

## Lungworm

We are entering the risk period again for lungworm in grazing cattle. Although normally associated with being a problem in calves in their first grazing season it can under certain circumstances be a problem in subsequent grazing seasons. Symptoms are usually seen in young cattle in their first grazing season in the later part of the summer. The nature and severity of lungworm infection depends on the number of larvae that are ingested and the immune response of the animal.

The spread of disease is aided by the fungi *Pilobolus*. This fungus thrives in warm and wet conditions, growing on the surface of dung and the lungworm larvae attach to these spores. The spores explode and spread the larvae up to 3 metres on the pasture from the faeces.

Clinical signs of disease include intermittent coughing particularly after moving stock. Moderately affected animals will have coughing bouts even when they are resting and may show signs of increased difficulty in breathing. Heavily affected animals have an increased breathing rate accompanied with opened mouth breathing with head and neck outstretched. The tongue will also appear as they try to cough. The cough will be the harsh deep 'husk' cough. Cattle can lose condition rapidly. Yearling and adult cattle can be affected if they fail to develop adequate immunity as calves.

Lungworm will be susceptible to all anthelmintics on the market and there are no known cases of resistance. However for treatment we prefer a yellow class of wormer due to its mechanism of action - other classes can cause huge numbers to die at once blocking the airways. Secondary bacterial pneumonia with a high temperature is a common complication and this is when you will also need to treat with antibiotics and anti-inflammatories. Call us and we can advise accordingly.

If you are continuously worming for gut worms this will also remove lungworm and not allow for natural immunity to build up therefore cattle are at risk of lungworm infection when the activity of the wormer ends. Therefore, care needs to be taken when using long acting anthelmintics in the 1st grazing season because you may limit the animals' exposure to lungworm larvae and cattle will remain susceptible to reinfection the following season due to not developing natural resistance.

There is a vaccine available (Huskvac) - Young calves can be vaccinated after eight weeks of age with a double dose 4 weeks apart however these calves should not be exposed to any lungworm for at least two weeks after the 2nd dose. Please call us to order/if you have any queries.

## Free Haemonchus Testing

During July to October APHA will be offering free testing for *Haemonchus* where sheep present with anaemia with no diarrhoea, and sub-cutaneous oedema (bottle jaw) or where *Haemonchus* may be suspected.

At this point in the summer *Haemonchus* is a serious concern in sheep and goats especially after heavy rains. There is little immunity to this parasite so disease can be seen in lambs and adults. Anthelmintic resistance in this parasite is common therefore anthelmintic efficacy post treatment is recommended - 7 days post yellow wormers, 14 days post clear.

*Haemonchus* lives in the abomasum and consumes large amounts of blood - 5000 *haemonchus* can drink 250ml of blood daily and each female worm is capable of producing up to 10000 eggs per day. Acute infections result in sudden death without scouring and loss of condition - anaemia due to loss of blood (pale membranes) is the main sign. Chronic illness is however seen more commonly in cattle with failure to thrive, weight loss, lethargy and weakness.



## Smallholder Skills Workshop (Goats & Sheep)



Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> August

10am – 4pm Location: Chinnor Hill, OX39 4BH

Following the success of last year's workshop, we are again offering a day course to come and learn everything you need to know about caring for your sheep and/or goats.

This is a chance to learn new practical skills and to ask questions about your own flock - including buying in new animals, lameness, parasite control, pasture management, tugging and lambing/kidding.

Numbers are limited to 15 people £100 per person including lunch (£50 deposit required)

Please contact us on 01844 260616 or [thame@norcalvets.co.uk](mailto:thame@norcalvets.co.uk) to book your place.

### Pre-tugging checks

Pre-tugging checks can rule out common problems and can give you an indication of whether you should have a tup semen tested. Up to 30% of rams are thought to be subfertile.

Checking over eyes, mouths, feet and body condition scoring is important as well as palpating scrotums and examining the prepuce. Checks should be done at least 8-10 weeks before they are needed as sperm production takes 6 weeks allowing time for problems to be addressed.

A fit, fertile ram will get more ewes in lamb in a tighter time period and will also last longer in your flock. If you have any doubts about a tup it is best to give us a call and arrange a fertility exam where we examine a semen sample under the microscope.

### Reminder - Vaccination for Toxo and Enzo Pre-Tugging

For the ewes it is time to think about ordering vaccines early to prevent abortions especially as there have been so many supply issues with other vaccinations this year.

- Enzovax controls enzootic abortions - a 2ml injection at least 4 weeks before tugging.
- Toxovax controls toxoplasmosis - a 2ml injection at least 3 weeks before tugging.

Together toxoplasmosis and enzootic abortion account for 70% of sheep abortions in the UK so an effective vaccination strategy is a very good investment compared to the cost of keeping a ewe all winter. (Toxovax and Enzovax can be administered at the same time however they should be administered at different sites). Please call us to order/for any questions you may have.

Follow us on Instagram @norcalvets



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### Calling all beef, dairy, sheep, poultry, or pig farmers!

Have your say on a future Defra animal welfare payment scheme by taking part in a survey. Participation in this survey is voluntary and should take around 20 minutes to complete and can be accessed here <https://surveys.qaresearch.co.uk/public.asp>.