



Newsletter

May 2025



Welcome

Spring certainly sprang this year, the driest period of weather we've had in a long time which has left ground crying out for rain. We can't win! At the time of writing we have a spell of wet weather forecasted which will be good for grass but will also wake up the parasites. Be on the look out for Nematodirus in young grazing lambs, the usual sheep worms and lungworm in cattle.

We don't know how Blue Tongue will pan out this summer, a crystal ball is required but we do know the restrictions will cause some extra hassle for trading. From July 1st when the whole of England is going into the zone, we should have some relief. We are asked daily about vaccination, which is just like insurance. If your stock get infected it will save you lots of money, if Blue Tongue never arrives it will be money you didn't need to spend. Many are choosing to vaccinate and we are certainly not brave enough to tell you not to.

Jim McKinstry

Sheep Abortion - Catching up with vaccine.

There was an issue with enzootic abortion vaccine supply last year, so some of you may have used the dead vaccine (Inmeva). This vaccine only protects for 12 months, whereas the live vaccines protect for at least 3 years. The normal live vaccines should be in better supply this year, so please remember to also revaccinate any sheep that did get the dead vaccine last year to ensure there isn't a gap in immunity in your flock. As always with vaccines planning ahead and ordering early is advised to make sure your sheep are well protected ahead of tupping – must be done at least 4 weeks before the tups go in.

Any unvaccinated sheep are at risk from enzootic abortion but be particularly aware if you have had some abortions this lambing time, as the main source of infection is infected sheep that shed the bacteria at lambing time. This can happen from newly infected sheep or recovered carrier sheep that have aborted in previous years – so beware of bought in animals of which you don't know the history of. The **MSD Flockcheck scheme** is still open until 30th June for subsidised testing of up to 8 aborted or barren sheep if you would like to check for enzootic abortion and toxoplasma.

Hannah Lawrence



Included this month

- **Sheep Abortion–** Hannah Lawrence
- **Bull Soundness Exam–** Mark Stott
- **Use of Regulin–** Sarah Harker
- **Blue Tongue –**Finbarr O'Sullivan Green
- **Compulsory BVD Control in 2027–** Beth Thornton
- **News and Diary Dates**



Wormer and Fly Products all in stock for the summer season,
please speak to us.



Bull Soundness Exam

So why do pre breeding soundness exams on bulls? Well, they are 50% of your herds fertility and without a fertile bull your cows do not get in calf. This quick and relatively simple check up has been performed worldwide for many years and repeatedly it has been found that up to 25% of bulls are sub fertile, the risk increasing as they get older. Completely infertile bulls are easier to spot but a sub fertile bulls get some cows in calf over a lengthened period of time tend to do the most damage. Only half of these can be identified from looking from the outside, the rest are only detected by collecting a semen sample. With an electro ejaculator you don't need a cow in season, you only need a good crush with a side opening. After a full examination and introduction of the probe a sample is usually produced in a couple of minutes. We bring along our mobile laboratory so that within a few minutes you can receive the peace of mind that you have a bull that can produce fertile sperm.

Doing this simple task each year just before the bull is turned out means that this part of the herd fertility is more certain. If you would like to know more about fertility testing bulls please ring the surgery and speak to us.

Mark Stott



Use of Regulin in Lambing Flocks



Every Summer I get a couple of phone calls asking when to put Regulin implants in ewes. I sit down with the instructions and a calendar and have a work out, usually finding we are already a few weeks too late!! This year however, a client phoned me in early May with the same question so all credit goes to them for being more on the ball than me.

Reproductive behaviour in ewes is stimulated by shortening day length through the production of melatonin by the brain. Regulin implants are small pellets that are inserted under the skin behind the ear, mimicking this natural process by the slow release of additional melatonin. This allows tupping and thus lambing to be brought forward by a few weeks. The addition of teaser tups can also facilitate a tightening of the lambing period. Some forward planning is required with implants needing to be inserted about 9 weeks before the required peak of tupping. If you want to consider the use of Regulin, please speak to us in plenty of time! Early lambing has perhaps lost favour in recent years as the costs can outweigh the benefits but the use of Regulin can provide a cost-effective way of facilitating an earlier lambing if it suits your system.

Sarah Harker

Blue Tongue

On the 18th of May Lancashire and North Yorkshire were included into the Bluetongue Restricted zone (RZ). To see the boundary of the zone and to see if your farm is affected check out the bluetongue map here: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=514ec88edec74575958d860f0196d2ea> Farms that cross the border of the RZ are considered inside the RZ. You will be receiving a notice from APHA explaining the restrictions that are now in place.

We are currently reviewing what this means for animal movements and trade within our area. But in short all animal movements within or moving in or out of the RZ needs to be under licence. Most movements within the RZ will be covered by a general licence but specific licences will be required in certain circumstances. These specific licences can take 10 working days to apply for and may require pre and or post movement testing. General licences are available to download at <https://www.gov.uk/.../bluetongue-approved-slaughterer...> These licences are frequently updated and are therefore worth checking prior to each consignment.

We will be posting some specific examples over the next couple of days but for now we are advising all of our clients to check the terms of their licence before each movement (requirements are changing frequently) and plan as far ahead as possible. This is particularly important for stock intended to travel for breeding outside of the RZ where licensing and testing could take up to 20 working days to organise.

Finbarr O'Sullivan-Greene



BVD testing to become mandatory in 2027 - Make in roads now with the AHWP

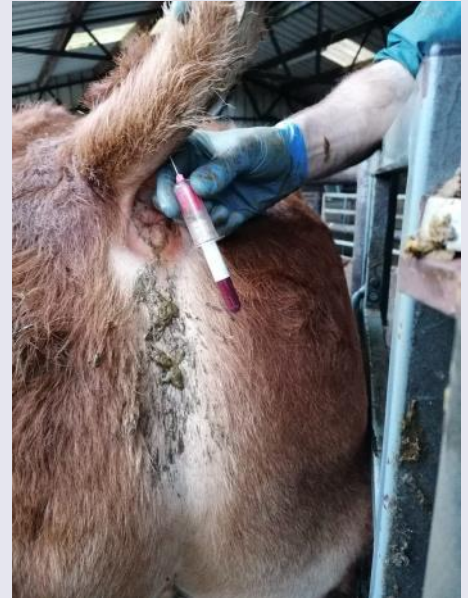
The future

BVD testing is to become mandatory in 2027 and with this, any funding will be withdrawn. Compulsory unfunded testing will categorise farms into BVD negative or positive. Positive farms will have to undertake a PI hunt, within 30 days, with all animals tested within a week. All calves including aborted fetuses and those born dead are to be tag tested. Any animals identified as a PI must be slaughtered.

What can we do to prepare?

- Apply to the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway (AHWP). Through this scheme, farmers can apply for three annual reviews and follow ups to monitor and control BVD in their herds.
- Funding includes a veterinary visit and either an antibody 'check test' (youngstock) or a bulk milk test. If a positive result is found, a PI hunt can be conducted. PI hunts are also available if the vet suspects BVD may be present, despite a negative result.
- As of February 2025, separate funding was made available for cattle and sheep. Claims for both can be made from the same farm.
- BVD eradication on farm relies upon:
 - Regular testing and monitoring.
 - A robust vaccination programme and watertight biosecurity.
 - Prompt culling of PIs.

Please get in touch with us to take advantage of funded testing. The AHWP is set to close in June 2027.



Relevance



- BVD has adverse effects on cattle health, welfare, productivity and economics. BVD costs the industry between £14 to 36 million per year.
- Nationwide eradication is achievable. This can happen within 10 years of a compulsory eradication scheme being implemented. This has been demonstrated in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland.
- England has fallen behind Scotland, Wales and NI regarding BVD eradication. This could limit trade opportunity for English cattle over the borders.

Species	Animal health and welfare review funding	Endemic disease follow-up funding
Pigs	£557	£923
Sheep	£436	£639
Beef cattle	£522	£837 for a follow-up with a persistently infected (PI) hunt or £215 for a follow up without a PI hunt
Dairy cattle	£372	£1,714 for a follow-up with a persistently infected (PI) hunt or £215 for a follow up without a PI hunt

Application information

Apply online at— <https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/endemics/start>

Or contact the Rural Payments Agency on 03000 200 301 for further information or to apply offline.

Beth Thornton

An Interview with Fraser

Being a local to these parts, Fraser returned to his home county to work for us after finishing vet school in London last summer. The time has come to put him through obligatory staff interview-

What was your first ever job? A paper round at age 13, and then I'd spend all my earnings in the post office on sweets!

What do you enjoy most about working at Farm Gate Vets? Getting to explore so much more of an area I grew up in whilst being part of such a supportive and well rounded team.

Where is your favourite holiday destination? Ideally somewhere quiet and remote, whether that's the Croatian coastline or the Scottish Highlands.

Who would you most like to have dinner with? (a famous real or fictional person). Monty Don, a childhood hero of mine and someone I'd love to pick his brains for any gardening advice.

How do you relax after a hard day's work? Gardening in my new allotment or a walk with my dog Bea.



Whatsapp Ordering Reminder

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.



Open Farm Sunday

Sunday 8th June 2025

We are once again proud to be supporting the Fishwick Family at Low Bank Side, Cartmel.

Please help us to promote this event to the general public by sharing posts etc.

Diary Dates



Behind the Scenes of Tebay Services Farm Shop, Thursday 19th June 2025, 6pm at the services.

This is our summer trip for Sheep club members where we will be having

- A tour of the farm butchery including carcass evaluation and selection.
- A farm shop tour and an informative talk on how the farm, the butchery and farm shop business evolved.
- Supper in the Farm Shop Café which is kindly sponsored by Ceva Animal Health who will be talking to us on the use of Regulon in breeding sheep.

To book your place, please phone the practice, or reply on the Sheep Club Whatsapp or e mail linda@farmgatevets.com



Nature working with Nature

Dairy Meeting—Calf Health from Inside Out with Tommy the Vet and Mastitis Control and where Vaccination Fits

Tuesday 24th June 2025 at High Farm, Arkholme, Lancaster, LA6 1AR.
11am—2pm. We will be discussing supplements the science of gut health and Lunch included. To book your place please call the office or e mail linda@farmgatevets.com

HIPRA

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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