



Autumn Farm Animal Newsletter

The autumn is upon us: the harvest will be in, spring calvers well in-calf, and ewes and tups doing their business! As a practice we are settling in to all the changes that happened in the spring. Both the new Melton and Market Harborough practices have had an immediate uplift in business and the new staff are getting to know the ropes.

With Max's previous experience working with Mole Valley in Devon, we are venturing into the sales of PML products such as wormers, boluses and common vaccines. Please see enclosed leaflet for details.

TB

Our recently completed TB office at Melton is a hub of activity with all the new requirements necessary to fulfil the government TB contract. Plenty of audits - announced and unannounced - are part of the contract. Three different organisations are popping in to see that we are doing it all correctly and that there is a paper trail to document every step of the way. Please help us by phoning in your TB tests to the Melton Office and asking for Kirsty on **01664 567481**.



Dairy

Johne's Milk Testing: Often we get asked about the significance of a single positive milk result on an individual milk sample and what to do about the cow in question. In the August edition of the Premium Cattle Health Scheme newsletter they address this very concern: unless the cow has typical clinical signs their recommendation is to have a number of milk tests at monthly intervals. Then if



she remains positive, she is likely to be positive. If you want to establish her status immediately, take a blood sample at the same time. If the blood is negative then the positive milk result is a False Positive and she should **NOT** be culled. To be certain, two positive milks and a positive blood will establish a good degree of certainty that she is a Johne's cow. You can also back it up with a DNA sample of her faeces for Johne's but this is expensive.

Vital 90 Days Free Service

The manufacturers of Kexxtone, Elanco, have produced an audit check list for the transition period focussing on: Housing, Cow Factors, Nutrition and Water. Transition cow problems usually manifest themselves in the month immediately after calving so an assessment of this area is well worth the time. The Healthy Start Farm Audit is designed to assist farmers and their vets in assessing risks to transition cow health, to help determine whether a further ketosis monitoring programme is needed. The easy on-farm checklist can also be used to evaluate the herd



management system, and track changes to it. The Elanco territory manager is offering this service to us free of charge. The idea being that when we do a fertility visit she will accompany us and spend her time in the transition cows using the traffic light system and report back her findings when we have finished scanning. We can all then review what she has assessed in detail. If concerned about your fresh cows, or if this is something you would welcome, just give us a call at Melton!

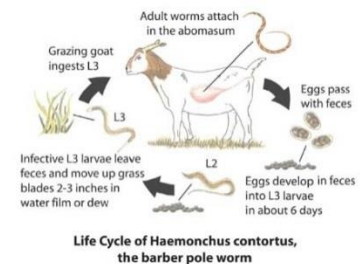
Haemonchosis – Emerging parasitic threat!

Haemonchosis is a major economic disease affecting sheep and goats caused by the blood-feeding, gastro-intestinal worm *Haemonchus contortus*. Traditionally restricted to the world's warmer regions, the parasite now poses a major future problem to the UK sheep industry. Having been present for many years in the south-east of England, the parasite range is increasing across the UK. At Farm Veterinary Solutions we have now had several confirmed cases throughout the East Midlands. Another species of the worm *Haemonchus placei* also primarily affects cattle in warmer climates. but this is not currently prevalent in the UK.



Parasite

The common name for *Haemonchus* is the barber's pole worm as both larvae and adults found within the abomasum have a characteristic spiral red gut from blood-feeding. The lifecycle is similar to the other gut worms of ruminants with ingestion of infective larvae from the pasture producing egg-laying adults, to repeat the typical 3 week cycle as shown in the diagram to the right.



Clinical Signs & Diagnosis



Disease is caused in the late summer and autumn by both larvae and adults sucking blood from the wall of the abomasum, so clinical signs are not typical of other gut worms. Loss of blood cells and protein leads to initial sub-clinical signs of poor reproductive performance and growth rates, ill-thrift, poor coat condition, lethargy and anaemia with pale membranes around the eyes. With heavier infections swelling of the head (bottle jaw oedema) can occur with collapse and sudden death especially in lambs. **Unless mixed worm infections are present diarrhoea is not normally seen!** These signs are therefore far more typical of liver fluke infection where the adult parasites suck blood from the liver and which is also increasing in this area. Development of immunity to *Haemonchus* worms is poor so the parasite will continue to affect ewes/rams as well as lambs, again similar to liver fluke.



This confusion with fasciolosis (liver fluke) means a diagnosis cannot be made on clinical signs alone! Post-mortem examination of any deaths from mid-summer onwards must therefore be carried out to identify if the parasite is present on farm. The typical hair-like worms can be identified on the surface of the abomasum but they are easily missed being only around 1cm in length.

Although faecal worm egg counts (FECs) are useful for monitoring overall levels of gut worm infestation, unfortunately the eggs cannot be easily distinguished from those worms more typical of parasitic gastro-enteritis.

Control

Before developing a control plan the parasite status of the farm must first be confirmed for both Haemonchus and liver fluke. As the disease affects all age groups of sheep, on affected farms, specific control measures should be developed for both ewes and lambs. The major classes of wormers (levamisole/benzimidazoles/ivermectins) have all historically been used to control burdens over the summer and autumn months alongside the other gut worms. However throughout the world high levels of resistance to all these classes are now documented, so major investments are being placed in development of alternative control methods such as vaccination. Some of our confirmed cases in the East Midlands reflect these high levels of resistance having been within 10-14 days of worming with various products. If Haemonchus cases are seen pre and post treatment, FECs are therefore advised for drench checking. Although SCOPs principles avoid pre-tupping broad spectrum ewe treatments, if the parasite is present on your farm, then targeted treatment using narrow spectrum products such as closantel may be required. This will prevent sub-clinical losses alongside those from liver fluke.



Whatever your farm's current disease status, buying in sheep presents a huge potential risk for introducing resistant strains of this worm alongside the other gut worms. We therefore recommend that all sheep flocks have an appropriate quarantine treatment plan for new/returning sheep incorporating the new class of wormer monepantel (Zolvix). ***We can now dispense small volumes for rams etc.*** Quarantine and parasite control plans are a major part of our Farm Veterinary Solutions flock health plans. So if you are concerned about this parasite or wormer resistance in general, please contact us to discuss future management.

Toxoplasmosis Testing

Toxoplasmosis is the main infectious cause of early embryo loss in sheep and a common cause of barrenness, abortion and weak lambs born alive.

Testing is available from 1st December until 1st March; we are offering a **Barren Ewe Check** (sponsored by MSD) which enables us to confirm if your flock has been exposed to toxoplasmosis for just the cost of the visit and taking the blood samples – **no laboratory fees!**

If your scanning or lambing rate is disappointing this year and you are not already vaccinating against Toxoplasma, then this is the chance to effectively rule out or confirm this disease in your flock.



Black Leg



Black leg is a highly fatal clostridial disease that we have recently seen a number of cases of. It frequently happens when areas in fields have been dug up or flooded. The farmer whose cattle were affected suspects that it was picked up from a boggy area close to a stream.

Cattle are infected by ingesting clostridial spores which then leave the gut and travel to wounds or bruised muscle. In this particular case the affected cattle were bulling heifers, which had areas of bruising over their backs where they had been mounting each other.

Most cases are found dead in the field as death occurs within 12-48 hours. Post-mortem findings are characterised by a swelling around one or more areas in a muscular area. The affected muscles are dark red to black (hence the name Black Leg) and dry and spongy; bubbles can also be seen. Samples of this muscle can be taken to confirm the presence of *Clostridia chauvoei*, the causative agent.

Treatment is often unsuccessful due to the rapid onset of disease but if caught early enough high doses of penicillin would be the treatment of choice. In our recent case this treatment was successful as they were caught early once the farmer had already lost one heifer.



Vaccination is the best form of prevention and also fencing off areas that have been dug up or the soil disturbed. 'Black Leg' vaccine is available for both cattle and sheep, and it also included in Clostridial vaccines such as Covexin 10.

Market Harborough



The Market Harborough branch is now open. We will be having an open day on **Saturday 14th November 11.30am - 3.30pm**. So please call in to meet the team and be in with the chance of winning a digital camera, and to collect your FREE can of Cyclo spray! The new branch offers a hassle free visit to the vets for small and large animal

client; benefits include great competitive rates, ample free parking, easy access and a friendly welcome. Large animal drug orders can be collected from the branch.

We would now like to introduce you to our new receptionist at Market Harborough, Sarah...

Where is home?

I live in Brixworth, on a farm with my fiancé Gordon and our teenage daughter Eleanor.



What animals do you have?

We have around thirty pedigree Charolais and a few commercial cattle. I also have a lurcher, terrier and German shepherd dog. My daughter and I have horses. I seem to spend a lot of my spare time with her competing at events and team chasing.

What competitions/ shows might we spot you at?

I show the cattle predominantly at local county shows such as Newark, Rutland and Blaston. I have a smashing commercial heifer entered at the English Winter Fair in November this year. My highlight to-date is winning male champion in the Charolais classes at The Royal Welsh Show in 2010.

Can you make a good brew for visiting farmers?

Yes, please call in at Market Harborough to find out.



We have another new introduction to make...Lucas Redondo Bolanios; here's a little bit more information about the newest member of the team.

Where are you from originally?

Madrid in Spain.

How long have you been qualified as a vet?

I qualified three years ago from Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

Before working at Farm Veterinary Solutions where have you worked?

I came to the UK two years ago, and since then have been working as an Official Veterinarian in abattoirs in Yorkshire.

What is your role at Farm Vets solutions and which areas are you covering?

I have joined the TB testing team, and most of my work is concentrated in Lincolnshire.

What do you enjoy most about TB testing?

I like the fact that I work every day on different farms and get to meet different people, which means I don't get bored.

What do you like about working at the practice?

Dealing with live animals.... :-)

What do you think of the English weather?

It makes me think about home everyday, and I wonder if the summer really exists in England.

What do you like to do in your spare time? Do you have any hobbies?

I play the guitar and like to socialise, drinking mainly beer and gin (*he will fit in well with the rest of the team!*)

Congratulations

Most of you may already know but Harriet Sluman recently became Harriet Robinson due to marrying Joe, a local dairy farmer. We wish them all the happiness for the future!



BRD – On-Farm Discussion

Thank you to all that came to our bovine respiratory diseases meeting, kindly held by Pete, Karen and William Walker at their farm in Sutton-on-Trent on Wednesday 30th September. It was a very informative meeting and we think everyone had a bit of a social sharing of ideas on how they all run their own farms and eating lots of yummy cake...thanks Karen!!

10 Year Anniversary

Farm Veterinary Solutions has been trading for 10 years now and we are indebted to you all for your support over this time. We have grown from a client base of 40 Uppingham farmers to 540 active clients and to celebrate the 10 year anniversary you were all invited to Mike's shed as Pete Woolston managed to get Mike's Red Poll on his spit. We all drank ample Grainstore beer and challenged each other on the rodeo bull! So we hope all of you that came enjoyed yourselves.



Best wishes for the winter, the Farm Veterinary Solutions Team!



The Vets



Andrew Moss



Harriet Robinson



Henry Dove



Katharine Selby



Matt Flavell



Mike Thorne



Rachel Heygate



Max Hardy

The TB Team/Support Staff



Alvaro Miguez-Rico



William Colmenares



Lucas Redondo Bolaños



Rowena Smith



Kirsty Black



Kirstie Griffiths