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### The Five Point Plan

Reducing the amount of lameness seen in a flock is not just about treating individuals, although this is obviously important. The Five Point Plan has been highly successful on farms that have implanted it as the strategies work together to control and reduce lameness by:

- Selecting sheep that have better natural genetic resilience
- Decreasing the disease challenge
- Increasing the immunity



To discuss any lameness issues you are having, good foot bathing procedures or the five point plan in more detail contact a member of the Farm team.

Bethany Collins

For many, the annual reviews of National Johne's Management Plan (NJMP) will be approaching. To satisfy the requirements of the NJMP three steps need to be completed on farm along with a BCVA Accredited Johne's Veterinary advisor;



1. Risk assessment to identify risks for Johne's spread on your farm
2. Testing to establish Johne's disease status on farm
3. A written Johne's disease management plan

All three steps must be completed and reviewed annually in order for an accredited vet to be able to sign an Action Johne's declaration which is required for Red Tractor Farm Assurance and by milk buyers. Management strategies differ between farms depending on their individual statuses. If you would like to clarify what steps you need to take in order to be able to complete your annual review please contact the surgery and one of the farm team will be able to advise you.

*Please note the deadline for declarations has been extended from the 31st October 2020 to the 31st December 2020.*

While the weather can't make up its mind what it's going to do, there's an upsurge in pneumonia cases- particularly among adult cattle. If you don't know the IBR (Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis) status of your herd, then it's a good idea to check. IBR can be a predisposing factor of pneumonia and respiratory disease in adult cattle. Also, have a look at when the last booster was done, as most programmes that folk are on require a booster injection every six months. A lot of the adult pneumonia cases that we are seeing are just off their milk, with a reduced appetite and breathing faster than their herdmates. The lungs are very rough to listen to- producing a sound akin to that of someone sawing through wood. Often in these cases, the temperature is normal, but the cow is clearly still sick. Treatment is needed, so if you are not sure, give us a call.



The few frosty mornings we have had are a welcome sight at the moment. With the ups-and-downs of the temperature outside, we have seen a steady trickle of calves with pneumonia too. If they are off their food for a day it is better to check them out straight-away, as we have had several cases where initial signs have gone untreated, to develop into a pneumonia which is a lot more difficult to cure a few days later. If you are unsure if a calf is ill, then taking its temperature is a great way to start investigations. In Fahrenheit, the normal temperature is 101.5°F, which is equivalent to 38.6°C. Anything above that can be considered abnormal, but severity tends to advance by increments. Commonly we will come across calves with pneumonia with temperatures around 40°C, equivalent to 104°F. Liz has written an excellent article over the page with lots of useful information and tips.

Fertility in general seems to be improving from summer lows. It is a nice change from last year to be able to PD plenty of cows in-calf, and heifers too. Some animals that are not seen bulling are actually not cycling at all. This is especially important to determine for beef and dairy animals alike, especially heifers, as the management of those affected may need to be changed to give them a better chance of starting to cycle again and getting in calf. This typically might be putting them back an age group in the case of heifers, concentrate feeding, or assessing their trace element and mineral status. Beef animals which are not cycling may be easily mistaken as being in-calf as they show no heats.

This will be the last newsletter before the Christmas so from all the team at WVG have a safe and Happy Christmas and see you in the New Year.

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

## Calf Pneumonia

**What is pneumonia?** Pneumonia is the term used to describe any inflammation to the lungs or airways that reduces the animal's ability to breathe normally. Damage to the airways and lung tissue can sometimes be irreversible and because of this, it is really important to put preventative measures in place. It is a very significant disease in young and housed calves and can cost the farming industry millions per year.

**Cause?** Calf pneumonia is often caused by an initial viral infection (IBR, RSV, Pi3 and BVD) which in turn can leave the calf susceptible to a secondary bacterial infection on top of that (Mycoplasma bovis, Pastuerella, Mannheimia and Haemophilus). It is classed as a 'multi-factorial' disease, meaning there can be several factors that can lead to the disease;

- Poor or inadequate colostrum
- High stocking density or mixing different age groups
- Buying in stock of unknown disease status
- Environment e.g. damp draughty spaces or inadequate ventilation/ air flow
- Stress e.g. castration, dehorning

**Clinical signs?** Symptoms of the disease can include;

- Increased Respiratory rate or respiratory effort
- Coughing
- Nasal discharge
- Reduction in feed intake
- Dull or quiet demeanour
- Increased rectal temperature

**Treatment?** Animals showing clinical signs should be treated promptly and should include an appropriate antibiotic (speak to one of us) coupled with an anti-inflammatory as well to reduce lung damage.

**Prevention?** Ways to prevent pneumonia in youngstock can be broken down into a few categories:

**Calf immunity-** We want the calf's immune system to be able to fight off the pathogens that cause pneumonia, and the two ways we can help to build and boost a calf's immune system is to ensure adequate and good quality colostrum, and also by implementing a vaccination programme. If you are interested in the pneumonia vaccines we have to offer at the practice or how this may help your young stock please get in touch with one of the farm vets and we can discuss this further.

**Reduce calf stress-** Stress can contribute to respiratory disease, and so gradual weaning, timing of disbudding/dehorning and castration and minimising transport where possible are all ways to reduce stress in young calves.

**Calf Environment –** We need to minimise the calf's exposure to the pathogens. Try to avoid overcrowding, poor ventilation and high humidity as these can make them more susceptible to respiratory disease. Also avoid mixing age groups where you can, and if you have bought in any stock keep them separate to ensure they are not carrying and incubating any respiratory pathogens. Lastly ensure appropriate cleaning and disinfection of calf pens between batches.

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Prevention is most definitely better than cure in the case of pneumonia. The damaging effects it can have on the lungs and airways can affect the animal for life and reduce its overall productivity. In reality, the loss of future performance is the biggest cost of pneumonia.

Liz Aubrey

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## Lameness in Sheep

Lameness in sheep is probably one of the most frequent topic of conversation between vets and sheep farmers, whether that be at the annual Red Tractor review or over the phone when problems have flared up. Sheep may be lame for various reasons, some of which can spread from sheep to sheep. The most common causes of lameness are Scald, Footrot and Contagious Ovine Digital Dermatitis (CODD).

### **Scald**

Scald is one of the most common causes of lameness. The bacteria that causes scald, *Fusobacterium necrophorum*, is found in the environment and spreads well when conditions are wet underfoot as they are at the moment. The skin between the claws becomes swollen and inflamed and has a pastey white scum. There is no under-running of the hoof wall and no foul smell with scald but scald can also be seen in the early stages of some more severe lameness's so treating it quickly and effectively is important. Individual cases of scald should be treated with topical oxytetracycline sprays. If big groups are affected then foot bathing can be an effective control strategy – but only when done well!

### **Footrot**

Footrot is caused by the bacteria *Dichelobacter Nodosus*, which can live on pasture or bedding for up to 7-10 days. Lesions start out looking similar to scald, with swelling and moistening of the skin between the claws, but the horn becomes detached and there is a characteristic 'foul' odour. Peaks in cases often occur when sheep are grazing intensively, e.g. at tupping time, or when housed. Injectable antibiotics, topical antibiotic spray and pain relief should be used for animals suffering from foot rot. There is a vaccine available which is licensed for the control of footrot and can also help to reduce levels of CODD.

### **CODD**

CODD is associated with treponemes, a type of bacteria, but can also involve *D.nodosus*. Sheep with CODD are often very lame and typically have one claw affected on the lame leg. In the early stages there is a small sore on the coronary band which travels down the hoof and can lead to the hoof capsule to come away. This damage can be so severe that horn regrowth is permanently affected. CODD is usually brought into a flock by purchased animals so careful examination of stock prior to purchase and good quarantine procedures are key to preventing CODD being introduced. Because of how deep the treponeme bacteria get into the tissues, injectable antibiotics should be used, along with pain relief and spray. Continued over page...