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FARM NEWSLETTER

SHEEP

BLUE TONGUE VACCINATION

A new report has been released from DEFRA regarding the time to give Bluetongue vaccination to ewes. We now advise vaccinating ewes which are in their second year of vaccination (i.e. those that had the vaccination last year) with their Bluetongue booster at the same time as the Heptavac P booster dose.

Vaccinating with BTV8 4-6 weeks before lambing means that antibody protection is passed onto lambs receiving adequate colostrum. This means they are protected for a minimum of 14 weeks and as most lambs will have reached slaughter weight at this point it will avoid the need to vaccinate fattening lambs in the summer.

There has been no evidence whatsoever to suggest that vaccinating pregnant ewes can lead to increased abortions so you should feel safe about doing this and saving money on vaccines!

BAYCOX OVIS (BAYCOX SHEEP)

Coccidiosis is one of the most common diseases leading to production losses in lambs and only second to worms as the most important cause of diarrhoea. Typically seen at 4-6 weeks, even if diarrhoea is not present, infected lambs still suffer a set-back in growth.

A new product is available to treat Coccidiosis in sheep **Baycox Ovis**. It is recommended to treat all at-risk lambs before they show signs of illness. Timing should be discussed with one of our farm vets but typically we would advise treating at the first sign of a problem or following a faecal test on the lambs.

Signs of Coccidiosis (not just diarrhoea!):

- Fever
- Abdominal pain
- Weight loss
- Inappetance, unthriftiness and poor growth
- Anaemia
- Dehydration

The advantage of Baycox Ovis over the other commonly used Coccidial treatments in lambs is that it is effective against all stages of the life cycle and persists for 7 days.

One single oral dose (4ml/10kg) will protect your lambs, kill the parasite and stop further development. It comes in a ready to use suspension as 250ml and 1L bottles.

The Invitation to an evening meeting on Thursday 25th March: 7.30 for 8.00pm - at the Horse and Groom Pub in Milcombe - is enclosed . The subject will be: "Control of Coccidiosis in Both Sheep and Cattle".

SHEEP MEETING REPORT

We enjoyed a very successful and well- attended meeting in February at the Horse and Groom Pub. Over 50 of you came to see our speaker, Harriet Fuller, talk to us about avoiding losses before and after lambing time.

Take home points were: a reminder to have abortions investigated by one of our farm vets in conjunction with the VLA as soon as they start to occur. Samples of aborted lamb and placenta will be accepted for up to 5 days kept in a cold place (outside?!), but

the sooner it is submitted the better so get in contact asap if you have a problem arising.

We can blood-sample aborting ewes which is very useful and don't forget we have mentioned before the Barren Ewe check scheme where samples will be tested free of charge for Toxoplasmosis (a very common cause of abortion). We can also check for other causes of abortion at the same time, although there will be a charge for this.

The meeting emphasised the importance of vaccinating breeding ewes against Toxoplasmosis. As this parasite is spread by cats it is very difficult to avoid contact with your flock and can lead to high losses. Harriet Fuller described vaccinating for Toxoplasmosis as a 'no brainer' for the breeding flock.

Vaccination for Enzootic abortion is also highly recommended to prevent losses, and if you had a problem last year with Enzootic abortion it is worth treating the whole at risk group with **Tetroxy LA** from 100 days of pregnancy.

FLUKE TREATMENT

Last autumn both NADIS and SAC produced data which

showed that the threat of fluke was at a significantly high level. Recent freezing weather has stopped ongoing fluke infections but now is the time to clear up late autumn infections completely. This will have the benefit of making sure stock is fluke free for lambing – contributing to optimal health for the ewes and, subsequently, their lambs. A fluke dose now will ensure there are no ongoing fluke eggs being passed onto the pasture which would contribute to next summer's fluke challenge.

Rather than reaching for a familiar product it is worth bearing in mind that resistance can build up to commonly used products. **Supaverm** and **Flukiver** contain Closantel and, to date, there are no reports of resistance to this within the UK. Implementing a strategic control programme using effective flukicides on a rotational basis, as well as a management programme, will control both acute and chronic fluke problems. Simply rotating the products used will help to prevent resistance occurring. Speak to one of the farm vets if you are uncertain.

CATTLE

NAXCEL – LONG ACTING WITH NO MILK WITHDRAWAL

A new product has become available for treating foot infection in cattle. A single injection of **Naxcel** (1ml/30kg) is administered at the base of the ear under the skin.

There is zero withdrawal on milk and only 9 days on meat.

It is important to dose in this location as it affects withdrawal time of the product if dosed elsewhere.

The antibiotic should improve foul in the foot within 48 hours and only one dose is needed, compared to daily dosing with an equivalent antibiotic (**Excenel RTU** for dairy cows or **Depocillin** for Beef).

This product brings benefits of time/labour savings, easier record-keeping and peace of mind that a full course has been completed.



