

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply you must have and be responsible for the welfare of: 21 or more sheep
Your business must have: A single business identifier (SBI) linked to a country parish holding (CPH) number in England. The CPH can be permanent or temporary.
You should be eligible for the BPS or anticipating applying for the BPS in 2023. To be eligible for BPS the SBI must have at least 5 hectares of BPS land and 5 or more BPS entitlements on 16 May 2022.

Testing Requirements to Receive Funding

Taking pre and post- drench test on faecal samples to test how well a wormer has worked. If the first round of testing shows no worm eggs, you do not need to carry out further testing. The worming treatment should have one of the active chemicals:

- Benzimidazole (BZ)
- Levamisole (LV)
- Macrocytic lactones (ML)
- Amino-acetonitrile derivatives (AD)
- Spiroindoles (SI)

Discuss on your Review with your Vet
which wormer is right to test for on
your farm.

These test cannot be run in the practice and need to be submitted to an accredited lab

Other Grants

Animal Health and Welfare Capital Grants can also be applied for, ranging from £1000-£25,000 and the review can include recommendations for these grants. They offer:

Smaller grants: where you can select for from a list of equipment and technological items, such as; mobile/fixed sheep handling systems, weighing crates, mobile sheep dip, lamb auto milk feeder etc.

Larger grants: for infrastructure changes, such as new housing, building upgrades and pasture improvements.

These grants are competitive

A full list of eligible equipment can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-fetf-2023/annex-4-fetf-2023-animal-health-and-welfare-eligible-items>

Please speak to one of the team today for any further information on the scheme or to book your vet visit.

Cara Hatfield

With the lambings all baa (!) finished, calvings again take centre stage. It's always worth having a refresher, as we did last year on this to have the best chance of a favourable outcome. There is a lot of time and effort required to get a cow or heifer to the point of calving. The most common calving difficulty this year seems to be a large calf, or a small maternal pelvis. The small pelvis is most commonly a problem in heifers, especially those which are under weight and have not grown out as well as might be expected. These are the ones most at risk of needing a large amount of traction, which could be 150 to 250 kg of pull (bear in mind that some calving aides can pull in excess of 250 kg which can cause considerable damage to your cow and calf). If the calf is not making real progress through the birth canal then a caesarean may well be indicated, depending on individual circumstances.

Some rules of thumb to go by are:

- 1) If the front feet (or hindfeet) are crossing over on entry into the birth canal then the shoulders/ hips may be too big, or the pelvis too small to allow a healthy birth.
- 2) 2) The calf's shoulders are not engaged in the birth canal until the front feet are out as far as a hand's breadth past the fetlocks. If it was a struggle to get to there, then it's only going to get tighter.
- 3) 3) When coming backwards, the calf's pelvis has not entered the birth canal until the back legs are out as far as a hand's breadth past the hocks (that is a lot of leg to come out). Likewise, if you struggled to get it to there, it's only going to get tighter. The umbilical cord is a lot more vulnerable to trauma and premature rupture when the calf is coming backwards, too. Once the hips are out it is then a matter of urgency to get the calf out quickly.



In calvings we attend, we often give an epidural injection of anaesthetic to stop the cow straining. As well as removing pain, stopping her straining also dramatically reduces the risk of trauma to the uterus and birth canal.

Richard Knight

Digital Dermatitis in Cattle

Digital dermatitis or 'digi' is one of the most common causes of lameness of cattle in the UK, however, luckily the organism involved is sensitive to a range of topical treatments and so there is no reason that this disease should not be kept to low levels on farm.

Digital dermatitis has spread across the UK over the last 20 years and is now widespread, affecting up to 30% of animals in infected herds. The disease is highly contagious so needs to be controlled on a herd, rather than an individual level. The main agent responsible is a spiral-shaped bacteria called *Treponema denticola*.

Clinical signs:

The disease presents as lesions that follow 5 stages:

- the paintbrush lesion: a few matted hairs
- the pink lesion: loss of hair and skin damage
- the red lesion; more severe skin damage
- the white lesion: longer term lesion with the skin producing white keratin plug
- the black lesion: a scab over the damaged skin



Digital dermatitis causes pain and discomfort and can result in lameness. The majority of cows with the disease will withdraw their foot rapidly if pressure is applied to affected area eg, water pressure from a hose.

Treatment and control:

The condition is relatively easy to treat in individuals, but difficult to eradicate from the herd. In an individual case, wash the heels and apply topical antibiotic spray or copper and zinc sulphate paste. This is best repeated 2-3 days later. Footbathing with a disinfectant solution (Formalin or Copper sulphate) will help to prevent the spread of spirochaetes and should be done frequently.

Digital dermatitis thrives in damp dirty conditions, so keeping passageways clean and minimising cow contact with slurry reduces the risk of infection.

Stock coming onto the farm should be treated appropriately and kept separated for 2 weeks before being foot bathed again and mixed with the existing herd.

All possible hygiene measures should be taken to ensure against cross-contamination eg, with foot trimmers.

Rebecca Howard

Animal Health and Welfare Pathway- Sheep

Subsidies in farming are changing, and with 2023 being the last year the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) will run, the government is rolling out new schemes to help farmers. The Animal Health and Welfare Pathway (AHWP) was launched in late 2022 and applications for the scheme opened at the start of this year for farms in England and is not yet open for farms in Wales or Scotland.

How does the scheme work?

The scheme focuses on improving animal health and welfare through a clear set of priorities, which for sheep include:

- Tackling internal and external parasites and worming efficacy
- 'Iceberg' diseases and abortive diseases.
- Reducing lameness
- Ewe sustainability- optimising body condition score
- Improving pain management during castration and tail docking

The steps of the pathway are as follows:

You need to register your interest in the scheme at:

[apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk](https://www.defra.gov.uk/apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review)

Only one enterprise can be reviewed currently but will be opened to multiple enterprises and applications (both cattle and sheep) in-the -near-future.

Vets visit on farm:

This will be a 2-3 hour on farm visit to assess and identify areas that could be improved and to take the required samples needed for the scheme (see testing requirements). Payment rates towards the visit and testing are: £436 for sheep

A report will be produced by your vet:

This report is specific to the AHWP and is designed to complement your farm assurance scheme, not replace it and will include recommendations and actions to improve your live-stock's health and welfare. The report does not need to be shared with DEFRA, but test results will need to be submitted.

Claim your Funding:

You will be required to provide evidence of the review having taken place, the payment will be paid directly to you, the farmer, by the Rural Payment Agency (RPA).

Important Notes:

- One application can be made per 10 month period
- There is a 6 month window between the start of the application and the review (you must have eligible stock to test within this time period)
- You can apply and un-apply without penalty provided no work on the pathway has begun.