NEWS

May 2025

GLENTHORNE Farm Vets

Fly Control - let insects do the job

Fly control on farms has long been required to help reduce stress and disease and as farming systems intensify so too has the need for effective control plans. This includes cleanliness along with chemical, biological and physical measures.
The main types of fly causing issues leading to economic loss in the UK are stable, common drone, house, face and head flies. The flies can spread diseases such as mastitis and infectious bovine keratoconjunctivitis (New Forest Eye) along with causing irritation leading to weight and production losses.

Bestico offer various biological products to help with fly control on your farm. Cattle farms are optimal breeding grounds for nuisance flies with moist and protein rich environments in abundance. The key to successful fly control is always prevention at its source. Bestico's Fly Trap bucket is an outdoor trap that catches flies in large numbers. The trap contains patented bait consisting of a mix of yeasts that are highly effective in trapping flies and is used outdoors where it attracts and catches flies that are usually drawn to livestock and farm buildings

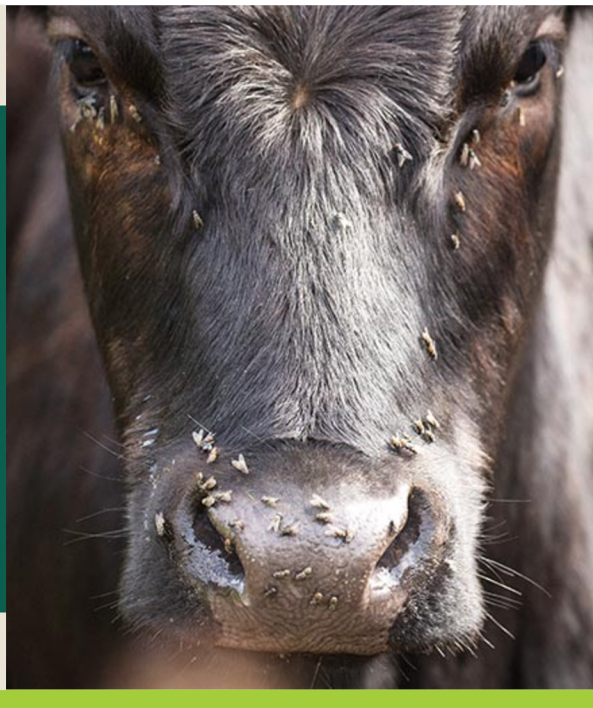
The Fly Trap bucket needs to be placed near buildings (within 20m) and in strategic areas such as passages and pathways between the pasture and the milking area. To maximise attraction of flies the bucket is best mounted 1.5m above ground level, and then 5L of water and the yeast is to be added and mixed.

Along with the Fly Trap bucket, effective all-round control can be further improved with Bestico's Biowasp product. Biowasps are parasitic wasps that target fly pupae. These beneficial insects occur naturally in the wild and parasitise flies during their pupal stage.

Biocontrol is safe for human health and the environment as there are no harmful chemicals used. The mini-wasps are present but unnoticeable on site, as they are only a few millimetres long and do not interfere with humans or animals. As part of its natural behaviour, the mini-wasp lays its eggs inside the fly pupa. When the eggs hatch, they feed on the fly developing inside the pupa. These new mini-wasps grow into adults and emerge from the pupa to restart the biological control process.

The distribution of the product can be discussed with your routine vet, however common areas include areas where fly breeding is likely to occur, such as muck heaps, straw yards, and areas where slurry can pool. The product needs to be dispersed in small heaps on bedding in areas not trampled by animals, where fly pupae are found. These areas include dry places along walls, under feeders, and under dividers. For best results start early in the fly season and always after cleaning or re-stocking a shed. Reapplication should be every 2-4 weeks.

Please speak to one of our team to discuss how we can use these products strategically on your farm.



BLOWFLY STRIKE

With the recent periods of sustained warmer weather, early season strikes may be anticipated in lowland areas and NADIS (National Animal disease Information Service) currently classify the risk for blowfly strike in this area as moderate. Strike management should now be in place and whilst more northerly regions have a lower risk, planning should be well underway.

Blowfly strike in the UK is primarily caused by the green bottle fly, Lucilia sp. The flies seek decomposing matter such as footrot lesions, open wounds and dirty backends to deposit their fly eggs. One fly can lay up to 200 eggs per deposit so fly populations can rapidly increase. Within 48 hours the eggs develop into maggots which cause damage to the skin of the sheep.

This can cause serious economic and welfare issues including loss of production, damage to the fleece, increased veterinary and labour costs and in severe cases can lead to death. Flocks should be checked at least daily throughout the risk season, and early signs can be relatively subtle. These include:

- Irritation
- Nibbling at tail head
- Increased swishing of tails
- Rubbing
- Further signs of discomfort in lame animals

These early signs progress to more severe signs including discoloured or damp fleece with fleece loss, separation from the flock, signs of general malaise and not eating/drinking leading to death from septicaemia.

Treatment of affected cases must be prompt and include clipping and cleaning of the affected area, removing ALL maggots present. An effective product must be applied to kill all maggots and affected animals will need pain relief and if necessary, an antibiotic injection to treat secondary bacterial infection. Please note Insect Growth Regulators (IGRs) do NOT kill maggots and should not be used for treatment.

Monitoring blowfly strike forecasts and prevention is key to avoiding issues.

- Application of a preventative product ahead of the risk period is recommended – IGRs, organophosphates (OPs) or synthetic pyrethroids (SPs) all work preventatively but have different duration of actions. Please consider this along with the age of animals treated, withdrawal periods, anticipated slaughter dates, and labour involved when choosing a product. We stock several products at a competitive price
- Reduce risk areas on the animals – ensure lame sheep are treated promptly, reduce dirty back ends with dagging and have an appropriate parasite control in place
- Manage the fly population with strategic grazing and prompt disposal of deadstock. Fly traps have been shown to reduce strike incidence by 80% in a season (NADIS, 2025)

ARE YOU A SMALLHOLDER?

We are offering a CLiK application service. For just £6 per animal (plus visit fee if necessary) a member of the team will visit and apply the product using calibrated equipment. CLiK offers 16 weeks of protection against blowfly strike. Please contact the Farm Office for more information.

ANIMAL HEALTH & WELFARE REVIEW

You may have already claimed for the AHWR but did you know you can claim every 10 months? The scheme has constantly been under review and many changes have been made since the introduction in 2023. The basic eligibility remains the same and prior to any vet visit or diagnostic tests there must be an Improve Animal Health and Welfare (IAHW) agreement number in place.

The scheme is split into 2 parts – the initial review, and the endemic disease follow-up. You can do up to 3 reviews and 3 follow-ups per species as part of your IAHW agreement up to the deadline of 19th June 2027. Typically for sheep enterprises the initial review is focussing on anthelmintic resistance; worm egg counts from lambs <12months old need to be analysed. For cattle enterprises the focus is on bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) virus; you must test a minimum of 5 unvaccinated youngstock aged 9 to 18 months in up to 2 epidemiological groups. The vet will visit and discuss biosecurity and medicines usage as necessary (sometimes as part of the herd or flock health plan) and then complete the relevant paperwork including a written report of findings and advice, and the vet summary form which is required to claim the funding.
Further details can be found here - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/farmers-how-to-apply-for-funding-to-improve-animal-health-and-welfare

Species	Animal health and welfare review funding	Endemic disease follow-up funding
Pigs	£557	£923
Sheep	£436	£639
Beef cattle	£522	£837 for a follow-up with a persistently infected (PI) hunt or £215 for a follow up without a PI hunt
Dairy cattle	£372	£1,714 for a follow-up with a persistently infected (PI) hunt or £215 for a follow up without a PI hunt

Once the initial review is completed and the claim accepted you can move onto the endemic disease follow-up. For sheep enterprises there are 6 categories that you can focus your attention on: ewe condition, reproductive performance, lamb performance, neonatal lamb survival, external parasites and lameness. For cattle enterprises the aim is focussed on BVD control and biosecurity. Earlier in 2025 the regulations changed so that farming enterprises with multi-species can now apply for both species as well. Please discuss with a member of the team to decide the best course of action for your farm.

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