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## Practice News

April has seen the usual calf scours with *Cryptosporidium* again topping the table for the most frequently confirmed. The use of Parafor instead of Halocur has produced improved results on some farms.

We continue to Caesar more cows than normal with most cattle coming through the winter in good enough order. This combined with the early grass should help the forthcoming breeding season for spring calving herds.

Most flocks have reported a successful lambing, with lambing percentages up on previous years. However, many flocks have reported mastitis being an issue this year. The cold spells we have had are likely responsible causing both damage to the ewe's udders and a drop in milk yield as grass growth slows, resulting in more frequent feeding by lambs.

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## Coccidiosis

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. For every clinically affected calf within a group there will be a number of subclinically affected ones

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## Free Ewe Abortion Testing

Next month we will be offering free abortion blood testing for any ewes that suffered an abortion this lambing season. The drop-in clinic will run in Kirriemuir on **3<sup>rd</sup> June from 11am-1pm**. Please phone the practice for more info or to give us the heads up you're coming. Testing for Enzootic Abortion will be done entirely free of charge, but we'd be happy to sample for anything else (such as trace elements) you want too!

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## Pre-Breeding Checks

Getting the cows in calf successfully is the foundation for any good performance. For many farms it is now routine to MOT the bull before breeding. Such checks can help identify a number of problems before they arise and prevent the disappointment that comes with a poor scanning result. In almost all the herds where we have investigated poor fertility the under-performance of the bull has played a significant part.

That's not to say we should forget the cow though! Individual factors affecting the cows can also add up and contribute to poorer results so gathering together the cows that have had twins, a bad calving, retained cleansing, Caesar etc and having them checked, and if necessary washed out, can help these individuals to conceive.

## Protect Your Lambs Against Pneumonia

With wide fluctuations in temperatures we have already post-mortemed a number of lambs that have died from pneumonia. This disease is very preventable provided lambs are correctly vaccinated with an appropriate course of Ovivac P+ or Heptavac P+.

Lambs can be vaccinated from three weeks of age and need two doses separated by 4-6 weeks to be fully protected. To ensure maximum vaccine efficacy it is important to store the product appropriately and ensure the vaccine is correctly administered - last year we dealt with several cases where this had not been so. It is also important to ensure lambs are in good health and not suffering from other conditions such as trace element deficiencies or Orf, to ensure maximum vaccine uptake.

