Dalehead Veterinary Group Ltd

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RCVS ACCREDITED PRACTICE FARM ANIMAL PRACTICE

24 hour dedicated farm cover

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FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2024

BLUETONGUE

Bluetongue is a viral disease affecting ruminants (cattle, sheep, deer, goats, alpacas, etc.) spread by midges. It does not infect humans. The initial source of the infection in this country is from infected midges carrying the virus being blown across the English Channel/North Sea from Northern Europe where there are currently many cases of Bluetongue in farm animals. If bitten by infected midges a cow or sheep will become viraemic, may show clinical signs, and other midges biting viraemic animals will pick the virus up and become carriers and capable of spreading the disease. There is not thought to be direct animal to animal spread. Once infected a midge will remain infected for life (thought to be around 30 days). Although midges can be blown over 30 miles over the sea they are not thought to fly more than a few miles over land.

SYMPTOMS

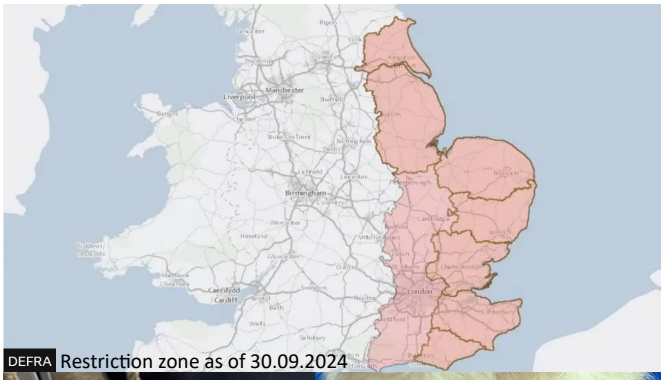
Clinical symptoms are more commonly seen in sheep than cows.

Sheep

- Ulcers/sores in mouth and nose
- Discharges from eyes, nose and drooling from mouth
- Swelling of lips, tongue, head, neck and coronary band (where skin of leg meets the horn of foot).

Other clinical signs include:

- Red skin as a result of blood collecting below surface
- Fever
- Lameness
- Breathing problems
- Abortions/foetal deformities
- Death.



DEFRA Restriction zone as of 30.09.2024

Cattle

- Lethargy
- Crusty erosions around nostrils and muzzle
- Redness of eyes, mouth, nose
- Reddening of skin above hoof
- Nasal discharge
- Redding and erosions on teat
- Fever
- Milk Drop
- Abortion/foetal deformities and stillbirths.

Most of the clinical signs in this country have been in sheep, and in many cases animals can recover with supportive treatment.

Bluetongue restriction zones have been set up in East Yorkshire extending down the East Coast as far as Sussex with restrictions placed on moving animals out of these zones into the rest of the country.

Three vaccines have been made available to use in this country under license but their use is intended initially for within the restriction zone. The vaccines do not claim to prevent disease but to reduce viraemia and severity of clinical signs.

Bluetongue is a notifiable disease so if you suspect disease either report your suspicions to APHA on 03000200301 or contact us to examine suspicious cases.

CALF PNEUMONIA PREVENTION AND VACCINATION OPTIONS IN SUCKLER HERDS

When we carry out antibiotic reviews for our suckler herds we find that on many farms the biggest use of antibiotics is for treating respiratory disease in calves. Most farms will treat a number of calves for pneumonia and deaths are not uncommon. As well as the immediate costs of a dead calf or antibiotic and anti-inflammatory treatments there are other less obvious costs. Disease in suckled or mated beef calves can reduce growth rates and reduce carcase quality. The peak risk period for respiratory disease in suckler calves is in the autumn period after housing.

While good ventilation in buildings, avoiding over-stocking and reducing stress by good calf management (e.g. avoid weaning/dehorning/castrating at the time of housing) are all important considerations, vaccination against respiratory pathogens is also an important part of any control plan for preventing calf pneumonia.

The aim of any vaccination programme is to provide protection against a disease before the period of anticipated risk. Suckler calves are best vaccinated before housing so that immunity has developed by the time they are brought in.

There are many vaccination options for calves—some of the factors which need consideration include:

- What does the vaccine protect against? Do I know what 'bugs' are on my farm or do I need broad cover?
- How is the vaccine administered? Intranasal, intramuscular or under the skin. Intranasal vaccines are typically a single shot vaccine and provide a quicker protection than injectable vaccines but may be more stressful for both the animal and the vaccinator to administer to lively suckler calves!
- How many doses of vaccine are required for full immunity, how quickly does the immunity develop and how long does the immunity last?

Vaccine	Protects against	Min age	No. injections	Route	Boosters
Bovilis Intranasal RSP	P13, RSV	7 Days	1 vacc	Intranasal	Protection lasts 12 weeks
Rispoval Intranasal	PI3, RSV	9 days	I vacc	Intranasal	Protection lasts 12 weeks
Rispoval 4	PI3, RSV, IBR, BVD	3 weeks old	2 vaccs 3-4 weeks apart	Intramuscular	Every 6 months
Bovipast RSP	PI3, RSV,Pasturellosis	2 weeks	2 vaccs 4 weeks apart	Under skin	2 weeks pre risk period
Bovalto Respi 3	PI3, RSV, BVD	2 weeks	2 vaccs 3 weeks apart	Under Skin	6 months duration of immunity
Bovalto Respi 4	PI3, RSV, BVD and Mannheimia Haemolytica	2 weeks	2 vaccs 3 weeks apart	Under Skin	6 months duration of immunity
Bovilis IBR Marker Live	IBR	2 weeks	1 vacc	Intranasal	Every 6 months
Bovilis IBR Marker Live	IBR	3 months old	1 vacc	Intramuscular	Every 6 months
Nasym	RSV	9 days	1ml intranasally followed by 2ml intramuscularly after 2 months.	Intranasal & Intramuscular	Every 6 months
	RSV	10 weeks	2 vacc 4 weeks apart	Intramuscular	Every 6 months

LAB UPDATE

We've continued to see high worm egg counts for lambs in the lab over the last month. The weather through September has been favorable for roundworms, weaned hill lambs coming down to in bye pastures have been susceptible to picking up burdens and we've also seen some dose failures.

We encourage you to keep checking any keeping lambs with FECs so that they not only go into winter fighting fit but to make sure doses are used well to prevent resistance. Always do a post drench test to make sure the dose has done its job. A reminder of the timing interval is:

- 1BZ, 3ML, 4AD, 5SI doses – check FECs 10-14days after dosing
- 2LV dose – check FECs 7 days after dosing

Fluke antibody testing in sentinel lambs is underway on some local farms. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for result updates.

OPA (Ovine Pulmonary Adenocarcinoma)

We have some interesting photos to share with you from a recent post-mortem done at the surgery. They are of a sheep that had progressive weight loss and pneumonia which didn't respond to treatment, OPA was diagnosed in the typically presented animal. Ovine pulmonary adenocarcinoma (OPA also known as Jaagsiekte – "driving sickness") is a contagious viral disease that leads to lung cancer in sheep. Affected animals most commonly show signs of disease at 3 to 4 years of age. Once clinical signs develop, affected sheep die within days to months. As well as mortality, production losses such as increased ewe barren rate and reduced lamb weight gains are likely because of poor ewe body condition.

Signs of disease

• Progressive weight loss (despite appearing to have normal appetite)

• Increased cases of pneumonia in adult animals that fail to respond to antibiotics

• Secondary bacterial infections and other concurrent infections of the lung are common

• Increased number of "sudden" deaths

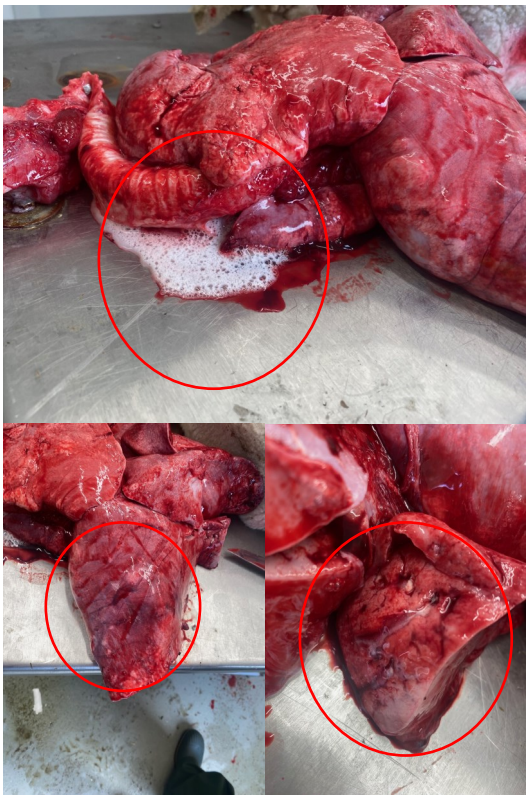
• Sheep seen lagging behind the flock when gathered or handled.

• Sheep struggling to breathe (flared nostrils and increased breathing rate) particularly after exercise

• In around two thirds of advanced cases fluid can be seen running out of the animal's nostrils when the head is lowered (wheel-barrow test)

• Cases peak in January and February due to affected sheep being unable to cope with adverse weather conditions and nutritional restrictions at that time of year.

Ultrasound examination of lungs can only detect tumours over 1 cm in size in the ventral areas of the lungs. Therefore, it is not possible to guarantee absence of OPA in individual animals. Both sides of the chest need to be scanned as tumours may be present in only one lung. The speed of progression is highly variable, but in some cases, small tumours can grow to a large size within 3 months. As a result, it is recommended that any sheep with suspicious lesions at scanning are quarantined and scanned again 2 months later.



Regular scanning at 6 to 12-month intervals with prompt culling of all positive sheep can be used as an OPA risk reduction strategy within a flock.

OPA spreads mainly through aerosol transfer - nose to nose contact. Offspring from positive sheep are likely to be infected.

The purchase of clinically healthy but infected replacement animals is the biggest risk factor for the introduction of OPA to a flock. Ideally, a closed flock should be maintained but this is not practical for most farms.

• There is no vaccine or effective treatment

• Flock management practices can help to reduce the spread of infection i.e. reducing close contact – lambing outside, using snackers instead of troughs monitoring and culling.

If you would like to know more about OPA or other iceberg diseases in sheep, please speak to one of our farm vets.

CONGRATULATIONS TO KAREN!

We are very pleased to announce that Karen Gardner has completed a Vet Tech qualification and apprenticeship, graduating from Harper Adams last week.

Karen has been working very hard over the last 18 months squeezing in 2 years of study to graduate with a distinction!

Well done Karen, we are so very proud of you!

ENZOOTIC ABORTION VACCINE

As has been widely publicised over the last couple of months there have been major supply issues with the 2 most commonly used Enzootic Abortion vaccines, *Enzovax and Cevac Chlamydia* although we were hoping that a batch of Cevac would become available in early October. Last week we found out that this batch is not going to materialise so the only Enzootic abortion vaccine available this is autumn is a killed vaccine *Inmeva* which requires 2 doses 3 weeks apart with the second dose being given at least 2 weeks prior to tupping.

However, being a killed vaccine means that if there isn't time to fit 2 vaccination in prior to tupping the vaccine can also be used after tupping, if this option is used we would recommend that the ewes are at least 30 days in lamb when receiving their first injection and completing their vaccination course before 90 days of pregnancy.

We currently have stocks of *Inmeva* in the practice, but please contact the surgery to let us know your likely requirements.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Cattle Worming at Housing - Tuesday 15th October @ 6.30pm

By kind permission of the Whalley family, please join us at:

Brunghill Farm, Back Lane, Newton in Bowland BB7 3EE.

Heather Whalley runs Brunghill Farm with her father Gary, they breed easy calving British Blue cattle. Heather also works for The River Ribble Trust, so as she shows us around the farm will chat about grant schemes. We will be discussing responsible cattle worming at housing and Genny Calvert from the Yorkshire Dales National Trust will touch on the importance of dung beetles.

The evening is kindly sponsored by Norbrook.

Supper provided, please RSVP and let us know of any dietary requirements. Telephone 01729 823538.

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