



### Welcome

The sun is shining and the 1st cuts are getting done. Is it me or does silo time get earlier? Where the price milk is at the minute you definitely need the best forage you can get to keep feed costs down. We have been getting through the spring work and we usually find May is one of the busier months with calvings and hoggs lambing. On the whole stock are looking well. Forages have been good and disease pressures have been relatively low. We need to keep the stock outside growing and making most use of the grass in front of them. Sarah has some good tips for growing lambs, but this can also be used for growing cattle as they come under pressure from parasites and deficiencies. I know it is easier with them at grass but there can still be bumps in the road. The vet techs are busy getting the wasps out to keep flies numbers down on quite a few of our farms. Surprisingly I was quite sceptical about these but I will admit that I was wrong as this control method is doing a great job on the farms that have adopted it.

**Jim McKinstry**

### “Insuring” your Bull

I’m sure many of you have had that grand quiet bull that got everything in calf, was an easy calver, the calves grew like mushrooms and were your pride and joy at the sales in the backend. He was also admired by your neighbours. They wouldn’t admit it, but you had noticed their Land Rover slow to almost a standstill, the driver continuing to drive without due care and attention while admiring the monarch and his progeny until they were either passed the field or were rudely interrupted by a car coming in the opposite direction.

The trouble is these bulls don’t last for ever. In fact, sod’s law says these bulls injure themselves prematurely and don’t fulfil their potential. Insuring your bull against loss of use may recompense you monetarily but it’ll not bring him back.

But there is a way he could live on – in a nitrogen flask! Not him exactly (it would take a lot of nitrogen), but we could take semen from him when he’s fit and well. The process does require him to be TB and blood tested before a government licence is issued but based on the production of 200 straws, the estimated total cost would be less than £5 per straw.

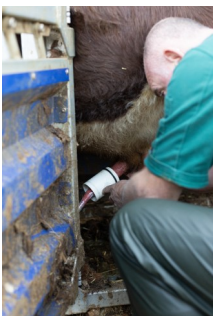
So that favourite bull could be used for years after his demise. You could even let your neighbour buy some straws if he were interested (which of course he’s not!).

If the idea interests you, please contact Mark in the practice and he can discuss the details.

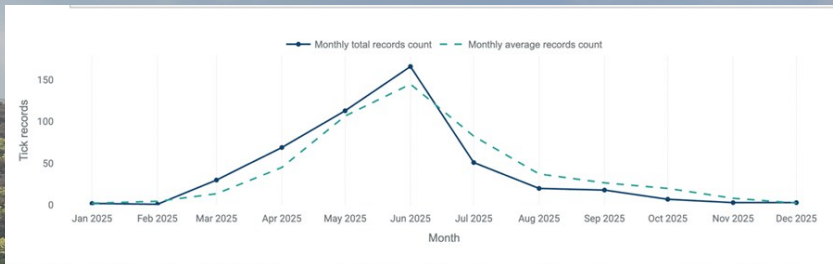
**Mark Stott**

### Included this month

- **Insuring your Bull - Mark Stott**
- **Tick Disease– Sol Elliott**
- **Getting Lambs to Market– Sarah Harker**
- **Vet Tech Team Away Day– The Vet Techs**
- **News and Diary Dates**



## Tick Disease



<https://ukhsa-dashboard.data.gov.uk/vectors-and-vector-borne-diseases/ticks>

Coming from Warwickshire I'd not heard of a fell until I moved here, let alone seen any real-life ticks. As southerners, my fiancé and I panicked the first time he found a tick on him and had no idea what to do about it. I only saw my first case of tick-borne disease in sheep this spring, including the devastating effects of large mortality rates in these trembling, recumbent hill sheep. The graph shows the tick record counts for 2025 which does show the peak of tick season being in the summer but be warned in a ticky area that doesn't mean they are not about in March. We all have that 60-day figure in our mind of dip offering protection, but it is worth remembering this is for scab. Dip will only kill the ticks. Now that we work with Downland, we have a product called Zermasect which provides 12 weeks protection against ticks. As always, if you have concerns about ticks pick up the phone and speak to us.



Sol Elliott

## Getting Lambs to Market

As you read this, lambing time will be a fading memory for most of you. The sense of relief at getting it over with for another year can be short-lived when you realise the work and time involved in keeping these lambs going til sale day! We can get hardened to the loss of a newborn lamb or two, but losses and poor performance can be more frustrating in older ones that should be out of the woods.

Things to remember in the management of growing lambs include:

- **Nutrition:** Good ewe nutrition pre and post-lambing is essential for lamb performance. This can include concentrate feeding of ewes after lambing if you lamb early or if grass is limited. Some systems justify creep feeding of lambs too depending on your market and system.
- **Trace Elements:** Deficiencies can be farm specific but generally, our area is short of cobalt. Lambs need more cobalt as they begin to graze and the diet changes from milk-based to forage-based. Drenches only last 2 to 3 weeks, which is fine if lambs are handled regularly, but injections lasting 3 to 6 months are more convenient for others. Supplementation is best started before weaning to maximise growth. Boluses are useful in bigger lambs after weaning. If lambs are on creep feed, this should provide most of the trace elements without the need for additional supplementation.
- **Clostridial Diseases and Pasteurellosis:** If ewes are boosted pre-lambing, colostral antibodies protect lambs against clostridial disease for up to 12 weeks and pasteurellosis for about 3 weeks. Lambs will need their own vaccinations beyond this age if they are still on farm and you experience unacceptable losses.
- **Scour** can be caused by coccidiosis or nematodirus. Same-day examination of muck samples at the practice can help with a diagnosis as treatments are different depending on the cause. Timing of nematodirus outbreaks can be predicted with a knowledge of lamb age, grazing history and reference to the SCOPS website hatching forecast that monitors meteorological data.
- A robust culling policy ensures last years problems don't come round again. Cast ewes are such a good trade, you might as well get rid of those that contribute to poor lamb performance. Lambs that get off to a bad start often don't catch up either so attention to detail with colostrum and good management in lambing time is well rewarded.



We are hosting a meeting for sheep club members on 12<sup>th</sup> May at the practice to discuss growing lambs. Please book in and come along with your questions.

Sarah Harker

## Vet Tech Team Away Day!



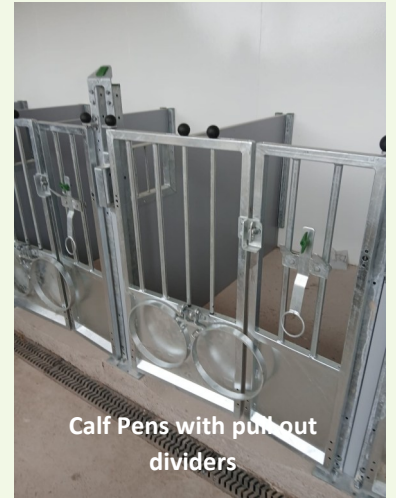
The dream team—Gill, Evie, Anna, Nicola, Maisy

A couple of weeks ago we went on a Vet Tech trip away for some training down in sunny Cheshire! The training was run by Downland and Volac Milk Replacers and we were hosted by the lovely Ray from Bidlea Dairy. Over the two days, we had a classroom session on colostrum, calf feeding, what to look for in milk replacers, and a practical farm walk session to look at Bidlea's fancy new calf shed and their rare breed of cattle called a Lineback, both of which were real highlights.

The key points we learnt from the trip were:

- Importance of high-quality colostrum management.
- Things to look for when deciding which milk replacer would be best suited to you.
- Correct mixing technique to optimise growth rates - For example, if feeding at 15%, mix 150g milk powder with 850ml water rather than adding 150g powder to 1l water.
- Ideas for calf housing – for example the insulated roof and the sliding barrier calf pens.

It was a really good opportunity for us as a fairly new team to get to know one another a bit better while learning interesting information and eating some good food! Big shout out to Ray's wife who kept us going with lovely soup, cake and their divine farm-made ice cream.



Calf Pens with pull-out dividers



We are looking forward to putting what we learned into practice and continuing to



Rare Breed Lineback Calf

develop our knowledge in calf health and nutrition. On behalf of the Farmgate team we would like to say a huge thank you to the Bidlea family for welcoming us on their farm and their amazing hospitality, and to Downland and Volac for an interesting and enjoyable training experience. If you need any help deciding which milk replacer is for you, we are your girls!

**Gill, Evie, Anna, Nicola and Maisy**

## Direct Debits



We would like to take the opportunity to remind you about the benefits of being on direct debit with us. Clients paying this way receive a 5% discount on vet time and POM-V drugs, money is taken on the 27th of each month or the next working day. We just need an original copy of the direct debit form (not a scan or photocopy) and a Trade reference. Please ask us for a form if you would like to sign up.

**Lesley Faulkner**

## A warm welcome to Nicola Thornton to out Vet Tech Team



I am originally from Cockerham, where I grew up on my grandparents' dairy, beef and sheep farm. That early hands-on experience sparked my passion for working with animals from a young age. After leaving school, I went on to achieve a Level 3 Diploma in Animal Management at Lancaster and Morecambe College. Since then, I've built a varied career working with animals, including roles in veterinary reception, several years as a professional flat jockey, and practical farm work such as calf rearing and milking on local farms. I genuinely love working as a veterinary technician, especially being out on visits, getting to know our clients, and supporting them in maintaining healthy, productive herds. Making a positive difference, even in small ways, is what motivates me most. Outside of work, I enjoy walking my working cocker spaniel, Sid, and heading to the beach for a ride on my ex-racehorse, Max.

## Auction of promises update !

Due to the overwhelming support that we have received for this event we have had to change venue to Ring 1 J36 Auction **Saturday 16th May 2026** 7pm Prompt for food (pie and peas). Viewing starts at 7.30pm with the auction starting at 8pm. Admission is **now free** unless you want to order food which is £10 per head. Let us know if you are coming by contacting either Farm Gate offices. Please book food by Friday 8th of May. Catalogues available at each office or online at <https://www.facebook.com/share/1GrJtpee2/?mibextid=wwXlfr> Thanks for your ongoing support.



## Congratulations Becca & Tom

On the safe arrival of Charles John Oston on 17th of April weighing 8lb12. He has already been in to meet us and all is going well.



Whatsapp order no.  
**07442 862092**



## Diary Dates



### Understanding Veterinary Medicines (Red Tractor Course)

**Friday 8th May 2026 12.30 pm—2.30pm** Ulverston Auction Mart Cafe, North Lonsdale Terrace, Ulverston, LA12 9AU (Lunch Included). **£40 plus VAT including lunch and certificate.**

To book please contact the practice or e mail [linda@farmgatevets.com](mailto:linda@farmgatevets.com)



### Keeping Lambs Growing - Mucky Backsides and More

**Tuesday 12th May 2026, 7pm at our J36 Practice**

A members post lambing discussion on keeping lambs growing including Cocci, parasites, trace elements and nutrition with our vets and guest speaker Matt Colston from Elanco. Supper included, please book asap.



### Suckler / Beef Farmer Meeting— Setting Up for a Successful Breeding Season

**Thursday 21st May 2026, 11am—2pm** —by kind permission of Maidenlands Pedigree Livestock, Maidenlands Tarn, Ulverston, LA12 0NL Lunch included, please book your place asap by phoning the practice or e mail [linda@farmgatevets.com](mailto:linda@farmgatevets.com)



### Dairy Client Coach Trip to Metcalfe Farms, Leyburn

**Tuesday 16th June 2026.** 9am leaving J36 to return approx. 4pm.

Focusing on Young stock rearing along with a tour of their other enterprises. We are expecting a full coach so please book your place asap by phoning the practice or e mail [linda@farmgatevets.com](mailto:linda@farmgatevets.com)



#### 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

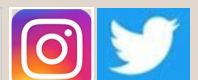
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