

Up coming Courses:

Pneumonia in the Beef Herd—free

Tues 3rd September, Hot Pot supper from 7pm
Westmorland Vets—Kendal

Veterinary consultant Colin Lindsay is coming to talk about the impact of pneumonia on growth rates in the beef herd, new vaccines available and advances in diagnostics to aid the diagnosis of the causes of pneumonia within your herd. Tel office to reserve a place.



Dairy Mastering Medicines

Thursday 5th September 1.30pm -3.30pm

Westmorland Vets—Kendal

£35.00, to book your place, please telephone

01539 722692



Milksure Course

Friday 6th September 1pm—3pm

A training course for farmers to safeguard residue-free milk

Contact Anne in the office if you need any further information or to book in.



Beef and Sheep Mastering Medicines

Thursday 3rd October 1pm -3.30pm

Westmorland Vets—Kendal

£35.00, to book your place please telephone 01539

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Westmorland welcomes two new graduate vets - Elizabeth and Gus- to the farm team this month! Here is a bit more about them both:

Elizabeth graduated from the Royal Veterinary College in 2019. Her passion for all areas of farm medicine began during her first lambing season when she was 15 years old working on a Northumberland farm. Recent farming adventures took Elizabeth across the pond to increase her knowledge of dairy farming whilst working in Wisconsin. In addition a placement in Texas allowed her to learn more about the Beef industry.

Elizabeth is a County Durham girl whose particular interest is dairy reproduction and fertility. Cumbria captivated Elizabeth with its beautiful mountains and countryside whilst on her Duke of Edinburgh's award expeditions and camping with her local Scout group. In her free time she enjoys hiking, skiing and watching rugby.

Gus graduated from Edinburgh University this summer. He grew up in Scotland, but after really enjoying lambing near Kirkby Lonsdale for the past 5 years, he decided to move down as a new graduate. He has always had a strong interest in farm practice, having done a calving season on a dairy farm in New Zealand and worked with farm vets in Alberta, Canada during his studies. Gus is looking forward to getting stuck in to all aspects of the job, and in his free time he is hoping to squeeze in as much hiking, running and cycling in the hills as he can!

They are both looking forward to getting out and meeting you all in the coming weeks!



Beef focus: Risk of over fat autumn calving suckler cows

This summer we have been lucky enough to have had a good grazing season (so far!) with good grass growth. However, this presents some challenges as autumn calving cows will have likely gained excess condition and be extremely fit in many cases. As we all know fat cows are much more likely to have calving difficulties.

Over the last few weeks SAC consulting have published the following advice on how to deal with over conditioned suckler cows which we thought was worthwhile sharing more widely:

- Delay weaning for as long as possible.
 - However, it is vital that that every cow is weaned at least 3 weeks before she is due to calve to ensure adequate build-up of colostrum.
- Put cows on the poorest pasture possible to maximise their grazing time and hence their exercise and fitness.
 - This would not be best for the calf at foot so creep feeding would be required.
- An alternative option is to wean cows early, put their calves on to aftermaths/your best quality grazing and heavily graze dry cows on poorer quality pastures.
 - As a rough guide, stocking rates should be double normal numbers
- With later calvers being the fittest it might be worthwhile splitting the herd and weaning at different times.
- Always ensure sufficient minerals are available, in particular Magnesium
- Consider housing the fattest cows so that feed intakes can be controlled.
 - The target for a 650kg cow would be around 70MJ ME / day. As well as minerals and vitamins ensure that the ration supplies at least 10% crude protein.
- Turn cows and calves back out to grass asap after calving with a high Magnesium mineral available.



As a note of caution with any of the above strategies, we have seen a higher than usual number of staggers cases this summer and it is very important that your supplementation is adequate. If you require any advice on different supplementation strategies, please speak to one of the farm team.

Andrew Crutchley

Cull Ewes

Have you given much thought to how many ewes you cull? The target is <15% but whether your figure is running above this or below it there is a lot of information about your flock that a cull ewe can tell us. After all they've hopefully been on your farm for some time and have seen all the viruses, bacteria and parasites that are potentially circulating in the flock. Screening cull ewes is an effective way of finding costly infectious diseases that may have gone unnoticed. For example:

Maedi Visna: MV is a viral condition that causes loss of body condition, pneumonia, mastitis and arthritis. The disease only becomes apparent when more than 50% of the flock is infected. There is no treatment or vaccine hence why it is so important to detect it before it spreads further.

Johnes: This is a bacterial disease, usually picked up as a lamb which then causes the ewe to lose body condition when she is an adult. It can take many years for the signs of Johnes disease to become apparent and unlike cattle they don't usually scour. Like MV there is no treatment.

OPA: Also known as Jaagsiekte, it's another viral disease which causes tumours in the lungs. These tumours often produce a copious amount of mucous which impairs respiratory function. It is possible to scan the lungs for tumours but sometimes a post mortem is needed. Again there is no cure or vaccine available.

CLA: Caseous lymphadenitis is a bacterial disease of the lymph nodes. It usually presents as thin ewes with or without lumpy lymph nodes but it can also present as mastitis.

Although this seems like a long list of very different diseases they all have several things in common.

- They only show signs in adults i.e. years and years after infection.
- They are very contagious
- They cause huge economic losses across the UK flock.
- They all often present as thin ewes despite treatment for parasites.
- They cannot be cured!

IF THESE DISEASES ARE PRESENT IN YOUR FLOCK WE NEED TO KNOW SO WE CAN GET IT UNDER CONTROL. A good way to see if there is the possibility of an underlying problem is to put these thin ewes onto good pasture following weaning and treatment for worms/fluke. If they don't put on condition something sinister may be at play. Fetch a few down to the surgery and we can blood/muck sample them for these common diseases.

Jaz Smith