

Just a reminder to order your sheep hormones and sponges asap as supplies are challenging this year.



## Getting ready for Topping?



**Special Offer**  
**£70 for the first,**  
**£50 for any**  
**subsequent ones**

### Tup Fertility Testing - Why test?

- Fertile tups get -
- 1) More ewes in lamb
  - 2) Tighter lambing period
  - 3) Improved efficiency

Every tup should be tested every year, approx 2 months prior to topping.

### Tup Vasectomies - Why use a teaser?

- 1) Tighter lambing pattern
- 2) Earlier lambing season
- 3) Higher twinning rate.

When? - At least 6 weeks prior to use. 12-14 days pre topping

To book a test or vasectomy please call 01539 722692 or 015242 71221



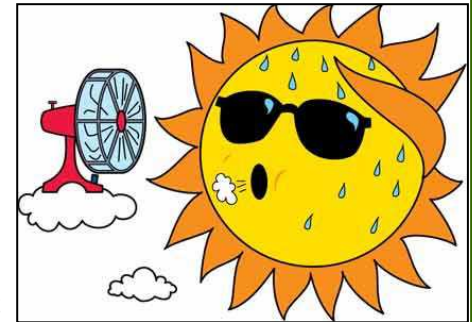
# PRACTICE NEWS

KENDAL ○ KIRKBY LONSDALE ○ ULVERSTON

July 2021

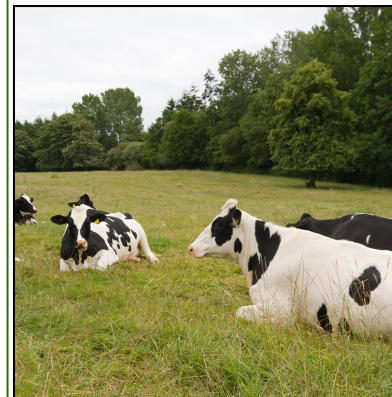
Well like the rest of you, I'm struggling to remember the last time when it was as warm like this for so long!

We haven't seen too many issues due to the heat yet, which is surprising. Butterfat seems to have dropped on quite a few herds, with still yields managing to hold up.



Lack of good structural fibre in the diet, such as that provided by the ADF (acid detergent fibre) fraction,

which is indigestible is causing a few problems. This ADF fraction helps to provide the "scratch factor" that the rumen requires to function properly, along with the NDF (neutral detergent fibre) fraction which is nutritionally available to the cow. Some folk need to supplement with wheat or barley straw, but baled dried lucerne is also a very good alternative which starts to look a lot more attractive when set against the high prices of straw at present.



We have seen a few cases of ketosis recently, and a few more twisted stomachs than we commonly would at this time of year. These may well be as a result of the hot weather affecting food intakes and cows milking off their back a little in early lactation, due to the sparseness of grass growth and good fibre availability.

Keep an eye out for coughing calves too. We have seen some sporadic cases of pneumonia, with most responding to the usual treatments for viral and bacterial pneumonia. However, we may start to see some cases of lungworm (or husk, caused by the worm *Dictyocaulus viviparus*) appearing soon, so cases of coughing where they look like they are losing weight and going backwards quickly should be examined to rule lungworm in or out. Bear in mind that we also see a few cases this year where the main sign is coughing and poor production in the adult dairy herd. This can easily be confused with an outbreak of IBR (infectious bovine rhinotracheitis), so please give us a call.

*Richard Knight*



#### Kendal Surgery

Monday to Friday 8.30am—7.00pm  
Saturday 8.30am-12noon  
Tel:01539 722692

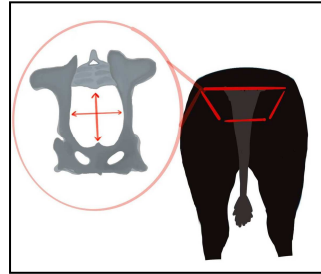
#### Kirkby Lonsdale Surgery

Monday & Thursday 8.30am-7.00pm  
Tuesday 8.30am-6.00pm  
Wednesday & Friday 8.30am-5.00pm  
Saturday 8.30am-12 noon  
Tel:015242 71221

[www.westmorland-vets.co.uk](http://www.westmorland-vets.co.uk)

### Easy Calving, Easy Life

Calving can be the biggest risk period for a cow and her calf. This is especially true for heifers as they may not be at their mature body weight and their first calving is crucial to their success in the herd. How can we make calving easier? By using pelvimetry and appropriate sire selection the ease of calving we can do our best to make sure that the calves are not oversized and there is enough room for the calf to fit through. Additionally, the use of synchronisation can also remove some of the stress by tightening the time period over which the heifers will calve.



### Pelvimetry

To increase the ease of calving, heifers with a large pelvic area should be selected. It is impossible to tell the internal dimensions of a heifer's pelvis just by looking at her. A well grown heifer could be hiding a small pelvis. We can measure the internal height and width of the pelvis using a rice pelvimeter. These measurements allow us to calculate each heifer's pelvic area and advise on suitability for breeding. Pelvic size has been shown to be highly heritable, meaning that if you do decide to breed an animal with a smaller heifer, chances are her offspring will also have the same issue, continuing the problem on farm.



### Sire Selection

Once we have determined that a heifer is suitable to breed from because of a large enough pelvic area we then need to choose an appropriate sire to produce a calf which can be delivered easily. Estimated breeding values (EBVs) are an excellent tool for sire selection. It is important to select a bull based on EBVs for calving ease (direct and maternal), birth weight and gestation length. Calves gain around 0.5kg/day in late gestation so any extra days on gestation length will lead to larger calves and greater calving difficulty. The use of artificial insemination (AI) will allow for a greater number of bulls to be used with higher genetic merit.

### Synchronisation

Although synchronisation has no bearing on calving ease it does allow for the use of AI; increases the numbers of heifers which have calves at the start of the season; and eliminates the disease risk of bringing in a bull. For heifers to be ready for synchronisation they need to be 65% of adult body weight and cycling.

If you are interested in decreasing calving difficulties in your heifers, please get in touch with the team at Westmorland Vets. We offer a full pelvic measuring and reproductive scanning service to ensure your heifers have enough space and are cycling.

### BCS at calving

To achieve best results heifers should be body condition score 2.5 as they calve down. This helps limit the amount of fat laid down in the birth canal increasing the space for the calf to come through.

*Ben Harvey*

### Teaser Tups – What's the craic?

Teaser tups are tups that still have their testicles and so still have the drive to serve ewes but as they have had part of their vas deferens (their 'tubes') removed they don't produce semen that contains sperm.



Using teaser tups can help to improve breeding performance in both early and conventional lambing systems by bringing forward ewes into oestrus earlier than normal and by tightening up lambing periods by making use of the ram effect.

#### **Teaser Tup suggested protocol**

<b>Day 0</b>	<b>Introduce teaser</b> (Aim for five and a half months before start of lambing)
<b>Day 14</b>	<b>Remove teasers, introduce breeding tups</b>
<b>Day 25</b>	<b>Rotate/re-raddle breeding tups</b>

When a tup is introduced to a group of ewes it stimulates them to have a silent heat about three to four days later. This heat tends not to be fertile but gets the ewes cycling and they go on to have peaks of oestrus activity at 17 and 25 days after. As ewes tend not to hold to this first heat a teaser ram can be used for this purpose and a breeding tup then be introduced two weeks later, ready and rearing to go with ewes that have a much higher chance of pregnancy at the start of tugging.

### How to get the best results

Choose your teaser tup well. Choosing a healthy tup that has worked well previously means he will know the job and have the drive and physical ability to serve ewes so avoid using lambs or elderly tups for these reasons.

Teasers need to be selected well in advance of the breeding season as they can remain fertile for about 4 weeks until his pipes are properly cleared out.

As always, ensure ewes are in good condition pre-breeding and check breeding tups are fertile before introducing them.

Ewes and tups need to be kept apart for at least 2-4 weeks before the teaser is introduced by at least 1 mile.

Use a ratio of 1:50-100 ewes for the teaser tups but increase your fertile ram power to 1:20-30 ewes to achieve optimum pregnancy rates.

**Offer: First tup vasectomy £70 all further tups £50 ex VAT See over page for offer**

*Beth Collins*