

Newsletter

November 2023



Welcome

One of the many things we can do well in the North West of England is grow grass. It has just not stopped this autumn. This is great but it is not without its problems. We have seen a lot of lungworm in cattle at grass and gut worms in sheep. Warm and wet conditions are what parasites love. We have seen no evidence of fluke yet, but like Christmas it is coming!

If you are sending lambs away for wintering on dairy farms be careful as we have seen plenty of dead lambs due to pasteurella. All you can do is condition lambs on better grazing before putting them on lush silage aftermaths so they are not getting a huge diet change. Easier said than done I know.

Sol is writing about Bluetongue disease. It shows how old problems from the past can pop up again. Definitely one to be really vigilant about.

Jim McKinstry

Veterinary Attestation Forms

Export procedures have changed since Brexit, and a paper trail is required back to the farm of origin of agricultural products confirming regular veterinary health visits. Currently, a farmer declaration is required but from 13th December 2023, the rules will tighten. If you are farm assured (Red Tractor or equivalent) this will be adequate to comply with the rules. If not, we need to sign a short form to say that the farm is free of notifiable disease and has good disease control and biosecurity. This can be done as a specific visit or whilst we are out doing something else. If you wish to take advantage of the Health and Welfare Pathway funding, the visits could be combined for example. The form is valid for 12 months and a copy accompanies consignments to the auction mart or abattoir. The information it contains is then used to support any export health certificates that are needed subsequently. It is our understanding that they will not be required for the sale of store lambs or store cattle. If you are still confused, please speak to us at the practice or to your auction mart or abattoir. There will no doubt be a few issues to iron out over the coming months, but we are here to help. There is also some useful info here put out by the Livestock Auctioneers Association. [Veterinary Attestations - FAQs for livestock markets and producers | Latest News | Livestock Auctioneers' Association Limited \(laa.co.uk\)](#)



Sarah Harker

Included this month

- **Veterinary Attestation Forms-** Sarah Harker
- **A New Stain of Bluetongue -** Sol Elliott
- **Sheep Lameness-** Rebekah Carling
- **Lame Tup and Laminitis -** Charlotte Chapman
- **Vaccination and Carbon Reduction -** Jim McKinstry
- **MCF—**Thom Leman
- **News and Diary Dates**



REMINDER FOR DAIRY CLIENTS

All Johnes declarations must be completed by the end of the year. If you haven't had a review in 12 months, please contact us ASAP.



New Strain of Bluetongue Virus

Farmers and vets are currently being asked to remain vigilant as a new strain of Bluetongue virus is spreading rapidly in the Netherlands and has entered Belgium. I remember sitting in a vet-farmer meeting a few years after the last outbreak of Bluetongue in 2007 discussing the signs to look out for and the impacts it could have on our farms. As a refresher, Bluetongue is a virus spread by midges. Hopefully, heading into winter, the chance of having midges about in the UK will decrease but as we are having warmer weather than we would normally at this time of year, the risk is increasing. Unlike the name suggests a blue tongue is not the most common sign in cattle. Redness of the eyes, mouth, foot, skin above the

hooves and teats as well as crusty lesions around the nose and muzzle are signs to look for. In sheep, they are more likely to have breathing problems caused by swelling of the tongue (giving it a blue colour hence the name) as well as swollen heads and drooling. Maintaining good biosecurity as always is a good way to mitigate any risk of bringing it into your herds/flocks, so avoiding importing from European countries at this time and if you do notice any of the above signs to give us a call as soon as possible.



Photo Credit Nadis



Sol Elliott

Sheep Lameness

Keep your eyes peeled for a sheep lameness with a CODD focus farmer meeting coming up later this year. We can't promise to provide the miracle cure which will solve all your lameness problems overnight but hopefully there will be some good discussion generated as to what different people find works for them and what current research is able to add. Current layout includes footbath practices, treatment choice, to trim or not to trim, and whether Footrot vaccination can play a part. We're hoping to run two meetings - north and south - not only to make life easier for yourselves travel wise but also to make sure numbers are small enough to allow for discussion between yourselves. Come along to bring your wisdom if you've managed to crack it or to share your woes with those that can relate.



Rebekah Carling

Lame Tups - Could it be Laminitis?

With tup sales and tugging in full swing take a moment to read this section on lameness in sheep because laminitis certainly is not fixed with antibiotics. That's right, sheep can get laminitis just like horses, where the sensitive layers (laminae) underneath the claw wall become inflamed, damaged and as a result cause lameness. In ruminants this condition is often linked to feeding practices, commonly overfeeding but energy dense diets and abrupt diet changes can be risk factors. Think laminitis if you can't quite tell what foot the animal is lame on, or if there is no sign of an infection yet stock are walking around on their 'knees'. Anti-inflammatories will help alleviate the discomfort but cutting back on concentrate feeding and/or adding in good-quality forage may relieve the symptoms all together.



Charlotte Chapman

Vaccination and Carbon Reduction

The whole carbon foot print malarky does get my goat. It does get used as a stick while we should use it as a method to improve. Carbon costs, simples. So, we need to minimise the amount of it that we waste and this will make our businesses more efficient and more profitable. Animal health is a big part of carbon reduction as animals that have health issues will not perform to their potential.

IBR has been shown by the experts as one of the

most carbon costly diseases. They have done lots of research into it and concluded that controlling IBR will make your herd more efficient and lower your carbon footprint (see the table from CIEL Net Zero & Livestock). I have always seen IBR as the common cold of cattle. It comes in varying severity but like a bad cold I am sure the cattle just want to do as little as possible until they feel better. They do not want to grow as well as they ought to or give as much milk, so their efficiency is decreased. As it impacts on milk production and decreases feed conversion efficiency, carbon in the feed that could be getting made into milk is being used by the cow to fight the infection so in effect wasting carbon.

The same is true for calves with pneumonia. They eat the same amount of food but they put on less weight. We see this when we are monitoring calf growth rates. As pneumonia levels increase, weight gains decrease.



Prevention is the key. We can easily diagnose IBR in your herd from a bulk milk sample or in sucklers from some blood samples. Vaccination is the way to prevent the disease. Please have a chat with one of us to see how we can make your herd more efficient and get as much from your feed as possible.

Sustainable Jim

MCF - Malignant Catarrhal Fever

Not a common disease but one we saw in the practice last month, MCF is a severe and predominantly fatal in cattle. Clinical signs include a high temperature, inappetence and depression but most noticeably corneal clouding causing blindness, discharge from the eyes and nose (clear progressing to thick and yellow) as well as ulceration/crusting of the mouth/muzzle and coronary band. Clinical signs can occur anywhere from 9-200 days post-infection.

The virus (Ovine herpesvirus-2) is transmitted from sheep to cattle during periods of close contact or grazing/housing in fields or sheds recently inhabited by sheep. Shedding of the virus increases during periods of stress (pregnancy/lambing, housing or recently transported stock) with infected sheep being lifelong carriers.

Diagnosis is typically based on a vet's clinical exam but can be confirmed by virus identification from either blood or tissue. Unfortunately, there is no treatment for MCF, therefore euthanasia based on welfare grounds is the usual course of action. No vaccine is currently available so the best way to control the disease is to reduce contact, co-grazing and concurrent housing of cattle and sheep where possible. With housing coming up sheds previously used for lambing earlier in the year would ideally be disinfected prior to cattle coming in.



Thom Leman

Table 1. Impacts of using vaccination against endemic disease in the UK beef and dairy sectors on total potential GHG emissions mitigation

Production system	Disease	Potential mitigation (ktCO ₂ -eq)*
Dairy production	Infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR)	227.1
	Johne's disease	167.8
	Salmonella	83.5
	Bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD)	73.3
	Calf pneumonia	11.7
Suckler beef production	Infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR)	101.6
	Bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD)	100.6
	Johne's disease	26.3
	Calf pneumonia	5.8
	Salmonella	4.6

Congratulations to Beth



In September we welcomed the newest member of our Farm Gate Team, George Henry Thornton, 08.09.2023 weighing 9lb 5oz. According to Beth he's doing well and fattening like a texel tup lamb! Huge congratulations to Beth, Gary and Edith.



Well Done to Ruby and Sedbergh YFC!

We are extremely proud of our fabulous Receptionist and Vet Tech, Ruby for her part on organising a huge Tractor Run in memory of her cousin Tom Allan who sadly lost his life last year. The event was a huge success raising over **£7000** for **North West**



Air Ambulance with a staggering 218 tractors taking part!



MOVEMBER[®]

Changing the Face of Men's Health



This picture took some finding in the archives, you're welcome Mark!! This November our male staff members will be taking part in Movember to raise some vital funds for Men's Health. From cancer to mental health, we all know someone affected by it a friend, dad, brother, son, grandad the list goes on. We will of course be updating you on the "tash" progress on social media! Please support us in our plight by making a donation to our team either at the practice or online <https://uk.movember.com/team/2445978> We will be competing with our pals at Dalehead Vets in Settle and Belle Vue in Wigton so please help lead Farm Gate to victory with social media likes and donations!!

Dates For Your Diary



Understanding Veterinary Medicines—Red Tractor Approved Course. If nobody on your farm has completed this course then you will get a non compliance during an inspection. As the majority of clients have been through now, the dates we provide will become fewer, so please get booked in and the job sorted on— **Wed 1st November 2023, 1.30pm—3.30pm at our J36 practice.** Course cost is £35 plus VAT which includes your course book and certificate.



Healthy Heifer Members Meeting - On farm by kind permission of Mr J M Barton, Lupton Hall, Wednesday 1st November 11am –1pm, sponsored by Boehringer Ingelheim, the makers of Bovalto and Fencovis vaccines. The subjects are Defra grants for calf sheds, equipment & slurry. The Importance of Total proteins and bench marking data.



Lantra Foot Trimming Courses. Two Courses Available— Run by Finbarr and Tim Carter

- 1) **Monday 13th November 2023— Lantra First Aid for Feet** 1 day Course 9am—5pm, at our J36 practice.
- 2) **Tues 14th—Thursday 16th November 2023— Lantra Intermediate Hoof Trimming** 3 day course. Day 1 at the practice (J36) days 2 and 3 on farm. To book or express interest please call the office or e mail 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

Monday-Friday

CLOSED Saturdays

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