

Booking in TB tests

We have noticed that many of you are yet to book in your TB tests. With the diary starting to fill up please contact the office asap so we can offer you your preferred date and please also mention any other jobs to be done that specifically require a vet (castrates, dehorns, PDs etc).

Pink Eye in Sheep

We have seen a marked increase in cases of pinkeye or Infectious Keratoconjunctivitis in sheep at the moment linked with the weather. This contagious infection is usually caused by one of two bacteria - Chlamydia Psittaci or Mycoplasma Conjunctivae. Affected ewes show initial tear staining, cloudy eyes leading to inflamed pink eyes and possible blindness.

Close contact usually through feeding hard feed at this time of year speeds the transmission of infection from sheep to sheep. Bought in animals can introduce the infection therefore anything bought in should be isolated from the main flock for 28 days and monitored for infection (not just pinkeye!). Indirect spread for example on your hands after treatment can also cause cases to increase.

Treatment can be successful with a single injection of Alamyacin LA 300 (1ml/10kg IM) and Emdocam (1ml/20kg sheep SC or 1ml/40kg SC if treating cattle) - eye tubes are helpful although multiple daily treatments will be required which is obviously challenging with multiple cases on a busy farm.

Separating affected sheep can help slow transmission however immunity to these bacteria is poor as antibiotics do not always eliminate the bacteria. Sub-clinically infected, carrier animals appear to be the cause of repeated outbreaks in flocks and studies suggest persistence in the conjunctival sac for several months in some sheep.

Good hygiene practices and separation of affected animals is key to slowing the spread. If feeding indoors allowing adequate space for feeding in troughs or feeding on the ground to prevent bunching up may help.

Reminder to Check VAN numbers Expiring

Just a reminder that it is approaching a year since the introduction of Veterinary Attestation Numbers so for a lot of you they may be expiring. We will need to have seen your animals in the last 12 months to issue the new number. Please contact the office if you require a new VAN.

Important! Vitamin D For Alpacas

Alpacas in their natural South American environment will be exposed to much higher levels of UV light compared to the UK. Since removing them from their natural sunny environment they now have a lack of UV exposure during winter months. It is therefore important to supplement Vitamin D to prevent poor calcified bones similar to those seen in human Rickets disease.

- Younger, growing animals will require up to three doses (**November, January, March**)
- All animals should be given one dose in November.
- Pregnant females should receive two doses in November and January.

Vitamin D can be given by injection - please give Kathriona or Becca a call to discuss.

Housing Cattle and Worms

Housing is a perfect time to worm to “clear out” animals of worms they have picked up whilst at grass. While it may seem like a good idea to use a combination product at housing to kill fluke and worms, fluke products have no persistence and you need to wait a number of weeks after housing before treating for fluke to ensure that it removes all of the life stages. As an example, Closamectin pour on is a product we see being used frequently. The flukacide in this product will only kill fluke from 7 weeks of age. Therefore, any fluke picked up just before housing will not be killed on that day. From a money saving point of view - the flukacide part is many more times expensive than the wormer therefore a cheaper wormer only product at housing time is a much better option. It is best to wait until seven weeks after housing and then treat again seven weeks later. While triclabendazole products will treat most stages of fluke it is one of the only products left - this product should be strictly left to treat cases of adult fluke especially in sheep because of the widespread resistance we are seeing. There is also widespread resistance of fluke to triclabendazole which you may not be aware of in your herd.

In cattle we recommend a clear wormer at housing time due to its ability to kill dormant stages of *Ostertagia* - a stomach worm which buries itself in the gut wall and is often reactivated in late housing and can cause serious clinical signs and death. These pour on wormers (Group 3 Ivermectins) are also effective against mange. Please consider not routinely worming adult cattle over 2-3 years old as adult cattle generally build an excellent immunity to gutworms through exposure. However routine worming can stop this immunity developing - making the importance of FECs on youngstock very important!

Worm egg counts are the best tool we have to determine the need for worming during the summer. We recommend youngstock less than 2 years old (especially first season grazers) are tested three times during the grazing period starting two weeks post turnout.

Important News Regarding Dog Vaccines - L2 Now Discontinued

MSD has made the decision to discontinue the use of Nobivac L2 (Lepto 2) after the release of WSAVA vaccinations guidelines earlier this year. The guidance now has a clear recommendation for the use of quadrivalent leptospirosis vaccines (L4) in countries where the sero-epidemiological data for the serogroups is known, which is the case for the UK.

All adult dogs who are on the L2 regime will now need to transition to the L4 vaccine programme. This means that those dogs will need to receive two doses of Nobivac L4 four weeks apart to be fully vaccinated against leptospirosis. We will not be able to vaccinate any dogs using L2 once current stocks run out. This information is easily seen on your dogs vaccination card - the yellow sticker will read L2 or L4.

Please speak to one of the vets to discuss this. Although this may seem like an inconvenience we as a practice fully support the use of the L4 vaccine due to its increased protection - especially in the case of working dogs.

Grazing root crops

Root crops such as turnips and kale can provide an excellent source of feed for animals through the winter months. However, there are a few health issues that can arise, so here are a few top tips for preventing problems:

- Review your mineral supplementation - root crops can cause iodine deficiency, which affects fertility and causes stillbirths. They can also predispose to milk fever and other deficiencies at calving time, so take particular care with pregnant animals.
- Ensure that there is also a good source of fibre available - hay, straw or silage bales should make up at least 30% of the diet
- Wait until the root crop is mature before turning stock onto it - immature root crops can cause photosensitisation, especially in younger animals and those with white skin or patches
- Try and introduce the diet change gradually, and ensure animals don't gorge themselves on roots when they are first introduced - this can result in digestive upsets and bloat
- Due to the increased bare ground in these crops, animals are at an increased risk of contracting Clostridial diseases such as Black leg and Pulpy kidney. Ensure that all animals going onto root crops have had a full course of clostridial vaccination, e.g. Bravoxin for cattle or Heptavac P for sheep.

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