

## Spring Vaccines & Boluses

Spring is here! So hopefully turnout will appear on the horizon shortly! Please place your orders for your spring vaccines (BVD, Lepto, IBR and Huskvac) and trace element boluses ASAP to ensure that you are ready to turnout when the weather comes good.

## New Team Member

We are pleased to welcome **Andrea** who has joined us to help on the TB testing front on a permanent basis. He is an experienced testing vet who has been working at a variety of practices across the north west (including at WVG) over the last year. Please look out for him buzzing around in a Westmorland vets van and give him a friendly wave and help with directions to some of our harder to find farms if you see him! Once again, just a reminder we are extremely busy with TB testing at the moment, therefore we would appreciate 2 weeks notice for pre-movement tests required.

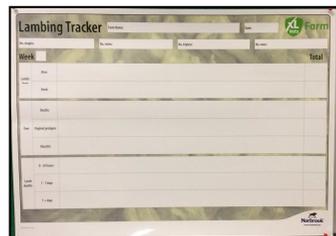
## \*\* Fantastic Lambing Kit Offer to help you with Lambing\*\*

Handy XLvets Lambing Kits available from the surgery. We have a limited number of lambing kits available at both surgeries. **On offer at £20 exc VAT.**

All items come in a sturdy carrying case. Each kits contains:-

- Bottle of lubgel
- Box of arm length gloves
- 100 elastrator rings
- 10 lamb macs
- Laminated recording chart & marker pen

**We also have some of the poster lamb trackers at both surgeries if you want to pop in and get one.** Hurry because once they've gone, they've gone!



**XLvets**  
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**Kendal Surgery**  
Monday to Friday 8.30am—7.00pm  
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Tel:01539 722692

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Tuesday 8.30am-6.00pm  
Wednesday & Friday 8.30am-5.00pm  
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Tel:015242 71221

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

Westmorland  
Veterinary Group  
FARM SERVICES

**PRACTICE NEWS**

KENDAL ○ KIRKBY LONSDALE ○ ULVERSTON

April 2018

Well if the amount of calvings that we are attending is any indication, then everyone is in the thick of things, too!

Ring-womb cases seem to be prevalent, though- and can be difficult for folks to pick up if they've not seen many before. Typically it is a ewe which looks like she has been lambing for a few hours, with nothing to show for it. Examination of these cases shows that the cervix is sometimes only dilated by a few centimetres. Often all the membranes are still intact inside the ewe, but sometimes a water bag or membranes may be seen hanging from behind her. If you're not sure if it is a true case of ring-womb, or rather a protracted first stage of labour, check again in one or two hours. If there is a putrid discharge then that confirms the diagnosis and the outlook for the sheep is poor. If, after an hour or two, she is still in the same position with a cervix only one or two centimetres dilated, then it probably is a case of ring-womb. Many of these cervixes will dilate under mild to moderate digital pressure, but also many don't. It's very easy to go in with too much pressure and split the cervix through into the abdominal cavity- which is game over for the sheep. If you're not sure, or need help- give us a call. We see a lot of these cases and deal with everyone's worst lambings. We will commonly administer an epidural which means that we can try a controlled dilation without putting the sheep through distress, as dilation can be a very painful procedure. No-one knows what really causes these ring-womb cases, there is evidence that too many oestrogenic plant such as clover may predispose, and that they may also be a symptom of energy deficiency such as in twin-lamb and some instances of vaginal prolapse. If the cervix is unaffected after 5 or 10 minutes, then we'll usually progress straight on to a caesarean section of the ewe and the lambs look in a healthy state. Happy lambing!

*Richard Knight*

Spring Time at  
Westmorland  
Vets



## Flies

As the bad weather keeps on coming it is hard to think about the summer and the issues that it might bring. However, there is one nuisance that is guaranteed to appear every year- Flies. However, we tend to not think about fly control until we see large numbers around the farm or observe cows kicking in the parlour but this is often too late for optimum fly control.

### **Why control flies?**

Flies, as well as being a nuisance to livestock and ourselves they play a key role in transmitting costly diseases such as New Forest eye, Summer mastitis and Fly strike in sheep.

### **When to start controlling flies?**

All fly species have to survive the winter, to breed in the subsequent spring and summer. As this winter has been colder than last we should have a reduced overwintering population of flies and this will hopefully lead to a slow start to the fly season.

This doesn't mean we should forget about flies this year as early implementation of a fly control programme will drastically reduce the peak fly population.

### **What sort of flies do we see?**

One of the most common flies affecting cattle in the UK is the **Face fly** that feeds on eye and udder secretions as well as sweat from the body. In doing so the face fly transmits the bacteria responsible for **New Forest eye disease**.

The other common fly is the **Head fly** which is responsible for transmitting summer mastitis and can cause intense irritation (and all that kicking in the parlour!) when feeding en masse.

### **What fly control measures are available?**

A successful fly control programme is multifactorial and depending on your farm it may include:

1. Pour on insecticides such as Butox Swish;
2. Larval growth regulators, such as Neporex, that can be used to treat fly breeding sites;
3. Contact killers, such as Oxyfly, to treat areas where flies congregate; and even,
4. Parasitic wasps that feed on the fly larvae.

One area that is often overlooked is how the environment can be managed to minimise the fly population. The main way to do this is to identify fly breeding sites, such as the edges of silage pits, manure heaps and calf pens/hutches and taking actions to make them less attractive as fly breeding sites. This can be simplified to;

**Clean it:** A clean environment eliminates most fly breeding areas, especially if done weekly.

**Move it:** Haul muck etc away from the livestock areas regularly. It should be approx. a quarter of a mile away.

**Dry it:** Fly larvae like a moist environment, approx. 40-60% water. Good drainage will reduce the number of potential breeding sites.

*If you would like any advice on implementing a comprehensive fly control programme this year, please contact the farm vet team.*

*Andrew Crutchley*

## Sheep News

Sheep mortalities seem to have been exceptionally high this year, with losses occurring pre and post lambing. The vast majority of the losses we have seen through post mortems this year have been liver fluke, hence the importance of having a good fluke control in place for this year. Other potential causes would be pasteurella, pneumonia and mastitis. Please let us know if you are experiencing high numbers of losses so we can post mortem sheep, confirm the cause and then put a culling plan in place to prevent further losses this year and in the future. We are also still seeing lots of abortion caused by enzootic and toxoplasma. MSD are running their

Flock Check scheme again this year. They cover the cost of the lab fees, you only pay the costs of sampling and postage and packaging.

Lean sheep also require attention. The body condition score (BCS) of ewes at lambing affects milk production and subsequently lamb growth rates. With a higher BCS ewes are able to mobilise body fat in order to meet the energy demands of lactation. Thin ewes are unable to do this however feeding can significantly help. The diagram illustrates ideal BCS through-out the year.



If ewes are below target at lambing time they should be separated into a 'thin' group and given additional supplementary feeding to ensure no further loss of body condition. At 8 weeks post lambing, thin ewes may again need supplementary feeding or you may consider early weaning of lambs, which would allow the ewe more time to regain condition pre-topping. The best grazing should be for lambs. AHDB research showed ewes that could lose 1 BCS from lambing to 8 weeks reared 6.2kg more weight of weaned lambs, and heavier ewes at weaning resulted in better scanning percentages. At weaning, it is important thin ewes are separated as they will need a good diet to reach optimum BCS for topping. Very lean sheep should be investigated for diseases such as fluke, johnes and maedi visna.



We have now been running our Flock Health Club for a year! Over this past year, we have held four meetings, covering lambing time success, lambing performance and growing lambs, Ram MOTs, Farm KPIs and Feeding the pregnant

ewe, all topics the group were keen to cover. We have collected and benchmarked masses of data allowing us to identify individual strengths as well as areas to improve on. The group has been a real success (and a laugh!) with everybody getting involved in group discussions and freely sharing their problems as well as thoughts and ideas. We have a couple of spaces available with our present group and could start a second group if there is enough interest. If you are interested in joining flock club for this following year, please get in touch with Judith or Becky.

*Becky Inman*