



In This Issue

- Practice News
- Coccidiosis in calves
- Foot Trimming
- Synchronised breeding
- Clostridial Disease and Pneumonia in Lambs
- Flock Health Club - Improving Sheep Fertility

Practice News

April has seen the usual problems with calf scour and joint ill with possibly a few more issues than normal. The lack of grass has meant many cattle have remained housed and with bedding scarce it has been difficult to keep stock as clean as normal. On several farms where navel and joint ill issues have been investigated it appears that poor colostral transfer has been the underlying issue.

Coccidiosis in calves

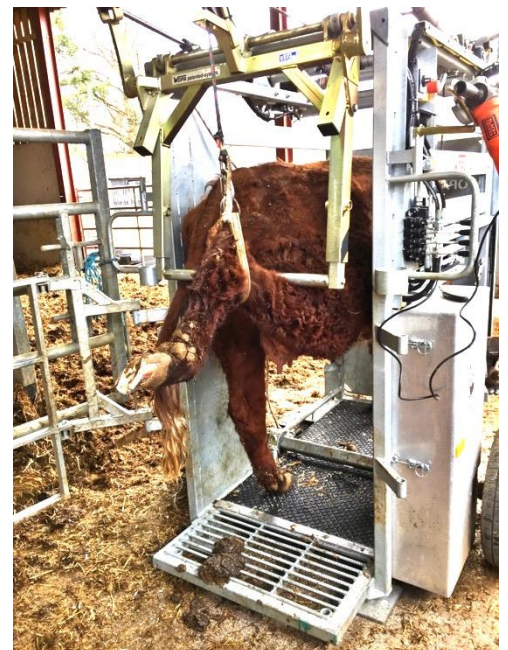
In calves at grass coccidiosis has already been seen on a few farms and we expect to see a lot more in the next few weeks. Acutely affected calves sometimes have an explosive bloody diarrhoea but a lack of growth, pasty scour is a more common manifestation and is easily overlooked. These calves often however end up as poor doers.

Prevention is preferable and there are a number of preparations now available for this. Ideally calves should be treated in batches after they have been exposed but before they are clinically affected. Normally this is around 4-6 weeks of age.

Foot Trimming

With the grass finally growing we will all be looking forward to cows going out to grass! Before cows head out, this is the ideal opportunity to tidy up any overgrown hooves or deal with lame cows to give them the best chance of taking the bull early.

Our mobile hydraulic WOPA foot trimming crush has been in action for over a year now and has proved very popular with many herds. We are competitively priced and can usually come out with a day or two's notice. Please give us a shout if you are in need of a bovine pedicure!



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Synchronised Breeding

May and June traditionally sees the peak of pre-programmed Artificial Insemination. There are numerous advantages for those that can face the additional handling of cattle including tighter calving pattern, potential savings on bull costs, choice of bulls/breeds for replacements etc.

The modern drug protocols seem to give more consistent results but good forward planning and a decent handling system are pre-requisites. Currently we have a pharmaceutical company interested in collecting data from herds that have not previously used A.I. so there will be some free product available for a limited number of farms wishing to participate. If you are interested please contact the surgery in the first instance.

Clostridial Disease and Pneumonia in Lambs

In early summer we often deal with outbreaks of “sudden death” in growing lambs, commonly the cause is revealed to be a clostridial disease such as Pulpy Kidney or pasteurella type pneumonia.

Protection afforded to lambs by the ewes colostrum can start to wane from as early as 3 weeks of age. Lambs require two doses of a vaccine such as Ovivac/Heptavac P+ to be fully protected.

Please ensure your protocol is robust and if you need any advice please let us know. After such a protracted winter and spring can you afford to lose lambs to preventable diseases?



Flock Health Club - Improving Sheep Fertility

Later this month Thrums Flock Health Club will meet to discuss ways of maximizing and manipulating sheep fertility.

The club allows members access to these meetings, health planning, disease warnings, health bulletins and discounts to many medicines and services.

Please let us know if you would like to know more about the club or if you'd like to sign up!