

Newsletter

March 2022



Welcome

I feel optimistic that spring, although isn't quite here, is just around the corner. Therefore unsurprisingly, there's a bit of a springtime theme to this edition of our newsletter with discussions and tips based on lambing, calving and getting cows back in calf. At the time of writing, Russia is invading Ukraine and everyone's talking about fuel price rises. But as Ukraine produces 10% of the world's wheat and fields are more likely to be ploughed by tanks than tractors, both human food and animal feed costs will rise. I can only hope that it's a wake up call to the UK government regarding food security and the importance of having a farming industry that can feed the nation and of which we can be proud.

Mark Stott

The Recovery Position for Calves and Lambs

With lambing and calving season upon us it is worthwhile knowing how best to position newborn calves and lambs to get them going! The most important step is to sit them up on their sternum so they can make full use of both sides of their lungs. Then tuck both front legs underneath to stabilise it and stretch the back legs straight out in a forwards direction. This position allows the chest to expand without putting pressure on the lungs, see photograph.



If the calf/lamb still isn't breathing try to stimulate it by rubbing vigorously and pinching the nose. Hanging them over gates won't help get fluid out of the lungs, any fluid seen is likely coming from the stomach. Hanging upside down can also put more pressure on the lungs because gravity is working against them.

Catriona Hoy



Included this month

- **The Recovery Position for Calves and Lambs**— Catriona Hoy
- **Sheep Pushing Puddings out**— Charlotte Chapman
- **Lambing Time Losses** Becky Dean
- **The Value of Good Heat Detection** — Charlotte Chapman
- **News**
- **Diary Dates**



Huskvac available now and ready when you are. Two doses must be given approx 4 weeks apart, 2 weeks before turnout. Please speak to us about Lungworm as part of your parasite control plan.



It's no wonder they push their puddings out!

We have witnessed a lot of pregnant ewe deaths from pushing intestines out as well as prolapses – a sad sight for all. But what is the underlying cause? The main risk factors are -

- Having fit sheep
- Increased number of lambs,
- Large amount of the diet being forage based.

Anything that increases the size of the abdomen e.g. large lambs and a large rumen full of forage will increase the pressure from the inside and result in a tear in the vaginal wall which allows the guts to escape. Leaving you with a dead ewe, dead lambs, wasted production and wasted money.

Unfortunately, vaginal tears can happen spontaneously but assessing ewe feeding could help ensure dry matter intakes and energy demands are met without compromising the ewe.

- Dry matter does not need to be forage alone
 - Twins and triplets should get some level of concentrates
 - Ewes will **not** put on condition themselves in late pregnancy
 - Both thin and fat ewes are at risk of twin lamb disease / pregnancy toxaemia
- The energy is needed for healthy lambs, **colostrum** and milk production. Just because a ewe is 'fit' doesn't mean she shouldn't have her cake and eat it. Speak to your vet or feed advisor about pre-lambing nutrition.



Charlotte Chapman

Lambing time Losses

This is your friendly annual reminder that recording losses during lambing time can be really helpful when discussing flock health with your vets.

I know that in the thick of lambing the last thing you want to do is faff finding a bit of paper and a pen, but a clipboard and a sharpie by the medicine cupboard to make a quick tally chart is a quick way to keep records easily.

Recording List

- Number of lambs scanned (if you scan).
- Number and ID of barren ewes (we can test them later if retained, but only if we know who they are!)
- Number of abortions (losses more than 2weeks before due).
- Lambs born alive.
- Lambs born dead.
- Lambs lost in first week and causes of death if know.
- Cases of scab, watery mouth, joint ill, navel ill.
- Ewe losses, prolapses (before and after), bad lambings, caesareans, black bag.

With this information we can find patterns and help you reduce losses by identifying diseases. (Oh and if you're dropping off aborted lambs for testing... please bring some cleansing too) .



Becky Dean

The Value of Good Heat Detection

The decades of breeding highly productive dairy cows has come at a price, with the production of increased milk yields inadvertently affecting fertility performance. Detecting oestrus is a well-recognised and significant problem on UK dairy farms. The challenges faced with heat detection often result in reduced submission rates, decreased pregnancy rates, and ultimately extended calving intervals, all of which can add up to a substantial financial loss.

OR, if looking at it on the bright side, an opportunity for considerable financial gain. The facts:

1. Cows are showing fewer behavioural signs of oestrus
 - At best only 60% of cows stand to be mounted
 - This is the most recognised and acted upon behaviour.
 - So, what about the other 40%?
2. Cows are displaying signs of oestrus for shorter periods of time.
 - As short as 3 hours (compared to the traditional 10-18 hours often described)
3. Cows are mainly showing oestrus when we are not watching
 - 91% of oestrus behaviours take place outside the management window
 - E.g. times other than feeding or around/during milking.

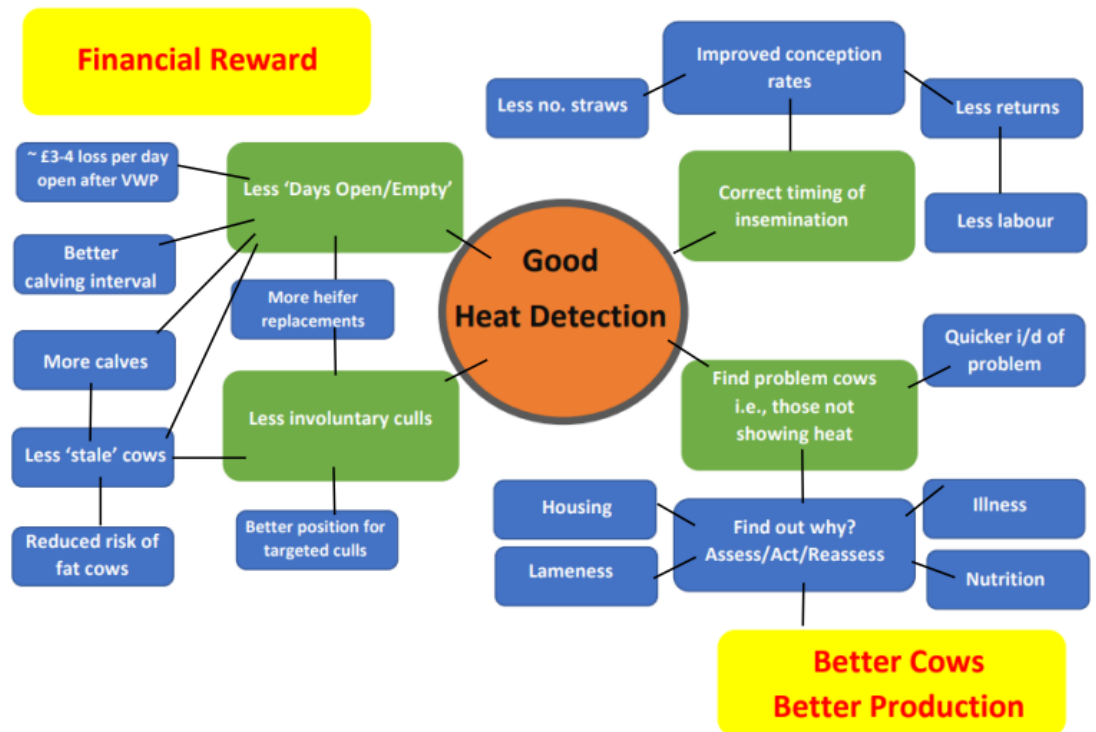


The diagram below shows key areas in which money could be saved when heat detection is prioritised. Studies have shown that it can cost on average £4 per day for every cow not in calf after the end of her voluntary waiting period. Taking this into consideration savings within the thousands could be achievable on individual farms. Putting it simply, if a 100-cow milking herd reduced its calving interval by 20 days (20 x 4 x 100) a value of £8,000 could be gained.

1. Review your fertility data and milk recordings (if available) with one of our vets
 - Certain recorded parameters can give us a quick reference to on-farm heat detection efficiency as well as identifying other possible areas for financial gain.

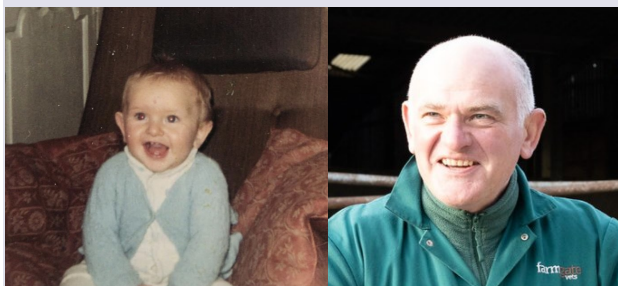
2. Go through a heat detection checklist with one of our vets
 - Encompassing all aspects of heat detection to smooth out the potential pinch points.

3. Join our upcoming discussion session on 'Mastering heat detection'. An informal discussion on heat detection and the tools available on the market – which detection tool is worth the investment?



Charlotte Chapman

He hasn't changed a bit!



Who guessed it right? Yes last months baby photo was of Mark.

An Interview with Hannah Fulford

Hannah joined the team in August last year, you may have met her on reception or out on farm carrying out our vet tech services. Here we find out a bit more..

1) What was your first ever job? My first job was milking cows and feeding calves on a local dairy farm.

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

Being out on farm meeting clients doing the vet tech work such as vaccinating or disbudding calves. Very much looking forward to doing more of this work as we expand the service.



3) Where is your favourite holiday destination? Australia in the summer months.

4) Who would you most like to have dinner with? (a famous, real or fictional person) - I think it would be very entertaining to have dinner with Jeremy Clarkson and Kaleb Cooper, they are both very funny people and have done a lot of good for UK Farming.

5) How do you relax after a hard days work? I like to get outdoors, ride my horse and have few pints in the pub!

Dates For Your Diary



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 23rd March 2022—2pm—3.30pm 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 or evening practical courses are filling fast, held at our J36 Practice (Unit 2B Rural Auction Centre).

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.

Courses have been popular and fully booked, if you would like to attend one of our courses this season, please register interest by phoning the office, if demand is there we may then offer further dates. Thank you.

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

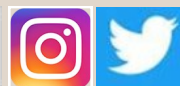
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