



## August/Autumn Newsletter

### Liver fluke

Liver fluke affects both sheep and cattle. It is a disease of late summer, autumn and winter. The liver fluke needs mud snails to complete its life cycle and so is more commonly found on wetter pasture. Once ingested, the fluke larvae take 10-12 weeks to become adults within the host.

- Clinical signs
  - o Poor performance
  - o Scour
  - o Brisket oedema/bottle jaw
  - o Death

Liver fluke can be diagnosed on faeces blood or milk. There are variable treatment options **BUT** most are very specific to the time of year and point of the life stage that the fluke are at within the host. As an example,

- Albendazole and Clorsulon are the most effective against adult fluke. (Fluke that have been in the sheep/cow for 12+ weeks) and will have little to no effect if the fluke <9 weeks old. Therefore, it should ideally be used in the spring and early summer.
- Closantel works well on adult and young fluke that have been in the host for over 6 weeks and therefore should be used in Autumn / Winter
- Triclabendazole works at all stages of life cycle and is the only drug that kills very immature fluke. Resistance has been shown in some populations so it should be used sparingly but is our go to in the autumn.

Please contact us to discuss liver fluke testing and treatment for your farm.

### Grass Staggers/Hypomagnasemia

Also known as grass tetany – staggers is caused by a low level of magnesium in the blood. It usually occurs around calving and presents as a down cow. Cattle cannot control magnesium levels in the blood well so the condition can develop + deteriorate very quickly.

Lactating cows will lose magnesium through their milk and if it not replaced by sufficient dietary intake or other minerals (certain types of soil rich in potassium and nitrogen can prevent plants from taking up magnesium) will lead to staggers.

Clinical signs include:

- Muscle tremors, staggering, collapse
- Ear twitching, noise sensitivity, poor appetite, reduced milk yield

- Sudden death

If you are concerned about grass staggers this is an **emergency** and you should contact the farm as soon as possible. Treatment is much more likely to be successful if started rapidly.

Prevention of hypomagnesemia is generally done through mixing magnesium into concentrates or into drinking water. Oral boluses often contain magnesium as well.

### Ovacyte

In the past few months, we have added an Ovacyte machine to our lab at Whorral Bank, this has allowed us to do accurate worm egg counts/faecal egg counts in house and can be done the same day that the samples are dropped off.

### Sheep Abortion Vaccines

As most of you know there has been supply issues with enzovax and cevac chlamydia this year. We do have access to Inmeva inactivated vaccine against Enzootic abortion. It is not as convenient as the other vaccines but provides good protection. 2 doses are needed 3 weeks apart with the second given at least 2 weeks before tupping. A yearly booster is needed. If you would like to discuss prices please give us a call at the practice.

### Bluetongue

Bluetongue BT3 was diagnosed in Norfolk on the 26<sup>th</sup> August. This is a midge spread disease and we ask all farmers to be vigilant for signs. The most common signs are ulcers in the mouth and on the nose. This can cause discharge from eyes and nose and drooling from mouth. The lips tongue and head can swell, and the lips and tongue can go blue in colour. The top of the hoof can also swell causing lameness. If you have any suspicion of bluetongue please immediately call us or call APHA on 03000 200 301 .

### August Invoices and Statements

Our financial year ends on the 30<sup>th</sup> September, it would be greatly appreciated if all outstanding accounts could be settled on or before the 28<sup>th</sup> September to allow us time to reconcile our accounts. If you have any financial queries on your account, please do not hesitate to contact the accounts team.

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As always, we can be contacted 24hours a day on 01670 512276 and during office hours on 07921 401901

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