

Do you want to better understand the policy changes that will affect the future of your farm business?

The Prince's Countryside Fund's [Farm for the Future Programme](#) includes a series of workshops and one to one support to help you understand the change to farm payments, how this might affect your business and provide you with tools and advice to help you make changes. The programme will also provide the latest information about the new environmental schemes.

The Farmer Network is delivering the Farm for the Future Programme in Cumbria and we are holding Welcome Meetings on the following dates:

- Monday 18th October at the Hired Lad, Penrith, CA11 0DN
- Thursday 21st October at Mitchell's Auction Café, Cockermouth, CA13 0QQ
- Monday 25th October at the Farmer's Arms, Lowick, LA12 8DT

All the meetings will start at 7pm with refreshments available. Booking is essential.

To find out more and to book onto the Welcome Meetings, please call the Farmer Network on 01768 868615 or email: admin@thefarmernetwork.co.uk.

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

Abortion Vaccines – Place your orders now.

With tupping season getting closer, now is the time to get your abortion vaccines ordered if you know your requirements and injected if you have your breeding replacements selected or sourced already. Don't forget that Toxovax needs to be given at least 3 weeks pre-mating and Cevac Enzootic Vaccine at least 4 weeks pre mating.

Toxovax is in very short supply with a waiting time of approximately 2 weeks. If you know what your needs are then please order your Toxovax for your desired delivery date asap to avoid disappointment. (Orders are non cancellable once placed).



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

Well as I write this the rain has finally arrived! For nearly all farmers this is welcome news, especially when the becks through hill farms have turned into puddles or dried up completely. Changeable weather will also put a lot of stress on animals, especially fattening lambs. Make sure that the clostridial and pneumonia vaccinations are up-to-date as these are still the biggest killers of what are, at present, valuable animals.



For dairy farmers, the time of year for Johne's disease declarations is soon coming around again. Declarations of Johne's health plan completion and Johne's disease testing need to be submitted by 31st December for this year. For those that do regular testing then this will be relatively easy to sort out, however for those that don't then a little more planning is required. The basic level of screening is of your cull cows, where milk samples are usually submitted nowadays for all these tests (blood can be used, however we obviously need to visit you to take the samples). The next level is a 30 cow screen, to include culls and the older end of the herd in preference to the younger end. The level after this is to screen the whole herd. This is not a test that a herd can pass or fail at, it's designed to find out what (if anything) is going on with regards to Johne's disease in order that the management of the herd can be optimised with regard to limiting any impact of Johne's disease.

Johne's still remains a chronic wasting disease of cattle (and sheep) which can have an insidious and creeping impact on a herd. Herds with this condition can successfully manage it to reduce impact, with even the most successful programmes taking many years (even a couple of decades) to eradicate it.

If you are not sure what you need to do then give us a call. Don't delay as the deadline soon creeps up and it's not too much of a hassle for you to sort out.

Richard Knight

County Show

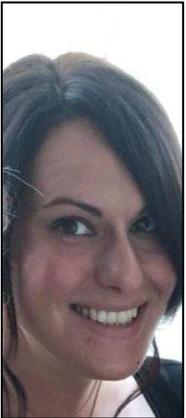
Thanks to everyone who took the time to drop into our show stand and share a drink and cake. What a wonderful 2 days we had!

Practical Learning for Young Vets

Towards the end of September we held a week of practical farm veterinary skills for vet students from all over the country. We focused on topics that would make the transition from student into farm vet a bit easier, giving workshops on mastitis management; farm animal emergencies; medicine use; farm animal post mortem examinations, and many other topics that we wished we had covered in a more clinically relevant way as a student! We think that the education of new vets is really important, and at Westmorland, we are looking for ways to continue to support veterinary education. It was brilliant to meet such an enthusiastic and engaged set of students and to be the first vets in the country to run this type of course. Thanks to our farm clients who helped make this possible too and Rebecca who pulled it all together.



Meet new vet Cara Hatfield BVetMed AFHEA MRCVS



Cara qualified from the Royal Veterinary College in 2010 and after graduating undertook an Internship with the Farm Animal Practice at the University of Edinburgh. She then spent time in Wales working as a large animal vet, with a focus on dairy cattle, before returning to her Lancashire roots and working for a local farm animal practice for four years. In 2017 Cara enrolled in the residency programme at the University of Liverpool and helped teach final year veterinary students, whilst working for the farm animal practice and assisted with more in-depth whole herd health investigations. During this time, she enrolled in post-graduate courses including the Diploma in Bovine Reproduction and the European Collage of Bovine Health Management, which reflect her passion for cattle work. Cara has a particular interest in bovine reproduction, transition cow management and nutrition and is always keen to help farmers reach their production goals. Cara comes with a great deal of experience from both veterinary education and practice.

Outside of work, she enjoys being in the outdoors and rambling with her Doberman Maddie, as well as keeping fit at the gym, which helps balance her new-found love of mixology!

Testing for liver fluke in sheep

There are a number of diagnostic tests available to use when looking for liver fluke. Unfortunately, none of them on their own will give us all the information we need at all times of year, so we need to use a combination of different tests and information from other sources to fully understand where and when the fluke challenge is likely to happen on any farm.

When we need to first treat for acute fluke in sheep, animals sampled will show no eggs on a faecal egg count because fluke need to be at least 10 weeks old; it is, therefore, unhelpful to look at the muck. Antibody testing of lambs in the Autumn, can be a useful tool to tell us about fluke exposure on farm when treatment is otherwise, a little better than guesswork.

Cattle and sheep develop antibodies to liver fluke within a few weeks of being infected for the first time. Although these antibodies give no protection to the animal, we can use them to show that an animal has been infected.

This is the test that will detect liver fluke earliest after infection, but as the antibodies last for months, they will still be present after successful treatment. The best group of animals to test are new-season lambs as they can only have developed antibodies to fluke infection in the current year; a positive result in a lamb means recent exposure to fluke, therefore, lambs tested this way act as sentinels for the rest of the flock. Interpreting the presence of antibodies in older animals is extremely difficult as these antibodies may have been present due to exposure in previous years. The antibody test is relatively inexpensive (the cost per sample is about £10) and can detect antibodies from 2 weeks after fluke infection.

As this test detects the presence of liver fluke the soonest after infection (i.e it can detect fluke at the early immature stage), it is best used at the beginning of the fluke season to detect when the infectious stages (metacercaria) are starting to appear, and therefore, the risk of infection for cattle and sheep is starting.

As antibodies can last from the previous fluke season in adult animals, this test should be targeted at first grazing season animals (lambs are easiest) grazing known fluke risk areas. The test may need to be repeated as time progresses until a positive is seen.

Once they test positive for fluke antibodies

- a) there is a risk to all animals grazing those areas
- b) there is no point in repeating this test in the same animals, as they will remain positive for a long time.

The results will not tell us how many liver fluke are there, only that the animal has met a fluke.

Please let us know at the surgery if you would like to know more about blood testing lambs for fluke antibodies.

Rebecca Howard