

Lambing..

Preparing or Just Starting

Things to consider...

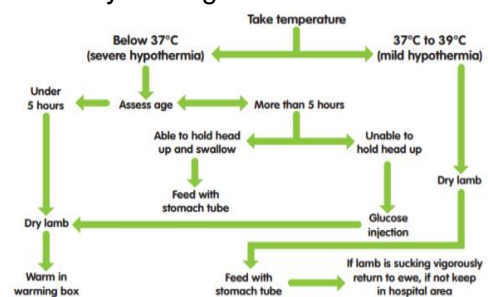
- Leading up to lambing, ewe nutrition in the last 6 weeks of pregnancy is incredibly important so if you can feed your singles, twins and triplets different amounts, it is definitely worth scanning them to divide them up. This is because the lambs will take up an increasing amount of space meaning that there is less space for food inside the ewes abdomen. In order to counteract the lack of space, then a more nutrient diet should be fed (high energy and protein).
- Body Condition scoring is a good way to determine if your sheep are getting enough nutrition. This should be done four times throughout the year – weaning, before tupping, mid-pregnancy and before lambing. Just before lambing you want 90% of ewes to be 2-3.5.
- Another way to check is for a vet to come out and blood sample 6-8 ewes from your group of twins or triplets. This can determine if there is a risk of twin lamb disease (pregnancy toxemia) occurring.
- Fast forwarding to when your lambs are born – currently the average lamb mortality in the UK is 10-25% which is far too high, the aim is 7%. We would suggest recording all lamb deaths how many died and the cause if known (We have a spreadsheet that we can send to you to make it easy to note down)
- The most important factors that are going to affect your lamb mortality rate – are ewe BCS, the quantity and quality of colostrum (they need 200ml/kg in first 24 hours with 50ml/kg in 2 hours) and a clean environment. The latter increases the risk of watery mouth, lamb scours, navel ill, joint ill and mastitis and metritis.

THE UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who came to our lambing meeting at Wynnstay and The Stamp it out meeting at The Thame Office.

It was great to see so many of you there and we hope you got something useful from the evening!

The diagram below gives a good indication of what to do if you have a hypothermic lamb – and when they need glucose before warming etc.



Diseases to keep a look out for in new born lambs: -

- **Watery Mouth** – lambs will be drooling and have swollen abdomens.
- **Scours**
- **Entropion** – lower eyelid turned inwards.
- **Navel ill** – very important to treat navels with 10% iodine!!
- **Joint Ill** – see swollen, hot, painful joints with possible muscle wastage.
- **Physical deformities** – Lambs can be born with no opening to the rectum on the outside, stomach becomes swollen and stops suckling. Euthanasia is the best option.
- **Trace Element Deficiencies** – copper, selenium, iodine, cobalt deficiencies in the ewes can all have an effect on the new born lamb.

New TB Rules

If you are in the 6 month TB testing areas of Oxfordshire and West Berkshire you may be eligible to return to annual testing as of May 2019.

This will apply automatically if you have not had a breakdown in the past 6 years. APHA should send you a letter to confirm you are eligible in this case. If you have a test scheduled between now and May then this will take place accordingly. After this your subsequent 6 month test will then be cancelled.

For those of you who have had breakdown in the last few years there is an option to join the bTB CHECS accreditation scheme in order to return to annual testing. We mentioned this scheme a few newsletters previously but now there is more incentive than ever to get signed up.

Key points of the scheme

- £35 annual membership fee through the Premium Cattle Health Scheme (PCHS)
- Biosecurity requirements and herd health plan must be signed off by us
- You MUST post movement TB test any animals brought onto your holding between 60-120 after they arrive. This is YOUR responsibility to organize with us and pay for. Failure to do so will return you to 6 monthly testing.
- Being signed up even if you do subsequently have a breakdown ensures you receive 100% compensation for culled animals

Information about biosecurity can be found here:

<http://www.tbhub.co.uk/biosecurity/protect-your-herd-from-tb/>

Information about bTB CHECS can be found here:

<https://www.checs.co.uk/bovine-tb-herd-accreditation/>

Information about the TB part of the Premium Cattle Health Scheme can be found here:

https://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120112/premium_cattle_health_scheme/1851/bovine_tb_herd_accreditation

Please speak to one of the vets who will be able to give you more information

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