Farm Veterinary Solutions

Early Spring 2017 Newsletter

Some may have wondered where Mike has been over the summer. Having grown up in Zimbabwe he spent most of his time in the African bush and connected up with an organisation called The Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust who, amongst many other projects, manage rhino operations. Rhino operations - You may well ask? Well, it is vaguely similar to working with our suckler herds. The wild rhino calves need to be ear notched (aka tagging) and the older ones dehorned! The slight difference is there are no handling facilities for the rhino and they are notorious for charging before giving a second thought - during the summer both a vet and a ranger were hospitalised after being smashed. It is quite an operation with a spotter aircraft, a helicopter, vehicles and ground crew with danger at every turn: the helicopter is flying low amongst the trees, the drugs are very potent (a third of a ml is enough to knock down a rhino!) and the rhino are very aggressive and belligerent!

Belvoir Vale Bovine TB Group

As a recent member of the steering group, Max attended a farmer meeting kindly held at Friars Well Estate, Wartnaby in January. With the overall goals of helping cattle farmers in the Vale of Belvoir understand bTB disease, regulations and prevention through quarterly meetings. The session was well attended with thanks to the 3 speakers from APHA; Guayente Reyes (Local veterinary officer), Mala Hovi (Policy advisor) and Shelley Rhodes (Testing consultant). They detailed the current 'Edge Area' situation and future policies, alongside explaining the differences and limitations of skin and gamma interferon testing. Farmer questions and discussion then followed, which have already generated some ideas for future sessions.

The next meeting is due to be held at 10am on the 27th of April at Wartnaby. The focus of this meeting is on practical farm biosecurity. If you are interested in attending or for further information please contact Melton NFU Branch.

XL Vets Farm

SHEEP - Orf

Orf - a highly contagious disease of sheep and goats. It is a virus that invades mildly damaged areas of skin causing painful, scabby lesions.

- Affects the mouth, nostrils, lips, gums, teats and heads
- Virus can survive for years in cool, dry places
- Spread by carrier sheep, shared handling/shearing equipment

Affects lambs, ewes and rams and is spread by direct contact, aerosols or environment. Spread of the disease is rapid and can affect up to 100% of the flock. Deaths are rare but lambs can die from oral lesions and ewes from mastitis.

Growth rates in infected lambs are significantly lower that of uninfected, at any ongoing stage of life this can be up to 10% reduced, therefore having a huge economic impact.

If your flock is 'clean' then preventing it entering is the key:

1. Source replacements from clean flocks
2. Quarantine all replacements
3. Cleanse and disinfect shared equipment before and after use
4. Pasture management

Flocks with a history of Orf:

1. Thorough disinfection of lambing pens/equipment pre lambing
2. Isolate any newly infected ewes/lambs
3. Use Scabivax Forte

Treatment

- There is no specific treatment as it is a virus, antibiotic spray and injections can be used to control secondary bacterial infections. NSAIDs (metacam) for pain relief.

Prevention

- Scabivax Forte vaccination reduces clinical signs and lesions
- Only to be used on farms with previous history
- 12 months immunity

Vaccine protocols vary by farm depending on prevalence so please speak to us for advice on the best use of this vaccine to control Orf in your flock.

Treatment of common peri-parturient ewe disease

Some of you will be well underway with lambing while others have a couple of months before starting. However it is important to be aware of potential problems which can be encountered in the run up to lambing so that prompt identification and appropriate treatment can be administered.

The most common problems we see 4-6 weeks prior to lambing are:

- Twin lamb disease
- Low calcium and/or Magnesium
- Abortions
- Prolapses

Twin lamb disease

Twin lamb disease occurs during the last few weeks of pregnancy when the ewe requires more energy than she is receiving. The disease can potentially be fatal if not treated promptly. Factors which increase the likelihood include:

- Ewes carrying multiple lambs
- Not enough feeding space
- Sudden change of feed
- Stress (vaccinations, moving)
- Over conditioned ewes in late pregnancy which can lead to a reduced appetite.

Signs to look out for:

- Separation from the flock and look depressed
- Not eating
- Appear blind
- Salivating and twitching which can progress to fitting

Treatment:

- Ewe-Go - Unlike many of the traditional products for twin lamb on the market, it not only includes propylene glycol as an energy source, but an extra readily available energy source in glycerol, together with calcium. Providing both energy and calcium giving the ewe the best chance of recovery.
- Injecting with an anti-inflammatory (Flunixin or Metacam)
- Injecting glucose into the vein or into the abdomen on the right hand side behind the ribs
- Pen separately to monitor and feed palatable hay

Low calcium

Twin lamb disease can present very similarly to ewes suffering from low calcium. This again can be seen before lambing. It progresses from incoordination to recumbancy and finally coma. Some animals may become bloated on the left hand side. Animals will respond rapidly from an injection of calcium or a dose of Ewe-Go drench. Without blood testing it is difficult to differentiate between low calcium and twin lamb disease, therefore we recommend treating for both.

Low magnesium

Occurs far less frequently than low calcium. Very quick onset and sudden death can occur. Related to insufficient magnesium intake so the flock nutrition will need to be addressed. Treatment is injectable magnesium under the skin.

Abortion
The main causes of abortion are:

- Toxoplasmosis
- Enzootic abortion
- Campylobacter
- Salmonella
- Borders disease

It would be possible to write a whole article on each of these individual diseases but it is important to first identify the cause. The sooner the problem is identified the earlier control measures can be implemented. Ensure the ewe/ all infected material is isolated and the area thoroughly disinfected.

In order to gain accurate and reliable test results we ask for samples of abortive material to be submitted as fresh as possible. Please collect the aborted foetus with the placenta and cotyledons, double bag and drop into the practice so we can obtain the appropriate samples to send for further testing.

There is a potential infection risk to humans when handling abortion material so good personal hygiene is paramount. Pregnant women should avoid handling potentially infected material.

Vaginal prolapses
Factors which increase the risk of a vaginal prolapse:

- Low calcium
- Large litter size
- Ewes with a body condition score of less than 2 or greater than 4
- Short tail docking
- Previous problems at lambing

Prolapses require prompt correction with a harness or spoon. Such devices are designed for the ewe to be able to still lamb but should be monitored closely in case assistance is required. Some cases which cannot be corrected with the above aids may require veterinary intervention and a vaginal stich applied.

Lambing is a very busy time but accurate records of problems encountered are vital so we can help assess the potential for future issues and ensure that preventative programs are in place to maximize the overall productivity of your flock. We will soon be running our annual lambing meetings which are designed to highlight key diseases and treatments as well as teaching new practical techniques. If you have any further questions or concerns about clinical signs you are observing in your flock then please do not hesitate to contact the practice.

Management of the "Down" Cow

There are many initial causes that will make a cow go down, some of which are featured in the table. No matter what the initial cause, after **as little as 6 hours** down on a hard surface, pressure on the blood supply with muscle and nerve damage in the lower limb the cow is laying on can become the main reason the cow cannot get up, despite correction of the initial deficiency. We call this "downer cow syndrome". These are the frustrating cases that can look bright, often eat and drink well but will just not get up. You must therefore act quickly on down cows to try and prevent this syndrome setting in, and if it has, good management and dedicated nursing of the cow becomes vital.

Common Causes of a "Down" Cow
• Hypocalcaemia (Milk Fever)
• Hypomagnasaemia (Grass Staggers)
• Hypophosphataemia (Low Phosphorous)
• Toxic (E. Coli) Mastitis
• Toxic Metritis
• Nerve damage/paralysis
• Fractures/dislocations

Treating the underlying cause

The first thing to do is treat the initial cause, so for example in milk fever, give them calcium. If you are unsure as to what the initial cause is then it's best to get a vet examination +/- bloods. Don't forget there may be more than one issue occurring together. Also remember that this needs to happen ideally within the first 24 hours.

Get the cow to a suitable area

If not up within the hour move to a clean, straw area as the deeper the bedding, the less pressure it puts on the muscles/nerves. The bed needs to provide good purchase if they try to stand so if applying new straw to concrete throw some sand down first. Cleanliness is important to reduce the risk of secondary mastitis which is a common reason for loss of these cows.

Anti-Inflammatory drugs

Reducing pain and inflammation reduces the effects of downer cow syndrome so should be a standard treatment for all cases. Meloxicam (Metacam) can be given every other day, but other NSAIDS such as daily Flunixin or Kelaprofen (short meat withdrawal) are also suitable.

Provide ad lib feed and water

Again it may sound obvious, but feed and water needs to be available ALL the time. Bear in mind some cows drink well over 100L of water a day. Get some good quality forage in front of them as well. Try to stop competition for this from other cattle and if they are crawling around keep checking they are in reach, and if not move it to them. Propylene glycol drenching is also advised as an

energy source.

Turn at least every 3 hours

Taking the pressure of the hind limb that is trapped between the cow and the floor regularly, helps to prevent downer cow syndrome. Alternating which one takes the weight is the best way to do this. It should only take a couple of people a minute or two to roll them over and can make a big difference.

Physiotherapy

After turning a cow try to stimulate blood returning the muscles vigorously massaging the leg that has been underneath and flexing and extending the joints. Similarly to how you would do so yourself if you were suffering from a bad case of pins and needles.

Lifting

Lifting the cow twice a day can help to facilitate the previous points (rebedding, physiotherapy etc) and again helps by giving all the legs a break from having over half a tonne of cow lying on them. There are many different options and many farmers have their preferred method. This can go wrong so it's important to have someone around who's experienced with your chosen method.

Milking

Downer cows still need milking twice a day as well to help reduce the extra weight & discomfort from the udder and reduce the risk of secondary mastitis

Prognosis

Although some cows can be down for 14 days before rising again, it does not mean all down cows should be left this long. If the cow cannot be adequately cared for because of lack of labour or money, or they cannot be moved from concrete, they should be euthanased rather than left to deteriorate with inadequate nursing. There are also blood tests available that if taken around 24 hours after going down can assess the extent of muscle damage that has occurred. These "downer cow profiles" therefore not only help diagnose the initial cause but can try and predict the likelihood of them getting up again.

FVS Calving/Lambing Products 2017

For the upcoming season we will be stocking the following selected range of products in branch but if there is anything else you require please give us a call.

Sundries	Uses	Dose	Pack size	Price (Ex VAT)
Calciject 40 No.2	Hypocalcaemia in cattle by s/c or slow i/v injection	1 bottle	400ml 12 pack	£2.80 £33.60
Calciject 40CM No.5	Hypocalc/Magnesaemia in cattle by s/c or slow i/v injection	1 bottle	400ml 12 pack	£3.10 £37.20
Calciject 20CMD No.6	Hypocalc/Mag/Glycaemia in sheep by s/c injection	50-80ml	400ml 12 pack	£3.30 £39.60
Magniject No.9	Hypomagnesaemia in cattle and sheep by s/c injection	Cow 1 bottle Ewe 50-80ml	400ml 12 pack	£3.10 £37.20
Calcitrace D3 bolus 204g	Slow release formula for prevention of milk fever at calving or following treatment with injectable calcium.	1 bolus every 24-48hrs	4 pack 12 pack	£22 £60
Ewe-Go (XLVets)	Energy & Calcium supplement for treatment of pregnancy toxaemia	100ml/ewe	1 Litre	£10
Ketosaid 99.6% Oral drench	Treatment of ketosis (acetonaemia) in cattle and sheep, give twice daily	Cow 200ml Ewe 100ml	1 Litre 5 Litre	£10 £38
Vetsolube Lambing gel	Hygienic obstetric lube containing antiseptic chlorrhexidine		500ml	£3
Immucol Lamb colostrum	Colostrum supplementation for lambs	25g per dose	500g = 20 doses	£30
Immucol Calf colostrum	Colostrum supplementation for calves	200g per dose	200g	£18
Platinum calf colostrum	Complete colostrum replacer for calves with high levels of immunoglobulins	700g per dose	700g	£34
Perfect Udder colostrum bags	50x 4L freezer bags for colostrum storage		50 bags	£84
*Cosecure cattle bolus	Prevents copper/selenium/cobalt deficiency in cattle for up to 6 months	>100kg - 2 boluses	20 pack	£70
*Coselcure cattle bolus with Iodine	Prevents copper/selenium/cobalt and Iodine deficiency in breeding cattle for up to 6 months	>100kg - 2 boluses	20 pack	£76
*Oligovet super grazing bolus (New - XLvets)	Single bolus supplementation of copper, iodine, selenium, cobalt and zinc for 8 months in cattle >400kg	1 bolus/ animal >400kg	Individual	£7.95

*Please allow up to 7 working days for delivery on cattle or sheep boluses.

Vaccines	Uses	Dose	Size	Price
Blackleg vaccine	Blackleg in sheep and cattle, primary course 2 doses 4 weeks apart	2ml s/c	50ml	£7.90
Covexin 10	10x Common clostridial strains of sheep and cattle, 2 doses 4 weeks apart	Cattle 2ml Sheep 1ml s/c	50ml 100ml	£17 £29
Rotavec Corona	Cattle 12-3 wks pre-calving to boost colostral antibody against calf scour	2ml i/m	10ml 40ml	£49 £162

Late Winter/Spring Parasite Control

Cattle

With the majority of cattle receiving a housing dose of Ivermectin hopefully they will have come through the winter in good body condition with minimal worm and mite burdens. However with thick winter coats and higher stocking densities we commonly see lice infestations leading to hair loss, itching and reduced growth rates, particularly in youngstock. If signs are present check your cattle for visible lice under the hair and if found apply spot-on treatment.

With its devastating effects on body condition and colostrum production if you are unsure of your farms liver fluke status or are concerned about cow condition then it is a good time of year to check you are clear through sampling bulk milk or faeces from beef animals. Also if possible monitor your abattoir feedback from any finished/cull animals. If you have a known liver fluke history and haven't treated your housed cattle then it is an ideal time to use the products targeting late immature and adult stages (Closantel/Clorsulon/Oxyclozanide). For dairy cows due to the limited licensed products available, make sure cows are treated appropriately during the dry period. During 2016 we have diagnosed rumen fluke on faecal samples from several farms. Whilst the adults are generally non-pathogenic they are the only stage we can effectively treat to reduce future pasture burdens. As high numbers of the immature stages may cause disease, if confirmed on farm, it is recommended to treat with Oxyclozanide during the housing period.

Sheep

Housing ewes for lambing commonly leads to outbreaks of ecto-parasite disease. If ewes are itchy or losing wool please give us a call first for advice on getting a correct diagnosis (lice vs scab mites), through skin scrapes pre-treatment. If inappropriately used on scab the fly/lice pour-ons only delay problems for a short period, wasting both time and money on repeat treatments. Conversely Moxidectin or Doramectin injectables used to treat scab only have a limited effect on lice burdens so it is far more cost effective to get the correct diagnosis initially.

If the farm fluke status is unsure or ewes are in poor body condition it is well worth investigating faecal samples for copro-antigen or fluke eggs. For farms with confirmed liver fluke that use triclabendazole products in the autumn then an alternative treatment with one of the products targeting the later stages of the parasite is advised at this time of year. Closantel containing products are particularly useful as it will also treat the Haemonchus contortus worms that we are seeing more commonly in the area. Remember as a blood sucking worm the signs of haemonchus include anaemia, bottle jaw oedema and death and are virtually identical to those of chronic liver fluke so please bring in any ewes for post-mortem if losses occur.

Whether to worm ewes at lambing is always a difficult question in relation to SCOPS principles. The reduced egg output from ewes given a long acting product pre-lambing reduces pasture burdens and therefore wormer usage in the lamb crop, however blanket

use of any wormer is known to lead to resistance. We therefore advise if you are using long acting injectables to leave the singles/10% of ewes as a refugia population. Alternatively farms may opt to only treat any poor body condition or dirty ewes at lambing and then monitor the lamb groups FEC closely alongside rotational grazing.

Please see overleaf for our Spring offers available until April 2017 or call us at the Melton branch on 01664 567481 for further information.

Anti-Parasitic	Details/Uses	Withdrawal	Dose	Pack Size	Price (Excl. Vat)
Enovex pour-on	**Ivermectin** pour on for control of adult and inhibited larval stage roundworms, mange mites and sucking lice in cattle	Cattle Meat 28days Milk >60days	1ml/10kg pour on	2.5Litre	£26
Closamectin pour-on	**Ivermectin + Closantel** pour-on for control of adult and inhibited larval stage roundworms, mange mites and lice, late immature and adult liver fluke in cattle	Cattle Meat 28days Milk Do not use (>150 days)	1ml/10kg pour on	2.5Litre 4Litre 6Litre +Gun	£204 £340(-£40 Cashback) £495(-£60 Cashback)
Closamectin injection for cattle and sheep	**Ivermectin + Closantel** injection for control of roundworms, mange mites and lice, late immature and adult liver fluke in cattle and sheep. Ideal post-lambing treatment for ewes.	Cattle Meat 49days Milk Do not use Sheep Meat 28days	1ml/25kg s/c	250ml 4x250ml +Gun	£49 £177
Dectomax Pour-on For cattle	**Doramectin** pour -on for control of roundworms, mange mites and lice in cattle for up to 5 weeks	Cattle Meat 35days Milk do not use	1ml/10kg pour on	1L 2.5L 5L	£70 £108 £185
Dectomax Injection for Cattle and sheep	**Doramectin** injection for control of roundworms, mange mites and lice, in cattle and sheep	Cattle meat 70days Sheep meat 70days	1ml/50kg cattle, 1ml/ 33kg sheep	50ml 250ml 500ml	£19 £85 £158
Autoworm First Grazer bolus	**Oxfendazole** 7x pulse release bolus for 21 week control of round, lung and tapeworm in first season grazing cattle	Meat 8 months Milk 8 months	1 bolus for 100-400kg	Individual Pack 24	£16.60/bolus
Autoworm Finisher bolus	**Oxfendazole** 5x pulse release bolus for 15 week control of round, lung and tapeworm in first season grazing cattle	Meat 6 months Milk 6 months	1 bolus for 100-400kg	Individual Pack 24	£14.90/bolus
Noromectin 0.08% drench for sheep	**Ivermectin** drench for control of adult and inhibited larval roundworms in sheep	Sheep Meat 14days	2.5ml per 10kg	2.5Litre 5Litre 2x 5Litre	£25 £44 £76
Levafas Diamond	**Levamisole & Oxyclozanide** drench for control of roundworms and adult liver fluke in sheep & cattle	Cattle Meat 5days Sheep Meat 5days	Sheep fluke 3ml/10kg	2.5Litre 4Litre	£62 £81
Triclafas 5%	**Triclabendazole** drench for control of early immature to adult liver fluke in sheep that have outwintered	Sheep Meat 56days	1ml per 5kg	2.5Litre 5Litre	£35 £64
Cydectin 2% LA injection for sheep	**Moxidectin** injection for long acting control of roundworms and sheep scab mites. Used to prevent peri-parturient rise in lambing ewes.	Sheep Meat 104 days	0.5ml/10kg s/c at ear base	50ml 200ml 500ml	£17 £64 £135
Solantel (New Product)	**Closantel** drench for control of late immature and adult liver fluke and Haemonchus (barbers pole worm) in sheep (Flukiver alternative)	Sheep Meat 42days	1ml/5kg	1Litre 2.5Litre 5Litre	£34 £64 £113