

## Farm Visits and Ordering Drugs During the Coming Weeks

To protect you and our staff, please can you ring all drug orders in to the surgery. This will mean we can ensure we have the products in that you need.

Please wait outside when you come to collect them – just ring to let us know you are waiting and we will bring them out to you.

We have good stocks of all the main farm drugs stored at both sites so there is no need to stockpile. There are some delivery delays with non stocked items such as vaccines due to driver shortages so please order these well in advance of needing them and we would advise ordering your 2nd doses at the same time as the 1st doses for primary courses.

We are currently delivering MOST farm visits, however a vet will ring you to discuss the safest manor in which this can be carried out before arriving on farm. E.g Where we may normally of worked with you restraining cattle close to us we will now ask the animal is appropriately re-restrained within a crush or similar to ensure we can observe the 2m social distancing rules wherever possible to protect us and you.

Thanks in advance, The WVG team



**Spring Offer**

**7.5% OFF all BVD vaccine  
when ordered with  
Spirovac**



Please contact the surgery for further information  
Valid for orders placed between February  
and the end of April

Well what a difference a month makes! As the weather has dried everything up a bit and the days are a whole chunk longer, so life has changed markedly for many folk too.

The 'New Normal' is likely here to stay for the immediate and medium term future as a result of the response to coronavirus spread. Thanks to all for respecting the social distancing and hygiene measures which will limit the rate of spread of the virus and also the amount of virus that many of us are likely to come into contact with. Clearly this will work better for us all in the long term- you are more likely to have access to a healthy team of vets who are able to come and tend to your animals, and also less likely to get sick yourselves and thus put the daily management and care of your animals in short-term jeopardy. Every animal handling situation that we put ourselves in varies, depending on the handling system, the patient and what we are trying to achieve. Yes, things may take a bit of working out and they may even take a bit longer than normal, but we'll all get there in the end.

On a brighter note, with the grim rainy weather in abatement as least for a few weeks, hygiene conditions for lambing have markedly improved. Relatively few reports of abortion, scour and joint-ill this year are testament to everyone's continual hard work, and a steady reduction in medicines such as antibiotics.

The situation regarding coronavirus is constantly changing, so let's all keep on talking to each other!

*Richard Knight*



## Trace minerals

### What are they?

In order for cattle to perform well they require several different minerals. Some are needed in large quantities (such as Calcium, Magnesium and Phosphorous) whereas others known as Trace minerals are needed in smaller quantities.



The most important trace minerals are Copper, Selenium, Cobalt and Iodine. Even though they are needed in smaller quantities, these minerals are essential for good health and productivity.

### Why are they important?

**Copper**→ The body requires it to carry out several different functions. Copper deficiency can result in scouring, poor growth and infertility. It can also cause light patches of hair around the eyes of dark coated cattle due to reduced pigmentation.

**Selenium**→ Very important for immune function and acts with vitamin E to protect the breakdown of cell membranes. Lack of selenium results in White Muscle disease, poor growth and infertility. It has also been shown to extend the calving period and can be linked to retained cleansings.

**Cobalt**→ A component of Vitamin B12 which helps the body to make energy. A deficiency results in poor growth rates and also reduced appetite.

**Iodine**→ Forms part of the hormone thyroxine which controls the animal's metabolism. In cattle iodine deficiency can cause an enlarged thyroid gland (goitre), retained placenta's, weak calves and neonatal mortality is also greatly increased.

Supplementation can be given in the form of mineral licks or in the ration, however you don't often know if each individual cow is receiving the appropriate quantities, or any at all depending on your feeding system. Requirements for the trace minerals vary during the production cycle, with requirements being higher during times of stress. For example, calves would benefit from supplementation during the neonatal period, at vaccination, weaning and housing. For adult cattle, both dairy and beef, supplementation would be beneficial pre-breeding and pre-calving.

We now sell an injectable form of the trace elements needed for cattle at the practice. An injectable form ensures each individual cow is receiving an appropriate amount at the right time. If you would like to know how this product would fit into your production cycle, or about trace mineral supplementation in general, please contact one of the farm team.

Liz Aubrey

## Sheep News

So as I speak the sun is shining, lambs are sunbathing and for those of you who are lambing the conditions look good. Keeping lambs growing is the next priority and usually in this area the main stumbling block to that is cobalt deficiency. If you know this is an issue for you starting treatment early in the growing season will pay dividends. If you don't know whether you have issues with cobalt: blood test to check once your oldest lambs are 10-12 weeks old.



If you are interested in what energy and protein grass is providing to sheep and lambs at present the '**Forage for Knowledge**' page from AHDB makes really interesting reading. <https://ahdb.org.uk/knowledge-library/grass>

What is going on in the world outside is frightening but what are the disease risks for your growing lambs?

The biggest risks to growing lambs are coccidiosis and nematodiarus. If your lambs are housed for several weeks or grazing the same pastures as they did last year, they will be at risk of coccidiosis. The tiny parasites infect the gut causing significant damage and poorer doing lambs are always the hardest hit. As every gram of faeces from an affected lambs can have 1000's of eggs in it and it only takes 5-10 to infect the next lamb it is easy to see how infection spreads rapidly and can be devastating. Treating quickly if you see lambs scouring or if you had issues last year, treating before disease is obvious is a good option. There are 2 drugs available to treat coccidiosis each with its own pros and cons so please talk to one of the farm team if you have an issue.

The nematodirus forecast (<https://www.scops.org.uk/forecasts/nematodirus-forecast/>) is running again so it's worth keeping an eye on it to see when or if your lambs are likely to be at risk. If you have been using this over the past few years you will know when issues develop on your farm in relation to the map. Don't forget the main risks are to lambs who fit the following criteria:-



- Lambs grazing in fields grazed by lambs last year
- Lambs 6-12 weeks old as the mass hatch happens but may be younger if ewes are not milking well.
- Groups where there is also likely to be a challenge from coccidiosis? For example, mixed aged lambs are a higher risk
- After a period of cold followed by a period of warm weather which would mean lots of eggs hatching simultaneously
- Lambs that are under other stresses e.g. triplets, fostered, on young or older ewes.

For the vast majority of our clients, a white drench (benzimidazole) is indicated at this time although a limited number of clients do have nematodirus that are resistant to white wormers so should discuss options with one of the team.

Judith Lee