

# Farm Animal Practice News

Spring  
2019



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**Langford Vets** 

 University of  
**BRISTOL**

# Welcome

**Langford Vets Farm Animal Practice welcomes you to the Spring newsletter**

**The lambing season is well underway, with some of you finishing up already. The weather so far this year has been somewhat different to last year with record temperatures in February so be on the lookout for signs of worm burdens earlier this year.**

By now you should have received a letter announcing our prices are changing on 1st April. If you haven't received a letter, or have any questions please give us a call.

Sadly, Pete will be leaving us in May. He has been away on paternity leave and will be returning in April for a few weeks before he finishes. We wish him luck in his new ventures, and we have a new vet starting with us in the summer.



## Client meeting

Worming: what you need to think about

When: 17th April 2019

Location: Langford Vets

Price: Free

It's important as vets to never overlook common diseases that can affect both young and old animals. At this time of year an increase in young stock, who have poor immune systems, often leads to overstocking, meaning that parasite numbers increase exponentially. The meeting will discuss the common parasites your flocks and herds may encounter, how we can treat the problems and more importantly how we can prevent them. The meeting will include going over the latest SCOPs principles which should be utilised by all flocks in order to reduce the level of anthelmintic resistance in a cost-effective manner.

Book online: [langfordvets.co.uk/events](http://langfordvets.co.uk/events)

or call our Farm Animal Practice on 01934 852650 (8.30-5.00 Mon to Fri)

## Betamox LA Withdrawal Changes

You may have read in the farming press that the withdrawal period is changing for Betamox LA. Following a request from the VMD, Norbrook the makers of Betamox LA are amending the withdrawal period in the UK to incorporate an additional 30% safety margin.

The new withdrawal period will come into place over the next six months. You have until August to use up your current stock, after then you must adhere to the new withdrawal periods, which are as follows:

### Cattle

Meat and offal: 28 days

Milk: 84 hours

### Pigs

Meat and offal: 19 days

### Sheep

Meat and offal: 19 days

Not for use in sheep producing milk for human consumption

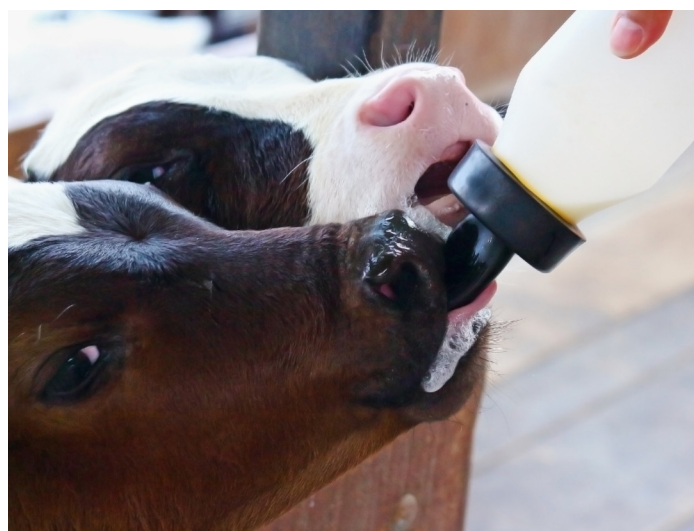
If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## Immucol

The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 requires each calf to consume bovine colostrum within the first six hours of life. In order to provide the calf with immunity to combat the common diseases they will face during their day-to-day lives they rely entirely on colostrum providing them with essential antibodies, energy and vitamins A and D. We all know the importance of ensuring newborns get adequate and sufficient colostrum but what if the dam doesn't have any?

Unfortunately, there are times when there is no colostrum available; it might be poor quality, the calf may not suckle, there might be insufficient quantity or perhaps none at all. The next best option is to use colostrum from another dam. However, if you don't have any available then you must look to using colostrum replacers. There are so many products available on the market but many will only contain energy and vitamins - not the essential antibodies that the calf requires.

The Immucol range is guaranteed EBL, IBR and Johne's free and is 100% natural colostrum. It is a complete replacement for maternal colostrum and is now available from the Farm Animal Practice.



## Warning: the Worms are Still Alive

Due to warmer weather and fewer frosts this winter, many parasite larvae which are usually killed off by cold weather will have survived on pasture. This means that animals turned out to pasture are at risk of developing high worm burdens early in the season, and are at a much greater risk of clinical disease.

This is especially true for Nematodirus - mass hatching of infective larvae may occur much earlier than usual this year. 6-12 week old lambs are most vulnerable; severe, often life-threatening parasitic gastroenteritis (PGE) can occur. Keep an eye out on the SCOPS Nematodirus forecast to see the risk in your area.

### What can you do?

- Faecal Egg Count (FEC) ewes pre-lambing and lambs
- Selectively treat ewes shedding the most eggs - often these are the ewes under the most pressure in late pregnancy (lower body condition, younger ewes, and triplets). Leave AT LEAST 10-20% ewes in each grazing group untreated
- FEC ewes every 6 weeks whilst they are feeding the lambs (producing milk immuno-suppresses the sheep)
- FEC lambs from 6 weeks of age and then at 5-6 week intervals after that, earlier if there are any signs of poor growth or scour
- The faecal egg counts will also detect any coccidia
- Always make sure any treatment you give is effective
- Correct dose (check your dosing gun! Studies have shown there is massive variation between what a dosing gun may say, and what it is delivering)
- Correct animal weight - dose to the heaviest
- Level of resistance - if you suspect the product has not worked then you can perform a faecal egg count reduction test (FECRT) to test for resistance - this involves repeating FEC 2 weeks after worming (7 days for yellow drench - LV)
- Product choice - discuss with your vet an appropriate product for your flock

### Appropriate pasture management

- Especially for the prevention of Nematodirus in lambs, avoid putting lambs on pasture that sheep were on the previous year.
- If your worm problem persists, speak to your vet as it may be worth investigating reasons for this such as trace element deficiency.

### How to take a good pooled faecal sample

- Gather sheep into a corner of a field and hold them there for 10 minutes
- Use a pair of disposable gloves to collect fresh (soft and ideally warm) faeces from different piles
- Collect the same amount of faeces from each pile (a couple of pellets from each pile, or about the size of a 50p coin)
- You must collect samples from at least 10% of the group
- Samples must be kept refrigerated in an airtight container or plastic bag, and delivered to the vets for analysis within 48 hours of collection.

## Fly Control

Blowfly strike is a major welfare concern and an important cause of ill thrift and death in affected animals.

### Control methods

#### •Chemical pour ons

#### •Plunge dips

#### •Farm management

Graze on exposed and unsheltered pastures

Dagging / crutching - start in April and repeat every 4-6 weeks

Shearing

Control GI parasites and scours

Nutrition - access to dry forage if on rich spring pastures

Control of mites/skin diseases and infected cuts

Control of footrot - smell very attractive to flies

Do not overstock

Ensure well drained fields

Keep dung heaps away from stock

#### •Fly traps

Monitoring to ensure chemical preventatives are applied at the right time

Can also be used to reduce fly populations

#### • Tail docking?

Often cited as necessary to reduce risk of fly strike, however, the ability to shake an undocked tail may deter flies from landing. It is the amount of soiling around the tail and the length of wool, not necessarily the length of the tail.

**Sheep require daily inspection for flystrike during high risk periods**

**Dirty back ends in lambs is NOT normal - this could be a sign of worms (but could also be caused by lush grass or mineral deficiencies).**



## Prolapse Harnesses

Using a prolapse harness is a gentle non-invasive treatment for a vaginal prolapse. If properly fitted it will prevent ewes from straining and pushing the prolapse back out. If prolapses are treated early (when small) success rate is high.

### How do they work?

When a ewe strains, her neck drops and her back arches. This pulls the cross webbing of the harness tighter against the vulva and prevents the vagina from prolapsing.

**Although ewes can lamb past a harness, ideally remove it when she is lambing.**

**An animal's tendency to prolapse has strong genetic links. So, it's good management to cull any ewe that prolapses from the next breeding season—and do not retain any of her lambs.**



## Alpacas Unpacking

Hopefully by now you know which of your dams are pregnant and have a rough idea of when they are due to give birth (I know they often like to keep you hanging on!). If you are going to arrange for plasma to be collected from the dams please do this now. We are unable to spin the bags down for you but are happy to come out and take blood if needed.

It's important to be prepared and this starts with ensuring that the dams are in optimum condition (BCS 3.0/ 5.0) before giving birth. It is best to body condition score or weigh all dams every two weeks. Those with low or decreasing body condition scores need individual modified stalls faecal egg counts so that they can be wormed appropriately and can be kept an eye upon. By doing faecal egg counts you can ensure the alpacas have no *Eimeria macusaniensis*. This must be treated before dams are moved to a clean pasture to ensure the crias are not exposed to this potentially deadly parasite once they are born. Please take care that younger dams in large groups have sufficient access to concentrate feed so that their body condition is not adversely affected as the cria makes more energy demands of the dam as it enters the final trimester.

All alpacas should receive a dose of an ADE supplement as spring approaches. Please give the dams their annual clostridial vaccination booster 4-6 weeks prior to them unpacking so that they can provide colostrum immunity to the crias. If regularly handled the dams should not find this unnecessarily stressful. We really do emphasise the importance of vaccinating the dams and NOT the new born crias as their immune system may react adversely to the vaccination.

Make sure that dams are kept calm leading up to the birthing and do not alter groups to ensure an equilibrium is formed in the herd. Lots of space allows alpacas to go off and give birth so do not overstock. Make sure that you are prepared. Have lube and Hibiscrub in stock in case you need to aid the unpacking. If any dams do sadly lose a cria during birthing, then it's essential to strip the colostrum which can then be frozen for any future crias that may need it.

If you have any worries please give us a call and we are happy to advise over the phone or come out to help you at this stressful time.



### Farm Animal Practice Opening Hours

**Mon-Fri 8.30am - 5pm**

### Telephone:

**01934 852 650**

**24 hour emergency cover**

**Email us:** [farmpractice@langfordvets.co.uk](mailto:farmpractice@langfordvets.co.uk)

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