

TB Testing

We are extremely busy with TB testing at the moment, therefore we would appreciate 2 weeks notice for any pre-movement tests required.

Upcoming Courses

Milksure Course

When: Friday 14th February

Where: Westmorland Vets, Natland Rd, Kendal,

Time: 1-3.00pm.

Dairy Mastering Medicines

When: Friday 6th March

Where: Westmorland Vets, Natland Rd, Kendal,

Time: 1-3.30pm.

Cost: £35.00 ea

To book onto any of these courses please tel Anne at the office 01539 722692



Cumbria Strategic Farm event

Tuesday 18 February, Penrith, Cumbria

- Overview of changes implemented and progress made on farm
- Tips for wet weather and grazing strategies
- Challenge Sheep project results on ewe longevity and BCS
- Specialist sheep vet, Fiona Lovett, advises on liver fluke, control plans and drench resistance

Keep an eye on ahdb.org.uk/events for updates and info on booking



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

In the Brief

Well the New Year seems to have started mostly soggy and warm (unless the snow that's forecast comes along in the week as I write this). A small flurry of calf pneumonia has come along with it though. These cases are still caused by the usual culprits of viruses and bacteria, often mixed together (including coronavirus, but thankfully a different strain to the Chinese one). If you are not sure that the responses to treatment are as good as you would expect, then give us a call as some further investigation as to what the underlying causes are may be money well spent. As a rough rule of thumb we would expect cure rates to a single treatment course to be above 80%.



Dairy cow fertility seems to have turned a corner too, with an increasing number of positive PD's around. The increased use of sexed semen in mature cows may be responsible for some of the recent downturns in conception on some farms- always worth bearing this in mind when considering which animals other than heifers to use it on. As semen sexing technology improves I can see this problem lessening- indeed we have a few farms now that notice no difference between conception rates to standard semen and sexed semen, in that they are both good.

Richard Knight

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Using medicines in Food Producing Animals

Using medicines according to data sheet/veterinary instruction and applying appropriate milk and meat withholdings is by no means a new concept to us and we are all aware that abiding by these rules is a vital step in the production of milk or meat that is safe to enter the food chain.

Recent developments in testing technology now allow for the processors, manufacturers and government agencies responsible for food safety to test more quickly, widely and cheaply than before.

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An example of this is the **Infiniplex for milk test (IPM)** that is now widely available and is capable of reliably detecting minute traces of veterinary medicine products which should not be present in milk.

The IPM test is capable of detecting more than just antibiotics and can detect a whole host of drugs including **flukicides, wormers, anti-inflammatories (e.g. metacam) and steroids.**

As milk is now regularly being screened for these products we advise you to:



Follow data sheet instructions for use and abide by the withholds;

If a product is not used in accordance with data sheet instructions, e.g. frequency of treatment increased, the dose is increased or the course is longer than advised, **this should only be under veterinary guidance and the vet will advise you on an appropriate withhold.**

Regularly check data sheets for changes;

Check with a farm vet before using a product if you are in any doubt as to if it should be used especially where milking cattle are concerned.

Be aware that many products have withholds following calving, even in they are used at the recommended time prior to calving, the correct withhold must be observed;

Also, do not be caught out by premature calvings – correct withdrawal periods must still be adhered to.

Do not use products that are not licensed for use in lactating dairy cows in milking cows;

(e.g. Some calf pneumonia drugs and most flukicides are licensed for calves and beef cattle but MUST NOT be used in dairy cattle.

Keep accurate and clear records of all medicines used;

This is a legal requirement. If farm medicine records are not accurate and a food safety incident occurs then it is possible that authorities could put lengthy, if not lifetime, withholds on some or all stock.

Be aware of risks associated with pour on/topical products.

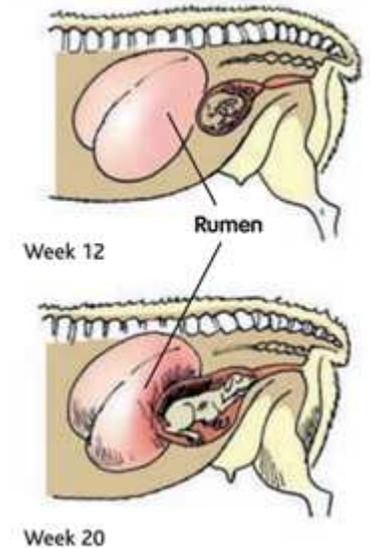
Pour ons may be licked off by other cattle so it is advised that treated cattle are kept away from untreated cattle until the product is safely absorbed. Topical products, such as antibiotic sprays, may contaminate milk and could also lead to bulk tank failures.

Beth Collins

Ewe Nutrition Pre-Lambing Part 2

Last month's newsletter dealt with feeding ewes forage in the build-up to lambing – this issue we look at the crucial final third of the sheep's pregnancy.

The last six weeks of pregnancy are when 70% of foetal growth occurs. The energy demands of the ewe will almost double - but as the lambs and uterus increase in size, they take up more space meaning the rumen cannot fill up as much as normal. For this reason, it is critical that food going in is of high quality to provide for her needs!



Feeding Concentrates

When buying concentrates it is important to look closely at the ingredients:

- Energy should be **12.5MJ/kg DM (dry matter)** or above.
- Aim for **18-20% CP (crude protein)**. The main protein-providing ingredients are key: Soya, Rapeseed, Wheat, Distillers grains and Beans will make a far better ration than urea – even if they don't provide quite as high a total CP.
- Ideally the concentrate should be no higher than **10%** for **fibre and ash**. Fibre is a key part of the diet, however it is low in energy and should be provided in the forage not the concentrate.

Reduction in rumen fill potential during pregnancy.
Image from AHDB Better

Tips for Feeding

- Avoid feeding more than 0.5kg of concentrate per ewe at a time as this can cause the rumen to become more acidic, and less effective at digesting the rest of the ration. Divide the concentrate into two/three daily feeds to avoid this issue.
- Ensure feed troughs are clean to avoid bacterial build up. If feeding off the floor, make sure bedding is clean and dry. In the face of enzootic and toxoplasma abortions, feeding from dirty floors are an infection risk!

Blood sampling of ewes

To check if the nutrition plan for the ewes is working, we can come and collect some blood samples for analysis. The best way to do this would be to pick ewes who are due to lamb first, and sample them 2-4 weeks pre lambing.

We can test for beta hydroxybutyrate (BHB) which assesses energy, and urea and albumin which indicate short and long term protein levels, respectively.

If any issues are identified, we can make an intervention at this point. It will be more challenging to make changes to the first ewes lambing, but this should provide enough time to get the rest of the flock sorted.

Gus Cassie