



HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL FROM THE KFE TEAM!

RON'S FAREWELL

It has come time for me to hang up my stethoscope after 37 years.

I moved to Cornwall when I qualified and worked a year in Newquay before moving to Bodmin to increase the number of vets to six ably supported by three lay staff who acted as nurses and office staff.

Things have changed greatly since then, I started as a mixed vet treating all species and over the last ten years, was treating large animals and horses as the need to specialise increased. The practice grew over the years and then the merger with Churchend and Pelyn followed by Dave Ellis' practice allowed us to split into large and small animal.



I leave with mixed feelings as I know the time is right, but I shall miss all the clients and animals that I have worked with for so long.

However, I know that I am leaving the practice in good hands and that there is a strong team of enthusiastic young vets to take on my work and give you all a great service and drive on with new ideas.

I would like to thank you all as it has been a pleasure and honour to be your vet and treat your animals and I would like to thank all the staff old and new for all their support over the years.

Finally, I would thank Tracey and my family for being there and putting up with me and the job.



Christmas is around the corner but our chosen Charity are still crying out for help to look after their ponies.

With the cold weather, extra feed and hay is needed to help maintain their health and condition.

If you would like to make a donation please pop into the practice or should you wish to actually buy some food to help the charity please call W Richards & Sons on 01208 873288 or visit their facebook page to place an order. Every little really does help at this time of year.



ARE EWE READY FOR LAMBING?

Preparation is key for a successful lambing – and although some of the early lambing flocks are already well underway, now is the time for most flocks to start getting ready.

Nutrition

About 75% of lamb growth happens in the last 6-8 weeks of pregnancy, therefore highlighting the importance of appropriate nutrition during this period in order to ensure good birth weights, adequate colostrum production, and also to prevent problems such as twin lamb disease and hypocalcaemia. Ultrasound scanning and body condition scoring (BCS) are useful tools to guide nutrition. Ewes carrying multiple lambs, or ewes that are in poorer condition can be fed on a higher plane of nutrition compared to fatter ewes, or ewes that are only carrying single lambs. If you have any concerns about the diet you are providing your sheep, it may be worth considering running a metabolic profile – this involves blood being taken from ewes to check that the ration supplied to ewes during late pregnancy is satisfying their nutritional requirements.



Vaccination

Pasteurella and the clostridial diseases are responsible for significant losses on sheep farms; however a vaccination programme against these diseases is widely used and worth considering if it is not already being used. The vaccination programme involves a primary course of two vaccinations (usually given to lambs from 3 weeks of age) and then annual boosters about a month before lambing (depending on what vaccine is being used). The timing of the annual booster will increase immunity in the ewe, and protection is transferred to the lambs via the antibody rich colostrum.



Abortion

If >2% of the flock is affected by abortion it is worth investigating the cause by getting a vet to perform a post mortem of the foetus to collect the necessary samples to test for the main infectious causes of abortion. Common infectious abortion causes include toxoplasmosis and enzootic abortion, these are two diseases which can be vaccinated against under veterinary advice.

For further advice, or to discuss our flock health scheme please give the office a call on 01208 76403. The flock health club offers farmers an independent veterinary advice service tailored to each individual farm. Included in the scheme is a free annual health visit and comprehensive flock health plan, nutritional advice, regular educational meetings, as well as worm egg counts (and worm control advice) throughout the year.

Antibiotic use in rams: Fact or Fiction?

For years it has often been rumoured that antibiotic use can lead to infertility in rams. To date there has been no research to suggest that this is the case. In fact, a sick animal is more likely to suffer with impaired sperm production as a result of fever - this highlights the importance of prompt treatment with anti-inflammatories and antibiotics where necessary.



Furthermore, Canadian research conducted on cattle (a fellow ruminant), has indicated that commonly used antibiotics such as oxytetracycline (e.g. Alamylin or Engemycin), and tilmicosin (e.g. Micotil) have no effect on fertility even when used at a double dose for up to 5 consecutive days.

If a ram has become unwell in the lead up to tupping, it is worthwhile having him fertility tested by a vet to ensure that everything is in working order before introducing to the ewes.

Please do not hesitate to call us on 01208 76403. Office hours 8.30am-5-30pm Mon-Fri and 8.30am-12pm Saturday. Emergency vets available 24/7.



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