



Welcome

I like this time of year. The sights, smells and lengthening daylight of spring always fills me with optimism. It's a great time to reflect over the past year and plan for the coming twelve months. Some of you will have noticed we're being more proactive in arranging health plans this year. We're trying to avoid the emergency plan where everything is done in a hurry, a piece of paper is signed and the inspector hardly looks at it. Our aim is to make the meeting a lot more constructive. Yes get the necessary papers signed but also discuss what we can do to improve your enterprise for the future. If you have a plan review coming up and we've missed you off our list, please give us a ring to arrange a meeting in good time. In the meantime, enjoy the good spring because as many farming sages say when I comment on the glorious weather, "We'll pay for this! (Probably at silo time)".

Mark Stott

Neospora - a case too close to home!

I was recently reminded about this frustrating disease following a case in one of my own heifers that aborted. Neosporosis is caused by a parasite called *Neospora caninum*. It has a lifecycle that involves the dog and causes abortion and fertility issues in cattle. It can be passed on in two different ways:

Horizontal Transmission:

Infected dogs will pass the parasite in their faeces in the form of "oocysts". These can survive for a long time in water and soil (potentially years). If cattle consume these in contaminated feed or water they become infected. Dogs become infected by eating carcasses or placentas that are infected with neospora.



Vertical Transmission: If a cow is infected with neospora she is unlikely to be ill, however if she is pregnant or becomes pregnant in the future it is very likely that she will either abort or have a calf that is also infected with neospora. A cow with neospora is up to seven times more likely to abort than an uninfected cow and 95% of live calves born from infected cows will be persistently infected. These persistently infected calves will have the infection for life and continue to pass on the infection to future calves.

Included this month

- **Neospora - a case too close to home!**
Hannah Tatham
- **Stagger Time**
—Jim McKinstry
- **Dreaming of summer at different can of worms -**
Finbarr O Sullivan
Greene
- **Fly season is upon us**—Jim McKinstry
- **News**
- **Diary Dates**



Fly and Worm Season is upon us. Competitively priced products in stock now, please speak to us for advice on parasite control. Faecal worm egg count packs available from reception, please take one.



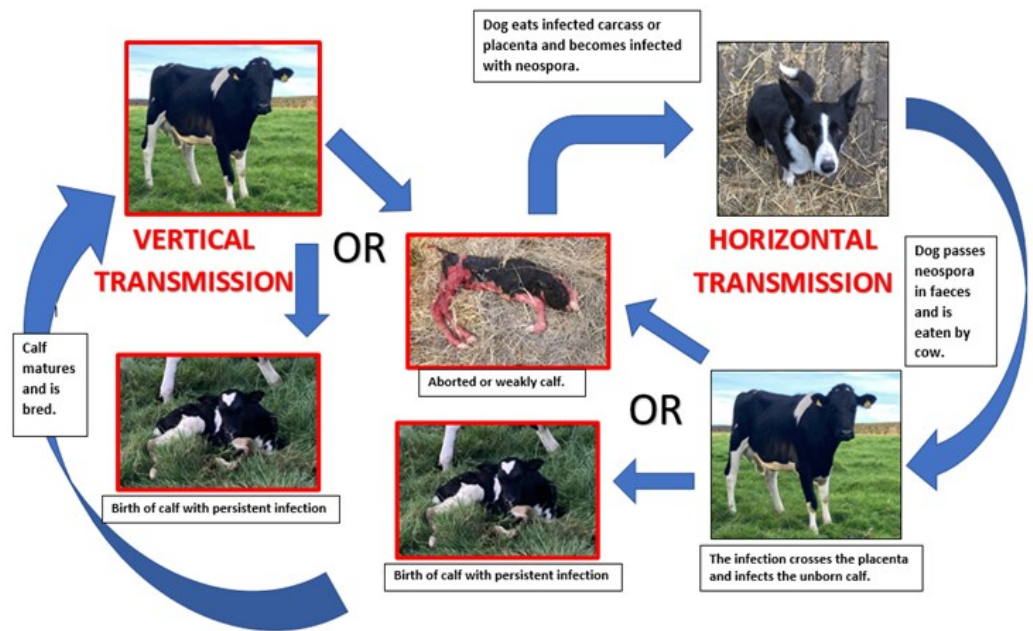
Continued.. Neospora

Diagnosis

We can diagnose this disease either by sampling the aborted calf and placenta or by blood sampling the cow that has aborted. It is important to identify infected cows to stop them passing on the disease to future generations.

Prevention

- Test any cows that abort and cull if positive.
- Try and prevent contact of cows with dog faeces either from dogs on farm or footpaths.
- Dispose of dead calves and placentas quickly and make sure they are stored away to prevent access from dogs.



Transmission of Neospora

Hannah Tatham

Stagger Time

It is turnout time and staggers is always a risk in animals at grass. I have seen all ages of cattle affected but mainly it is cows. Staggers is magnesium deficiency and shows as either a sudden death, a cow fitting and flailing about and most commonly in dairy cows being more fidgety and kicking clusters off. In dairy cows summer cakes usually contain more magnesium but if they are still on a winter cake at turnout there is a risk of staggers.

Prevention is to increase magnesium intakes. **Cows cannot store magnesium so they need a steady daily supply.** This is done by a few methods.

- Concentrate feed which works well for dairy cows and some suckler cows,
- High magnesium licks but if this is the sole means of supplementation some cattle will not get enough
- Putting magnesium chloride crystals in the water. This does not work if cows drink from streams.
- Magnesium boluses. These give a low amount of Magnesium over 1 month.

The other way is not to put cows onto lush grass that has had fertiliser as this is a major risk factor.

If you do get a cow with staggers you need to put a bottle of magnesium UNDER THE SKIN. If you put it in the vein, you will kill her!!!! Usually, it is best to call us for advice as a fitting cow is a serious problem.



Jim McKinstry

Dreaming of Summer - a different can of worms

With the occasional warm day I can't help dreaming of fine summer weather but soon reach for my coat again when the cold winds blow. I guess they are called April showers for a reason! That said now is the time when I try to reflect on the past year and think about what I want to do differently in the coming 12 months.

One thing that shocked me in the year gone by is the amount of **Haemonchus** or the barber's poll worm that we found as a practice. It might be due to an unusually warm and dry summer, but what we thought was a problem for farms in the south east is now very wide spread across the practice area.

How is it different?

Firstly it is a blood sucker therefore it **does not cause scour**. This is key as haemonchus clinically looks more like acute fluke than worms. What's more is the worm is also killed by some fluke drenches. When I hear of farms that have "fluke all year round" and drench for fluke regularly through the summer red flags go off in my head – is it haemonchus in summer and fluke in winter?

Secondly each female worm produces 1000s of eggs. It is not unusual to get faecal worm egg counts in the region of 10,000 eggs per gram with haemonchus. This leads to massive pasture contamination. With that many eggs falling in every gram of faeces it is clear how quickly large numbers of worms build up on each field. Is it any wonder that haemonchus RAPIDLY kills sheep and lambs if UNDIAGNOSED?

What would I do different?



The haemonchus cases this year really highlighted to me the importance of regular worm egg counting. It's a no brainer!

Sampling takes about 5 min when shepherding in the morning and is much easier than dosing the whole group. At very least regular egg counting will save you the time and drugs needed for at least one dosing in the growing season; at best it may save a significant number of lambs by identifying problems early before it's too late.

Worm egg counts cost £17.00 ex vat for a pool of ten or are included in the flock club membership. Turnaround is normally within one working day.



Finbarr O Sullivan Greene

Fly Season is Upon Us!

A bit of warm weather and they are here. I hate flies, nearly as much as I hate ticks but that is a whole other subject! **Sheep** get annoyed and eaten alive by flies. CLIK EXTRA is one of the best products I have ever used, it is a prevention for fly strike giving 19 weeks cover. It has a 40-day withhold so it is best to put it on early so you don't have any withhold problems. Clik Extra has to be used before maggots appear as it stops the eggs forming into maggots. **This is why it has no effect on established maggot infestation.**



Cattle get worried with flies as well. A lot of farmers only start to use fly products in the summer when they see lots of flies on the cattle which is too late as the number of flies that are emerging into the environment overwhelm the products. The products do not repel flies, the flies have to land on the animal to get exposed to the product and then they die.

Jim McKinstry

An Interview With Ruby Allan

Ruby joined us in September last year and can mostly be found on reception at J36 or out on farm carrying out our Vet Tech tasks. Here we find out more about her busy life outside work too!

1) What was your first ever job? I was a drover at Bentham Auction Mart as one of my first jobs, alongside the ice cream shop in Kirkby Lonsdale. These jobs couldn't be any different, a lot of hand and nail scrubbing was required between jobs!!

2) What do you enjoy most about working for Farm Gate Vets? I mostly enjoy the social side with having crack with farmers, as well as the hands on practical side, it is also reassuring to see other farmers have problems too!!

3) Where is your favourite holiday destination? 2 years of lockdown has severely disrupted my holiday plans, previously I have been on holidays to the Canary Islands. My ambitions aren't great this year so Blackpool AGM might be as far as I get!

4) Who would you most like to have dinner with? (a famous, real or fictional person) - Roast dinners at the grandparents, always guaranteed a good feed and always come away with a smile on your face.

5) How do you relax after a hard days work? Not much relaxing at the moment as I'm full on tug of war training!



Did you guess right?

Of course it was Sarah and she still likes her Swales!



Dates For Your Diary



Understanding Veterinary Medicines - Red Tractor Approved Course, Wednesday 11th May 2022 - 1.30pm - 3.30pm at our J36 Practice Meeting Room. Course cost £30 plus VAT including Course Book and Certificate—to book please call the practice or e mail linda@farmgatevets.com.



Tuesday 17th May 2022—Sheep Club Discussion Group - Iceberg Diseases with a specific focus on Johnes In Sheep, 7pm at our J36 practice meeting room. Supper included and kindly sponsored by Virbac. To book in please e mail linda@farmgatevets.com or phone the practice.



Wed 25th May 2022 - On Farm Suckler Herd Fertility Meeting - Making Sure Every Cow Earns her Place - 11am—1pm. Covering the current beef market (AHDB), bull Fertility Testing, Synchronization of Suckler cows and Infectious disease. **At Yealand Manor, Yealand Rd, Carnforth, LA5 9SQ by Kind Permission of Mr M Allen.** Lunch included and kindly sponsored by Ceva. To book in please e mail linda@farmgatevets.com or phone the practice.



Lancaster Office

Tel: **01524 60006**

Open 8:30am-5pm

Monday-Friday

9am—12noon Saturdays

CLOSED Sundays

J36 Kendal Office

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Open 8:30am-5pm

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9am—12noon Saturdays

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Tel: **015396 20335**

Open 8:30--5pm

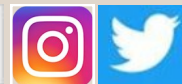
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