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Practice News

As we inch through winter it feels as if there must be a sting in the tail to come but calving is well underway on many farms. Along with the usual number of caesareans and prolapses there appears to be a near epidemic of twins on some farms. The last time we saw this it translated back to a particularly noticeable spurt in grass growth the previous bulling season and seemed to come to a halt almost everywhere at the same time a few weeks later.

There continues to be problems getting hold of certain medicines. Currently we are struggling to purchase local anaesthetic and Vitesel is also now in short supply. We have enough anaesthetic for emergencies such as C-sections for the next few months and hope to be able to import an alternative.

Courses

We hope to be running a calving course later this month. It will cover the normal calving process, advice on how to deal with the most common problems seen and some hints and tips on how to avoid the many pitfalls that can befall us all. The course will last a day and will include lunch. Date is yet to be confirmed but if you are interested please contact the surgery in the first instance.

New Cattle Fertility Bolus

Vetalis have launched a new bolus for cattle, specifically with fertility in mind. With a shorter duration than most boluses it is aimed more at improving cow fertility in particular situations such as A.I. programmes and embryo transfer. Please contact the surgery for further details.

Johnes Actiphage Testing

We are looking for a number of herds that carry out routine Johnes testing to participate in a long-term trial. The idea would be to test heifers as they enter the herd using the new test and follow them through for a number of years. The Actiphage testing would be available at a reduced price. If you are interested please contact Graeme at the surgery in the first instance.

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How was your sheep scanning?

It appears that most flocks sheep scanning is back a few % this year. Whilst some have bucked the trend and improved a little on last year, there have also been one or two with notable very disappointing results.

If barren rate has crept above 5% or you have seen a drop of over 10% in total lamb numbers then it is absolutely worth investigating. These cases are often multi-factorial, but already this year we have seen Toxoplasma, Borders disease, sub-fertile rams, trace element deficiencies and poor body condition at tugging time responsible for disappointment.

Almost all of the causes we see for disappointment are preventable the following year, but only if we identify the problem now. If you have concerns about how your flock have scanned please contact the surgery to discuss the best next steps to take.

Avoiding Problems at Lambing Time - Metabolic Profiling Sheep

Ensuring adequate nutrition to pregnant ewes in the run up to lambing time is critical to avoiding an endless list of problems such as watery mouth, joint-ill, hypothermia, prolapse, twin lamb disease and mastitis.

The only way to know exactly how ewes are responding to their diet is to perform a "Metabolic Profile" which looks at the energy and protein levels in the sheep's blood. By running the test this allows you to make any necessary last-minute adjustments to the diet that may be required. It is a simple test that can save multiple lives. This year we are able to run all the tests in-house which means we can get same day results, and cheaper too!



Ideally 6 twin/triplet bearing ewes from each separately managed group should be sampled 2-4 weeks pre-lambing. Please contact the surgery to arrange this work.