



Here we are in September with the summer nearly behind us. The first maize is already in the clamp and from what I have heard the quality is not too bad. At least not as bad as we all feared during the drought.

We had a fabulous summer barbecue to celebrate our 10th anniversary kindly hosted by the Leconfield Estate. A great thank you to Scott Bushby and John Giffin who made it all possible. John showed us around Stag Farm where the sheep and the Sussex cattle are kept and we finished back at the fishing lakes for the barbecue which was a great setting on a summer's evening.

With Summer/Autumn calving in full swing we hear of milkfever being a problem in some herds with retained afterbirths as a con-

sequence. Please don't hesitate to speak to one of the vets to see what can be done to prevent this condition. **Maarten**

Some news! (Ben)

We are really happy to announce that Claire is expecting again with the third mini-Walker due in January. Some of you may already have noticed the widening girth and we can now confirm the happy news and quell any rumours that she has developed a dangerous addiction to pies. We will of course be putting in place cover for her maternity leave and will be in touch with all her regular clients to go through individual requirements. In the meantime if any of you have any questions then give us a shout.

As you all know, Elena left us in June to pursue a career in clinical practice, working in companion animal practice and this month we welcome her replacement, Markos to the team. Markos originally hails from Ethiopia and completed his veterinary degree after being awarded a scholarship to study in Slovakia. Having originally worked in practice in Slovakia, Markos moved his family to the UK and has worked as a vet in the Meat Hygiene Service. After his initial training, Markos should be up to speed and carrying out the majority of our testing from the autumn. As many of you are aware the TB testing workload of the practice has increased significantly over the past year and so whilst Markos is settling in we also have Laura with us to help out with the load. Fingers crossed, Laura will stay on to help out with covering Claire's maternity leave too.

Genomics (Claire)

In July, Ian Cumming and Rebecca Gage came to talk to us about Genetracker, NMR's genomics service.

Genomics is using DNA from individual animals to improve reliability and confidence on genetic predictions. Genomics has a reliability of 65-70% and parent averages 25-30%. These parameters (34 different parameters offered in NMR's basic package) can be used to rank animals and improve accuracy in breeding decisions based on health, fertility, longevity and production. For example you can breed your top 50% of heifers to sexed semen and the bottom 50% to beef, increasing the speed of genetic improvement in your herd.



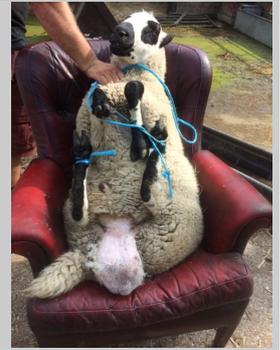
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Wondering what to do with your old furniture?

This is the best set up I've come across so far for doing Ram vasectomies!

Megan



Scour - causes and supportive fluids (Megan)

Animals may scour (have diarrhoea) at any age and for a variety of reasons. **Scour can be caused by bacteria, viruses, parasites, nutritional issues and many other factors.** The cause of scour cannot always be easily diagnosed for rapid accurate treatment. All animals that are scouring will be losing fluids as well as vital electrolytes (salts) and therefore fluid therapy is an important part of supportive therapy. The animal may well lose weight or fail to thrive as it needs energy to repair the gut. Failure to correct the fluid and electrolyte balance may result in death and certainly a very slow return to normal growth rates. No matter the cause of the scour, the treatment of a scouring animal should aim to: **Address the cause, if possible. Assess and correct dehydration. Address acidosis/electrolyte imbalances. Maintain energy.** Any scouring animals that are too weak to stand or have lost their suckle reflex should be assessed by your veterinary surgeon as intravenous fluids may be necessary. **Keep scouring animals on milk.** It has been recognised for a number of years that removal of milk from scouring animals does not encourage recovery. Milk has a very high energy level that is very difficult to replicate by any oral rehydration therapy. Energy is necessary for maintenance growth and repair, hence continuation of milk feeding has many advantages. Milk contains natural antimicrobials e.g. lactoferrin; milk maintains lactase activity which decreases risk of further scours and milk is palatable and there's no stress of removal from dam in beef and sheep. **It is important to note that the animals will continue to scour until the gut is healed, so they may appear clinically well but still have loose faeces.** There are numerous oral rehydration therapies (ORT) available and not all are equal. An ORT must supply the following in order to be of benefit to the animal:

90-130mmol/L **sodium** (enough to correct the losses)

Glucose +/- another facilitator of sodium/water absorption

Alkalinising capacity of 60-80mmol/L (strong ion difference (SID))

10-30mmol/L **potassium**

Energy for maintenance and growth

Many ORT products can affect milk clotting and therefore should be fed separate from milk, by 2 hours, ideally. **Rehydion gel** is designed to be fed with milk or if an animal is suckling, given directly into the mouth and the calf is allowed to return to the dam, so minimising stress. **Rehydion gel** addresses the issues of electrolyte imbalances effectively whilst allowing recovery, repair and growth to continue as the calf is still receiving milk. One bottle of Rehydion gel = 8 feeds (40ml per feed). Feed each calf 2 times a day until scour stops. *With thanks to CEVA*

A note on how to do a worm egg count (Sarah)

We are often brought lovely bags, pots, gloves of varying sizes of POO here at the practice. Now whilst I encourage worm egg counts at pretty much every opportunity, we need to revise what you actually need to bring us. POOLED worm egg counts are often the most economical way of doing routine monitoring to a group of animals. Whether it is cattle or sheep the following ground rules should be followed:

SAMPLE POPULATION – ideally of 10 different animals. Unless the group size is under 50 head. They need to be from the same management group ie all lambs, or all ewes .

RANDOM sample – not taken from 5 of the 'best' or 5 soft samples and some 'better ones'. The first 10 fresh samples you come across.

FRESH – the dung must be WARM! Using gloves will help with this assessment! Or going out first thing, as animals get up they usually stretch and produce a nice fresh sample.

SAME SIZE of sample from each animal – the best way to ensure this is by taking a teaspoon from the middle of each poo you are sampling. You can then put 10 x teaspoons into either a big pot or a clean zip locked bag.

Please also squeeze out all the air if in a bag or fill the pot to the brim as removing the air helps stop things from hatching. Please label with a group name that means something to you, and your name and date of sampling. It is also helpful to tell us if it from lambs/ewes, if it is for monitoring or if you are worried about them, and when they were last treated for gut worms.

WE DO NOT NEED 10 INDIVIDUAL WHOLE POO'S!!!! These cause a problem for disposal and are not necessary for the test.

Ideally not giving them to us on a Friday also means we have enough time to get them off to the lab and a result back before the weekend. Samples for Liver fluke are different, and if this is something you want to test for please discuss the best way with one of the vets before doing.