

As I write it seems that the first real rains have arrived. This should boost the grass growth so your animals have something to eat! We are getting lots of questions about worming products and protocols to follow. In sheep multiple WEC are useful so we can see the pattern and predict when to go in with treatment. These are of less use in cattle but I have assisted in some of these discussions with our organic clients. Accurate weights of animals to be treated is essential and using the product as per the data sheet vital if you are to get effective treatment. The right volume, applied to the right area, on unclipped coats, using the correct applicator and not using out of date products is important. Treating the lightest 20% of cattle and leaving well grown cattle alone can be a good way to keep some of the worm population unexposed to wormer but please discuss with your vet beforehand. All of the products we use have impacts on the insects and/or aquatic life which share the fields our cattle and sheep graze so the old saying 'as little as possible but as much as necessary' rings true. Oral and injectable prod-

ucts enable far more accurate dosing with less wastage but I appreciate the convenience of the pour on products. Use them wisely or we risk losing them all together. Most animals will have been vaccinated by now but with the weather warming please ensure vaccines remain below 4°C. We go to great lengths to ensure they arrive to you cold, if they are not looked after properly before administration you cannot expect them to work and produce a protected animal. Improper storage and administration of vaccines remains the main reason as to why animals do not mount an immune response post vaccination. A reminder to report badgers you see at the side of the road in the hotspot area (Please contact APHA on **03000 200301**). See Maarten's article in last months newsletter.

Dates for your diary: 18th June 1-3pm BVD cluster meeting

17th July 11-2pm Youngstock meeting at Brighthams Farm. I hope to see some of you at The South of England show!
(Megan)



Milk Fever Survey (Sarah)

There is currently a survey being run to assess the scale of the hypocalcaemia problem on dairy and beef farms, as well as look at the impact it has on the farm and productivity. Milk fever is thought to affect between 4% and 9% of the UK's dairy cows, with the subclinical form affecting up to 39%. It is being run by Boehringer Ingelheim, who is also hoping to find out more about the recognition of the signs of subclinical milk fever in particular. You will get to enter a draw for some Bovicalc goodies for your time. Results will be shared with the farming and veterinary community alongside any insights gained into ways to improve the approach to milk fever.

The survey link is: <https://bovikalc.typeform.com/to/iVGIIV> and available for completion, and will run until 31st August.

MilkSure ✓

We will be running a MilkSure Part 1 -Group meeting for this course on **Wednesday 10th July 10.30am – 2pm @ Petworth in the Leconfield Hall**. The MilkSure programme is 2 parts, the first being the theory, which can be done at meetings such as the one mentioned above, and a follow-up on farm with your vet which will take around 1 to 2 hours depending on your farm. You have 3 months to complete the course from when you sign up. The cost of the vet time is not covered by Arla for these, and will be £250 +VAT for both the theory (meeting) and on farm session follow up. If you are interested in signing up to this please contact the office ASAP as spaces are limited. (Sarah)

BVD Stamp It Out meeting 18th June 2019

Who should attend?

Farms who do nothing for BVD; farms who wish to claim back some of the money for their annual CheCS accreditation testing; farms who have done some BVD testing within 6 months of 18th June 2019.

The BVD cluster meeting which is the second of its kind will be **1pm to 3pm 18th June at The Fountain in Ashurst, West Sussex** with myself and Maarten. Lunch provided. The meeting will outline the disease, its costs both nationally and on your farms, and what sort of control strategies farmers can implement. The meeting will outline what we as vets can deliver for you; including how much testing budget is available. Please contact Megan to book your place– 17 places available ONLY– first come first served.

megan@livestockvets.co.uk

To gain access to the money available for testing and the visits to discuss risks on your own farm you must attend this meeting and sign the paperwork. Please have your CPH and SBI number to hand. Once you have attended the meeting you will qualify for 2 one to one farm visits, some testing and a final group meeting – all paid for. We look forward to seeing you. (Megan)



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Nothing like a bit of fresh air (Megan)

Installing two fans with a wind sock in this large shed only half filled with livestock has done wonders for reducing pneumonia on this rearing unit. The animals laid in a line directly under the windsock when it was first installed and they get quite agitated if the fans are switched off apparently!



Kangaroo ewes... (Sarah)

I'm interested to know if any of you have seen any ewes this season showing signs of 'kangaroo gait'?! This was a new one for me to come across this year, so I thought I would share it with you all. As the term suggests ewes that are affected are weight bearing more on their hind limbs than their forelimbs. They can still feel their front legs, it's just that they can't seem to weight bear properly on them. They will then go down into recumbency, hence when they are forced to move, they scabble or hop around on their hindlimbs. It seems to be more common among commercial crossbreeds and less common among sheep grazing hill pasture. Cases usually occurred between March and June while sheep were at grass, although it is unclear whether this pattern was associated with grazing or lambing patterns. Ewes are usually lactating and to multiple lambs. We know very little about this disease still, and it seems that often weaning the lambs and giving the ewes TLC and time sees them regain the use of their legs. This is something I find remarkable considering how hopeless they can look at the time. However, it is always important to seek our advice when dealing with any animals that are down, there is often a long list of reasons as to why and it can be difficult to know how best to treat them, if at all.

Neosporosis in Cattle (Part 2) – Preventing Horizontal transmission (Ben)

Last month I wrote about an excellent AHDB Monitor Farm meeting that discussed a particular farm's battle with Neospora and what they can do about it, as the disease is having a major impact on their calving pattern and culling rates. The life cycle of the Neospora parasite is quite complex and was outlined in the last article, but understanding it is the key to knowing how to minimize the impact of the disease in your herd.

Essentially, dogs and foxes pick up the disease by eating contaminated material (aborted material, raw meat, cleansings) and then can spread disease to other cows in their faeces, causing abortion, stillbirth and weak calves and a lifelong infection. This is known as horizontal transmission. An infected cow will then (mostly) pass on the infection to any viable offspring she has. This is known as vertical transmission.

In this article I will focus on the control measures relevant to preventing horizontal transmission which focus on 2 key areas:

Preventing access of dogs/foxes to infective material:

Once a dog/fox eats some infective material (raw infected meat, placenta from an infected cow or aborted material) the animals becomes infected but normally only passes infection in its faeces for a matter of weeks unless it becomes immunosuppressed (ill or pregnant).

Dispose of potentially infective material promptly e.g. picking up placenta by means of your fallen stock provider and, importantly, storing this material in a way that prevents dogs/foxes accessing it until collection

Do not allow dogs and foxes to access calving areas – tricky when you calve outside, but if you calve inside this might be practical with some electric fencing

Both of these might be made more practical if you can identify those cows that are infected through systematic blood testing. You only then need to focus your efforts on the infected ones.

Don't feed raw meat to dogs (that includes beef, venison and poultry, all of which can harbor the disease)

Preventing access of cows to infected dog/fox faeces

Once a cow ingests infected material from dog/fox faeces she becomes infected for life and when she becomes pregnant, she will most likely transmit that infection to her offspring.

Protect your feed stores and silage clamps from dog/fox faeces. These needn't be expensive and again, electric fencing can be used for this

Control the local fox population as much as possible!

Preventing contamination of pasture with dog/fox faeces. This is the trickiest one, obviously. There was much discussion at the meeting about the impact of local dog walkers, given that the farm has many footpaths through it, including the calving paddocks. The general consensus was that a combination of education through the use of signs about neospora, and the provision of dog poo bins to be emptied by the farm themselves – although strictly this should be the responsibility of the local authority it would probably be in his best interest to sort it out himself to make sure dog owners behave responsibly.

A few nuggets to chew over there! Next month we'll discuss how we go about preventing vertical transmission of the disease.

