



In This Issue

- Practice News
- Free Johne's Testing
- TB Testing
- Pneumonia Vaccination
- Trace element deficiencies in sheep
- Fluke Meeting

Practice News

The last few weeks have seen a sudden seasonal rise in the number of cases of grass staggers seen. Affected cows are typically suckling calves and are grazing good pasture. Often cases are associated with a stressful event such as transport or more commonly a cow bullying within the group. Most farms have some form of supplementary magnesium available either in the form of licks or cobs. The use of straw in ring feeders does not add magnesium to the cow but can effectively slow the gut down meaning that cows get more benefit from the nutrients available. Where cases do occur however rapid intervention with warm Calcium given intravenously alongside subcut Magnesium will help most cows if they are seen quickly.

Parasitism in the form of both acute lungworm and, more unusually for cattle, acute liver fluke have been diagnosed repeatedly. It would appear that in contrast to last year we are going to see significant fluke problems where suitable dosing is not carried out. At this time of year it is important to use a flukicide that deals with not only adult fluke but early immature fluke also.

On the sheep front we have been flat out fertility testing tups. This year to date 13% of tups have failed to meet the required standards, which is invaluable information when trying to achieve a compact and healthy lambing in 2020.

So far this year there has been no disruption to supply of abortion vaccinations and most have been well organised. We now anticipate that stocks of enzootic abortion vaccination will be tight, if you still need to order, please let us know as soon as you can to ensure you get what you need.

Free Johne's Disease Testing and Health Planning - Volunteers Needed!

This autumn we are looking for a small number of herds to get involved in a Johne's disease project. The ideal herds are those that are currently not carrying out any regular testing but are likely to have some level of Johne's disease in the herd.

Participant herds will gain from free testing of a limited number of animals and veterinary health planning time. If you are interested in getting involved, please speak to us at the practice.

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TB Testing

We have a number of upcoming TB tests where we are happy to use the handling for other routine management tasks such as scanning and Johne's sampling. As we approach the busy season for this work please give us as much notice as possible where we are likely to need 2 vets for a job.

Pneumonia Vaccination

This is well underway on lots of farms already which means that immunity will have kicked in by the time cattle face a challenge. Delaying vaccination until a late housing can mean that calves face a challenge before the vaccine has had a chance to work. Most farms now use single handling regimes and if this can be done pre-weaning it further reduces the stress later in the year.

Correcting Trace Element Deficiencies in Ewes

In the run up to tupping it is essential to think about correcting any trace element deficiencies that might exist on farm, in order to maximize fertility and scanning %.

Many farms have historical suspicions about what trace elements they are deficient in, but it is useful to keep tabs on what is required on a regular basis. Blood sampling a small batch of ewes is quick and cheap and will ensure you're using what you need.

Where supplementation is required, bolusing remains the most cost-effective method of sustained supplementation. Beware not all boluses are created equal, as a rough rule of thumb you get what you pay for! We generally recommended the TraceSure or Vetalis range and can offer competitive prices on all boluses. Please contact the surgery if you wish to discuss your requirements.

Flock Health Club - Fluke Meeting

On 15th of October Thrums Flock Health Club will be meeting to discuss liver fluke effects, testing and treatments. If you are interested in the meeting and joining the club, please contact Ed at the practice to discuss all the benefits the club entails.