

## Blowfly Strike (Cutaneous Myiasis)

General clinical signs include nibbling at perineum and isolating themselves from the rest of the flock. If it is allowed to progress larvae can be seen feeding on the skin surface causing extensive skin damage. This results in release of bacterial toxins into the blood (toxaemia) due to death of the affected skin (necrosis).

Primary flies include greenbottles and blackbottles which initiate strike, while secondary flies including bluebottles only attack areas which are already struck or damaged.

Methods of prevention include tail docking, shearing at an appropriate time of year, dagging, and use of a pour on.

Clik and Vetrazin are two examples that are for prevention only. Either of these should be used prior to a risk period.

Additionally, flies are attracted to areas next to facial staining around the perineum so controlling diarrhea is a key part of preventing fly strike.

As a result, it is important that adequate worm control is implemented.

In an affected animal the best form of treatment is to clip surrounding hair, clean the wound, remove visible maggots and apply insecticide such as fly repellent.

A pour on such as Crovect or Ectofly will work to treat the affected area as well as acting as a preventative measure for further strikes. Withdrawal periods and average length of protection provided by the pour ons are included in the table below. Always remember to check the datasheet of any products used to ensure compliance with regulations.

Pour on	Prevention	Treatment	Length of protection	Milk withdrawal	Meat withdrawal
Clik/Clik extra			16 weeks /19 weeks	Do not use	40 days
Clikzin			8 weeks	Do not use	7 days
Vetrazin			10 weeks	Do not use	28 days
Crovect			6-8 weeks	Do not use	8 days
Ectofly			6-8 weeks	5 days	8 days

## NorCal News...

### Welcome to the team

We would like to introduce our two new members to the vet team, Sophie Wilson and Hannah Martin.

Sophie and Hannah graduated from Nottingham in July.

Sophie will be based at Wantage  
And

Hannah will be based at Thame.

We thank you in advance for the warm welcome, we know you will all give them on farm.

## Summer Mastitis

We've noticed a lot of our recent calls and 'whilst you are here TB testing' questions have been for cows with summer mastitis.

This is often seen in dry cows or non-lactating cows and heifers out at grass, and may also be known as 'August bag'.

It initially appears as a hard swollen quarter and teat, if observed early, **but** it can lead to the cow becoming systemically sick, with a fever, dehydration and in worse cases abortion or death.

Treatment is based on the individual case. Regular stripping of the affected quarter and intra-mammary tubes can treat a mild case of summer mastitis, however if the cow is systemically affected, which is what we have seen the most of, then anti-inflammatories, systemic antibiotics and rehydration is also required. This may need to be repeated, particularly the anti-inflammatories.

Summer mastitis can be easily prevented. Good management and excellent hygiene at drying off plus the use of teat sealants is very important. For cows at grass, both dairy and beef, excellent fly treatment should be maintained during the whole of summer and careful consideration to where cows are grazing as many pastures near woods or rivers are likely to have a higher burden of flies.

Sadly affected quarters rarely recover, but the aim is to stop the infection spreading to other quarters, and other animals, giving you a live cow with a calf and enough quarters to produce good milk for the calf. This can and is achieved when summer mastitis is treated quickly.

If you have any questions or would like any of us to give any advice on possible cases of summer mastitis you may have then call the practice and one of us will get back to you!

## Ram Vasectomy

We're already well into the summer now and it might be a good time to start thinking about tugging in the autumn.

Aside from semen testing your rams to ensure they are in good working order, you could consider synchronising your ewes to minimise the length of time when you have to be up at all hours in the spring!

When you synchronise the ewes they'll all be cycling at the same time and will therefore get pregnant at the same time and lamb within a short space of time.

Synchronisation can be achieved with sponges which are devices which are inserted into the ewe's vagina and release hormones to kick-start her cycle.

Another method is to use a vasectomised ram. A ram releases hormone which trigger cycling in ewes. When we vasectomise a ram, the testes are left intact and therefore he will continue to release the hormones. However, he will be infertile so will not be able to get any of the ewes pregnant until you want to put an entire ram with them.

You should aim to get your ram vasectomised at least 8 weeks before you put him with the ewes as there can still be some sperm floating around in the pipes which could get the ewes pregnant.

A ewes' cycle is approximately 17 days so he needs to be in with them for this length of time before you put in the entire tup.

Therefore if you're tugging in early October, you'll need to put your teaser in about halfway through September.

Follow us on Facebook



NorCal Vets Thame

Pearces Yard, Aylesbury Road,  
Thame, OX9 3AS  
Tel: 01844 260 616  
Mob: 07725 039 093 (Evan)  
thame@norcalvets.co.uk

NorCal Vets Wantage

Unit 8a Elms Farm Business Park, Grove Road,  
Wantage, OX12 7PD  
Tel: 01235 429 767  
Mob: 07711 923 909 (Jono)  
wantage@norcalvets.co.uk