stock many other items that you may not know about such as lamb jackets, bottles and teats, castration rings and applicators, marker sprays and shepherds crooks, just to name a few. Place your order for collection or make use of our free delivery service.



**farmgate VETS Lambing List 2021**  
Get your lambing supplies ordered in to avoid those last minute panics!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Farm: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

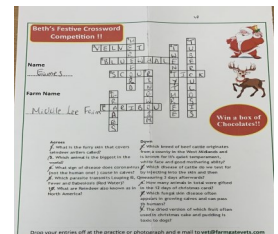
**Special Offers!!**

- FREE packets of Chocolate digestive with every order and entry into a competition to win a pair of Bekina Wellies!
- Buy 1kg of Immucol colostrum and get a free lamb feeder
- Buy 10 Markman Sprays and get 1 free
- Buy a pair of Bekina Wellies and get 10% off waterproof trousers

GENERAL SUPPLIES	SIZE	QUANTITY	PRICE (ex VAT)
Gloves (cotton length)	Box of 100		£11.76
Gloves (latex)	Box of 100 S/M/L		£9.69
Markman Marker Sprays	Blue 500ml		£4.00
	Green 500ml		£4.00
	Orange 500ml		£4.00
	Yellow 500ml		£4.00
	Purple 500ml		£4.00
Castration Rings	100-500 rings		£2.99/£4.83
Castration Ring Applicator	Single		£2.99
Lambing ropes	4mm		£1.71
Lute	500mls		£1.20
214 150"			10p each
Needles	(small for lambs)		15p each
	180 1"		15p each

## Christmas Crossword Winner

Thank you to everyone who entered our Christmas Crossword competition in the December newsletter, winner of the chocolate was Mr Eames of Middle Lee. Congratulations!



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