



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.

Small Holders Club

From a couple of pigs to a small flock of sheep to a herd of alpaca we understand that your animals are important to you. We aim to work closely with our smallholders to ensure that their livestock are healthy and productive.

We understand the importance of a transparent, fair pricing structure and are pleased to now be able to offer membership to our Smallholders club.

What is included:

- An on farm health planning meeting per year to review past performance and update herd/flock health plan for the next year. This will include a management calendar and written herd health plan.

- Three worm and fluke egg counts to monitor parasite burden throughout the grazing season and allow an appropriate parasite control plan to be implemented.

- Quarterly smallholder specific newsletter.

- Complimentary access to our winter discussion group of quarterly evening meetings covering topical issues and technical advice including one "Ask the Vet" session!

All for only £12 per month

Please contact Rebecca at the surgery for more information



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



PRACTICE NEWS

KENDAL ○ KIRKBY LONSDALE ○ ULVERSTON

November 2020

'What a difference a month makes! We are now in a world of water. The remaining maize left outside is doing well to stand up to the onslaught of the wind and rain, hopefully this first week in November will give a bit of respite to get those final crops tidied up. Dairy cows seem mostly relieved to be inside, judging by the reported milk volume increases and good milk quality that seems to be present. Hopefully happy and well-fed cows will conceive a bit better than they did through the grazing season, with a lot of pregnancies being hard-won. With the increasing use of sexed semen in dairy cows as a broad-brush approach to breeding, it should be borne in mind that when used at a whole herd level, conception across the herd can deteriorate. This is important as the conception rates dip then individual cows take longer to get in calf, increasing the herd average days-in-milk (DIM). These days, we regularly use pregnancy rate to see which way the trends are going (recorded herds). Most herds still have a relatively standard lactation curve which will lead to a deterioration in yield of about 2.5% per week after peak yield has been reached. If the herd average DIM increases, by say 2 weeks, due to a change in breeding policy, then this will lead to roughly a 5% reduction in yield.



We have had a few reports of lambs taking a bit longer to finish this year. This may be linked to trace element availability in grass. We have seen a few issues with mineral availability in grazed animals generally this year. Supplements are often successful in increasing weight gain. Please discuss with one of our vets as some tests may be required to navigate a way through the minefield of trace element supplementation.

Richard Knight

Pneumonia Vaccination

Autumnal weather and animals coming into housing are two of the biggest contributing factors in developing pneumonia in calves. Now is the time to act to limit the challenge on your farm. Please talk to the farm vet team about which pneumonia vaccination and protocol will be most suited for your system. Once you have decided which vaccines will be best for you please give us a call so we can get them ordered for you.



Milksure

A bulk tank failure due to antibiotic residues, is stressful and costly, and something that all dairy farmers want to avoid. Until I did the milksure course, I had wrongly assumed that failures were not a common occurrence and I think this is a viewpoint that most people share. Actually about 5 herds fail on a bulk milk every day of the year in the UK. These figures don't include the ones where producers realise there has been a mistake and forewarn the dairy. Bulk tank failures cost farmers around £1.5 million per year and cost the industry around £4.3 million per year. In the UK dairy industry the rate of antibiotic residue failures is far worse than the rest of Europe and the USA, where no insurance is available against residue failures.

Dairy UK are under increasing pressure from the Food Standards Agency to reduce our antibiotic failure rates. This is due to it being costly and potentially harmful for consumers as well as increasing the risk of developing antibiotic resistance. A failure gives the dairy industry a bad name and there is concern that our poor rate of antibiotic failures compared to other countries could affect trade deals post Brexit.

Data from one of the UK's largest milk buyers, with around 30% of the supply pool, suggest that:

- 35% of bulk tank failures are due to dry cow therapy
- 26% are due to off label use of medicines.

A newer residue test is being used for surveillance only and can detect more drugs than the older tests. It is possible that these will be used routinely more and more as they can also detect NSAIDs e.g. metacam and flunixin as well as flukicides and wormers.

Milk Sure, is a training course for farmers and their staff to safeguard residue free milk. It is a requirement of many milk producers and has been developed by Dairy UK and the BCVA (British Cattle Veterinary Association) to help reduce the UK's residue failure rate. This is also a recognised certificate for your Red Tractor assessment for responsible use of medicines. Despite the current COVID restrictions, we are still running the course at the practice, although on an individual basis. Please speak to us if you need to enrol, or would like help with the annual top-up requirements.

Rebecca Howard

Camelid Microchips for identification

Microchips are a vital form of identification in livestock. Chipping the animals not only enables the owner to identify a particular animal, but also allows the police and local vets etc to identify an animal by referring to the various lost animal or breeder databases.

Microchips are a safe and reliable way to tag your alpacas. They are easy to implant and once implanted are invisible. In the unfortunate event that your stock is stolen, you have a much better chance of getting them back. Although there is currently no legal requirement for alpacas to be microchipped, it is a necessity if alpacas are to be registered with BAS as pedigree animals.

If you interested in having your alpacas microchipped, please get in contact with us at the surgery.

Pregnancy scanning in ewes to monitor and improve flock performance

As producing food efficiently becomes more important, the collection of data is key to help us best manage flocks.

The best time to scan ewes is between 60 and 90 days in lamb. A skilled sheep scanner will be able identify those ewes that are barren as well as the number of lambs she is carrying. Identifying empty ewes has multiple benefits; it allows them to be culled sooner rather than later, reducing feed costs and provides income from her sale. Knowing this information means that ewes can be batched for easier and more targeted management and feeding avoiding problems with things like twin-lamb and difficult lambings or from under or overfeeding. Of course, correct feeding of ewes is vital in giving lambs the best start possible.

Scanning is the first point in the sheep calendar when we can begin monitoring a flock's performance. From looking at scanning results not only can we identify barren rates, which may indicate underlying disease or problems around tupping time, but we can also distinguish between barren ewes resulting from poor conception rates during tupping time or high abortion rates which may present as 'barren' ewes at lambing time. Obviously, the causes for each can be different and investigation is important. The following Key performance indicators (KPIs) are a useful way of assessing the productivity of a flock and teasing out areas where losses occurred;

KPI	Calculation	Target
Scanning %	Total number of Lambs scanned/ ewes tupped x 100	Lowland – 200% Upland – 175% Hill – 115%
Barren ewes	barren ewes/ewes tupped x100	<2%
Lambing %	Lambs born/ewes tupped x 100	Lowland – 195% Upland – 170% Hill – 110%
Abortion %	Ewes aborted/ewes tupped x 100	<2%
Lamb losses from scanning to rearing	(lambs scanned – lambs reared)/ lambs scanned x 100	<15%



If you want to discuss your scanning results please give one of the farm vets a call at the surgery.

Bethany Collins