



Afon Vet Centre

Farm Practice Summer Newsletter 2013

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Practice News

Welcome to our new look practice newsletter! As June begins temperatures are finally starting to feel more like summer and grass is starting to grow at long last. Many will quite rightly be focusing on silage however in the following pages are some other topics to remember as the grazing season continues.

Most farmers have reported a good lambing and we have seen many fewer prolapses before lambing and had less caesareans than previous years. This is likely due to the fact the few ewes have been in top condition after the long winter and lambs have been smaller at birth.

Gareth has recently been on a course for elite bull fertility testers. This means

the practice is setting the standard in terms of excellent quality of bull fertility assessment to ensure we are giving you the best service possible. Remember to book your bull in for his annual MOT! For any queries about bull fertility or to book a test ring the Neath surgery on **01639 642739** and speak to one of the farm team.

The new farm animal facility is now up and running! See inside for pictures and details!

And finally we would like to say good luck and congratulations to Simon and Emma Mogford on their new arrival!

Update on Schmallenburg Virus

We did experience some cases of schmallenburg in the practice— there was variation in timing of cases and they appeared to be sporadic. Some of our farms did not experience any cases. However, if an animal hasn't been exposed to schmallenburg there is a high chance that this year if bitten by an infected midge they will get the disease. There is no way of predicting this and not all animals on farms that have had cases of schmallenburg will have antibodies. We are therefore

strongly advising vaccination. A vaccine will be available shortly (Bovillis SBV). It is an inactivated vaccine for sheep and cattle. We will be in contact as soon as the vaccine becomes available with more details of how to use it. It is important we protect our stock from the awful effects of this virus!

Remember, fly control will not prevent midges biting!



Afon Vets News now online!

NADIS webinars in conjunction with Afon Vets are now available monthly. These new videos give a summary of monthly parasite forecasts and important diseases. Simply type in the web address below to gain access to this new service and more practice news keeping you up to date with the latest animal health issues affecting your stock.



<http://webinars.nadis.org.uk/distributors/afonvetcentre.aspx>

Fluke Reminder

As many farms in the practice experienced, the mild winter of 2011 and wet 2012 made last year and the beginning of this year ideal for fluke with losses being seen in several flocks. After winter, fluke development resumes when average daily temperatures consistently reach approximately 10°C.

NADIS (National Disease Information Service - www.nadis.org.uk) release monthly parasite forecasts with the fluke forecast generally released after climatic data for may and June are known, however, in general it is advised that an adulticide such as trodax (nitroxylin) or flukiver (closantel) is used to kill adult fluke that have developed from overwintered larvae picked up by stock after turnout. This will prevent these adult fluke from laying eggs which will build up infection on the pasture as the year progresses.

We have also received a sampling protocol from Liverpool University for detecting triclabendazole resistance in sheep and cattle. Resistance to triclabendazole (Fasinex, Fasimec, Combinex) in fluke is the most common resistance emerging amongst the



Fluke can cause sudden death in sheep ingesting large numbers very quickly or chronic wasting and death if smaller numbers and ingested over a longer period.

flukicides and we have had suspicion of this on several farms last year. There is, however, also evidence that triclabendazole may not work in animals who have already suffered severe liver damage from fluke therefore it is well worth carrying out a resistance test before assuming you have a true resistance problem on the farm.

If you have any concerns regarding the effectiveness of triclabendazole on your farm don't hesitate to call the surgery and we can advise you on drench testing if necessary.

Summer Worming

Sheep

We have already had a few reports of scour in lambs last month which suggested the beginning of nematodirus infections. These worms affect spring lambs in their first season and cause a greenblack scour. Unlike other worms, resistance to white drenches is still very low in nematodirus populations and this would be our drench of choice however several other gut worms can be resistant to white drenches. Last summer, in conjunction with farming connect, we carried out faecal egg counting (FEC) in lambs for several farms through the season. We strongly urge you to consider this this year as new cases of worm resistance are being reported all the time. FEC sampling can be used to decide if you need to worm at all, thereby limiting the amount of wormer used and saving money. It can also be a tool in determining if a wormer is still working effectively on your farm.



Typical scour caused by Nematodirus

Cattle

Generally, single suckled calves in their first season will not require worming as worm egg intake from the pasture is low and the small numbers taken in will allow the calf to develop some immunity to the worms. We do, however, advise worming in late summer /early autumn for lungworm which can have serious effects near the end of the grazing season.

Give us a call to discuss which worming option suits your farm.

Remember whether worming sheep or cattle:

- 1) Dose for the heaviest in the group
- 2) Ensure guns are calibrated to deliver the correct dose.
- 3) Ensure you are drenching correctly(Nozzle over the back of the tongue)

Resistance to wormers is one of the biggest issues facing cattle and sheep production worldwide. It is everyone's responsibility to worm responsibly. We would urge you to view the SCOPs (sustainable control of parasites in sheep) website at, www.scops.org.uk. This website has detailed info on worming and guidelines to delay resistance problems for as long as possible.

New Farm Block Completed (at long last!!)



We are now able to hospitalise two calves at a time and have a separate operating area for ewe caesareans, operations on calves as well as post mortems. There is now easy access to it for trailers and trucks - a major problem we have had for several years at the surgery. Thanks to Dai Jenkins, Rick and Dan for their hard work on the build!



What Calving Season?

As many spring calving cows will now be going back to the bull, it is worth thinking about your calving pattern for the year and whether it could be tighter. While leaving the bull run with the herd for half or even all of the year may seem simpler it is definitely not the most economic practice unfortunately.

In an ideal world it is advised to bull cows for 9 weeks allowing 3 cycles. Fertile cows going to a fertile, healthy bull should all get in calf during this window, and if everything goes to plan 65% should

be in calf after the 1st cycle! Although to many this may seem unfeasible it is a target worth aiming for as it allows bunches of calves all of the same age to be reared together and weaned together which can allow for higher weaning weights and the "peas in a pod" factor at the calf sales. This system will also allow you to pick up on cows that have problems as these can be picked up at scanning after the bull is pulled out. Remember "1 calf per cow per year", every month a cow is empty over this will start costing you money! With prices for

cows very high at the moment we really cant afford to be carrying "passengers". Regardless of whether you would like to tighten things up a bit, had a disaster with a bull which destroyed your seasonal pattern or you calve all year round and always have, there are ways in which you can start to pull things closer together, it may take several seasons but the reduction in labour and increase in profits could speak for themselves. As always contact the farm team to discuss things further.

Scanning offer!!!

To help detect problem cows early and plan your calving we are offering discounted pregnancy diagnosis visits for 20 cows or more. These would likely take place mainly in late summer/early autumn, Don't worry if your calving pattern is spread. Call the surgery to book a visit, or for further advice.



Royal Welsh Week:
22nd—25th July

**Farming connect
sheep scab meeting:**

**End of June in
Felindre**

**Details TBC. (See Afon
vets website, NADIS
page or call surgery)**

Hope to see you there

Last Chance for Health Plan Funding

At the beginning of the year, requirements for herds on Johnes accreditation schemes changed to include the need for a disease control plan to be in place for Johnes disease. Spurred on by this requirement we have encouraged these farms to put in place a whole herd/flock plan incorporating Johnes disease and uptake has been very good.

Even if you are not on a scheme for Johnes, we would still encourage you to consider implementing a herd/flock plan. Farming connect have provided a great incentive by funding 80% of the cost of a plan. In the practice Gareth, Beki and Jon have been trained and registered as vet "mentors". Funding is acquired when an organization contracts registered vet "mentors" to carry out health planning visits. In our case we are contracted to Welsh Lamb and Beef

Promotions who in turn will invoice you allowing you to claim back 80% of the cost of the plan. In practice this means you will have a complete health plan, specific to your farm for £100 instead of £600 which includes an initial visit and a follow up visit 6 months later. The aim of the plan is to assess management practices in place and the productivity of the stock and implement changes to increase welfare and productivity on the farm. All we require is a couple of hours of your time, as many records of production as you can provide (the more the better) and a cup of tea!

If you are interested in taking advantage of 80% funding and implementing a health plan on your farm contact to Gareth, Beki or Jon at the surgery.

In Other News...

Silage analysis

With the extended winter and relatively dry april and may silage will likely be delayed by several weeks. In the first months of this year we have also seen most herds back in condition with older cows in poor condition suffering



problems in late pregnancy. As well as the obvious effect of the longer period of winter weather (thank goodness we're not in the north of the country), another explanation could be poor silage quality so as silaging looms again it is

well worth considering silage analysis later in the year to ensure nutrition of stock, especially spring calvers in calf, is optimal through the winter. Lets hope we are on track for better silage this year albeit later than we would like!

We appreciate any feedback you have on the new look newsletter, or any aspect of our service. Please don't hesitate to get in touch.

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**Good farming from all the team at
Afon Vets.**

