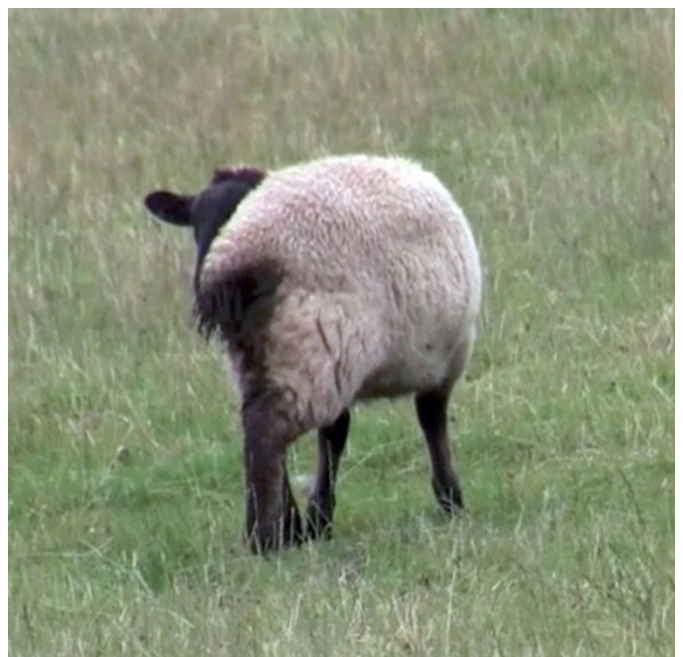




## **Farm Newsletter June 2023**

### **Watch out for blowfly in sheep**

Due to recent weather the risk of blowfly strike has significantly increased in the past few weeks. Flies will find dirty places to lay their eggs, commonly build-up of faeces around the tail as well as foot rot lesions. The eggs then hatch into maggots which can quickly start to damage the tissue of the animal. This can cause significant production losses as well as compromising welfare. The signs to look out for are nibbling or scratching at the tail head, general irritation and discoloured fleece. In more severe cases this will lead to sick animals separating from the flock and death. Make sure to keep the backends as clean as possible by dagging and shearing. Keep parasite burden to a minimum with regular faecal worm egg counts and a parasite control plan. Make sure to treat lame sheep as quickly as possible. Manage the fly population by removing carcasses promptly. There are also spot on products which can be used to keep flies at bay.



### **Foul-in-the-foot:**

Foul-in-the-foot is an infection of the skin between the toes which causes pain, swelling, and lameness. This is caused by bacteria which are normally in the environment and only enter the skin because of injury or irritation. There is a particularly unpleasant smell giving it its name. The best method of managing this is to improve walkways and tracks and fill in areas with sharp stones and deep ruts, especially around feeding or watering areas where animals may be stood in wet muck. If you notice infection, then prompt treatment is important with appropriate antibiotics and pain killers. It is important to allow time and ensure a long enough course of treatment to get the best result.

## **Summer mastitis in cattle**

Summer mastitis is common in non-lactating cows and heifers in the hot days of summer. Most commonly when barren breeding cows are kept for breeding later in the autumn. The mastitis is caused by a bacterial infection which is transmitted by flies. Early signs include enlargement of the teat, lots of flies about causing irritation and kicking to alleviate. As the disease advances the entire quarter becomes swollen, hard and hot and very painful. There is also a characteristic foul discharge. This can be followed by signs of illness such as separation from the herd, stiffness, reluctance to walk and unwillingness to eat.

### **Prevention**

The type of flies that transfer this live in bushes or shrubs and only fly out when it is warm, and the wind is low. This means that there can be problem areas in fields which are worth looking out for. Pour on products can also be used to keep flies away.

### **Treatment**

This involves antibiotic therapy, both as an injection and into the teats. Anti-inflammatory therapy using Metacam or the like is very important as these animals will be in pain and it is important to bring the swelling down.

### **Prognosis**

If untreated the animal can become ill and die. Sometimes even with treatment the affected quarter can be lost.

## **New Requirements for Veterinary Declarations**

EU Animal Health Regulations require farms producing animals or products of animal origin for export to the EU to have regular veterinary visits. A temporary measure allowed farmers to self-declare, but from **13 December 2023** UK producers sending animals to market or to slaughter must be able to demonstrate that a veterinary visit has taken place in the past 12 months. At least some portion of most carcasses is exported which means most farm businesses will need to ensure compliance. The requirement can be certified if the farm is a member of a recognised assurance scheme (currently Red Tractor, Welsh Beef and Lamb Producers, and Quality Meat Scotland), members of these schemes need to take no further action. Otherwise, the farm will need to arrange a visit so that the declaration can be provided.

