

Turning Out of Cattle

With many of you turning out your cattle soon or some already having done so just a reminder to check for any jobs that would be easier dealt with now rather than having to gather cattle back in in a couple of weeks - missed castrates, horns, routine vaccinations for diseases such as Clostridia and IBR, dosing, mineral bolusing etc.

Another reminder from last month's newsletter - lactating cows and sheep at grass are most at risk of developing grass tetany so ensure you are supplementing adequately especially if we get some rain and grass starts growing quickly... (which many of you are hoping for!)

Coccidiosis in Calves and Lambs

In the past two weeks we have had quite a number of calls for Coccidiosis in calves as well as lambs. Coccidiosis is caused by a parasite that usually infects 3 week to 6 month old calves and 4 to 6 week old lambs. Clinical signs of disease include scour which is usually bloody, dehydration, rapid weight loss, straining to defecate (sometimes with rectal prolapse as a result) and occasionally death. Subclinical signs show as reduced appetite, weight loss, reduction in growth rate and a dull appearance.

Clinical signs are usually suggestive of disease but a faecal egg count is the best way of reaching a definite diagnosis. However scouring can happen before coccidial oocysts are shed and also continue after shedding has ceased. By pooling samples taken from scouring and non-scouring animals there is more chance of finding coccidia oocysts.

Treatment involves using the coccidiocidal drench Tolracol as well as oral/intravenous fluid therapy depending on severity and often antibiotics/anti-inflammatories. Alternatively, an in-feed coccidiostat (decoquinate) – in combined mineral buckets or in feed can be used to suppress the infection.

Medicines Administration Course

**Wednesday 18th May 6pm @ Thame Barns Centre
(approx. 1hr, drink and snacks provided)**



It is a Red Tractor requirement that all medicines are administered by a competent person, and is now necessary for beef and sheep farmers that competency is demonstrated by completing an approved course. Our course covers all aspects of medicines use, including storage, administration, disposal and record keeping to ensure you are up to date with all the Red Tractor requirements.

Once completed, all participants will be issued with a certificate of attendance. The cost of the course is £35+ VAT per person.

If you are interested in attending the course please email thame@norcalvets.co.uk or call 01844 260616

Flystrike

With the warmer humid weather we often see increased cases of Blowfly strike in sheep that are yet to be shorn. If caught early fly strike is easily treated however if not detected and left untreated the maggots can cause severe damage with the most severe cases resulting in death.

Affected sheep are usually restless and may bite or kick at the area. These areas are usually sites of faecal contamination or infected wounds and therefore usually occur over the hindquarters. Eggs hatch within 24 hours with larvae penetrating and damaging the skin. Maggots will be seen at skin level when the fleece is parted. Fleeces will become discoloured and damp with loss of wool progressing to separation from the flock and eventual death due to septicaemia, secondary bacterial infection and release of toxins.

Treatment involves immediate removal of dirty, contaminated fleece around the whole area of strike and removal of as many maggots as possible. Wash the area with a disinfectant such as iodine or Hibiscrub and apply Engemycin spray. Preparations such as Crovect should be used as per the instructions. In severe cases administration of antibiotics and anti-inflammatories is needed. Please call us if you have a case of flystrike needing veterinary attention or if you need any further advice.

Remember that treatment is achieved using products such as Crovect rather than insect growth regulator products like Klik, Klik Extra or Klikzin, which are used for prevention.

For season long control the best option is to use a long duration insect growth regulator pour-on. This needs to be applied before sheep are at risk of flystrike. However it is important to observe the withdrawal period of each individual product especially in your lambs. For shorter term control and shorter meat withhold periods use a short acting IGR or Pyrethroid. These will provide 6-8 weeks cover with a 7-8 day meat withhold period.

Poultry housing measures lifted



Those of you that keep any poultry will be pleased to hear that as of 2nd May the compulsory housing measures have been lifted.

Poultry and captive bird keepers are advised to be vigilant for any signs of disease in their birds and any wild birds and seek prompt advice from us if you have any concerns.

A Reminder - Fleas and Ticks

With the hotter weather starting we are moving into one of the worst times of year for fleas and ticks on dogs. Fleas cause skin issues, flea allergy dermatitis, and carry tapeworms while infected ticks can transmit potentially deadly diseases like Lyme disease. We have tick pullers and Bravecto treatment (which lasts for 3 months) in stock at the practice so give us a call if needed.

Follow us on Instagram @norcalvets



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Booking in Pre – Movement Tests

Please can we request that enough notice is given when booking in pre-movement tests: ideally at least 1 week before you are planning for the cattle to leave the farm to allow enough time to schedule in the test and then submit the paperwork afterwards.