



Welcome

For us and yourselves, the next few months are our busiest time of year but I do feel that this year, barring any unforeseen issues, we are ready with a full supportive team for the mayhem that comes with lambing and the rest of the spring jobs. Over the past couple of years we have recruited young vets, vet techs and office staff. What they have lacked in experience they have made up for in enthusiasm and it is a pleasure to be involved in their training and mentoring. We have everything crossed for some drier weather this spring.

Mark Stott

The Ever Changing TB Picture

The TB situation is everchanging- we are ready to see the back of a few radials this year. Although unfortunately no crystal ball is available for what the future brings, alternatively, ignorance is bliss as they say! We are going into the future well prepared with Ruby now a qualified ATT (approved TB tester) and Mary well underway with her training.

TB testing can seem a thank-less task, though it's got to be done! Below are a few considerations to help things run smoothly:

- As usual, a decent crush or locking head yokes are imperative for everybody's safety. A good race can also help speed things along and help with cow flow.
- If you get in touch as soon as you receive your notice, it gives more time to find suitable test days. The sooner you get in touch the more choice there will be!
- Booking tests in the last available week of your window is not recommended. If something unexpected meant the cancellation of the test, the herd would automatically be put under restrictions.
- Pre-movement tests are often not thought about until close to when animals are due to leave. Bear in mind they are valid for 60 days from the day of injection- so anything going in the next couple of months is fine to be tested.
- Vets are given 5 days after reading day to complete paperwork for a clear test. If you will be needing your certificate sooner than this, please let reception know on booking. Please make sure all movements are up to date before the test as sorting cattle out can make us miss our submission deadline.

Beth Thornton

Included this month

- **The Ever Changing TB Picture** - Beth Thornton
- **Scab or Lice** -Rebekah Carling
- **Crypto, Cocci & Scouring Calves**- Sarah Harker
- **New Prescribing Rules**- Jim McKinsty
- **Testing of Geld Sheep** - Finbarr O'Sullivan Greene
- **News and Diary Dates**



Vet Tech Ruby Allan recently qualified as an ATT



New Prescribing Rules

Please read Jim's article this month on changes to prescribing rules. Any questions please pick up the phone.



Scab or Lice?

Unfortunately in the last few years there's definitely been more scab about. Usually this manifests as itchy sheep, with wool tags or in bad cases damaged skin with complete wool loss. However, animals that have had scab before don't tend to develop as strong a response as the first time and so might not be as obviously itchy. Although they don't look as bad, it's still a problem as the body has to fight something that shouldn't be there which has a knock-on effect for production. They're also just as infectious as a classic case of scab, so treatment is necessary from that perspective as well.

You only need one mite to initiate an outbreak in the flock. Signs of scab occur from 20 days to over 100 days and early signs can be difficult to spot; combine this with the ability of the mite population to double every 6 days and it's not hard to see how large numbers can build up in the flock causing a severe problem.

Sheep scab mites **can survive off the sheep in the environment for up to 18 days** therefore sharing handling facilities and equipment can be a source of infection as well as buying-in infected sheep. It also means that if you use Dectomax or Noromectin you can't return sheep to the same environment after treatment as otherwise they just get reinfected.

It is very difficult to see mites with the naked eye so taking some samples is almost always needed to diagnose mites. A scrape taken from the edge of a lesion gives you the most chance of finding the mite on the animal and this is something we can do at the practice and give you a result within a few hours for very little cost. A positive result leaves no doubt that you have scab but a negative result cannot be trusted as the mite may just have not been picked up in the sample. Thankfully there is now a blood test available to look for the immune response by the sheep to the mite. This requires us to send the blood to the lab so it takes a few days to get a result and does cost more money, however it is more sensitive than the scrape as you are not looking for an actual mite but the sheep's response to having mites. What we are likely to do is take both a scrape and blood and only send the blood if the scrape is negative.



Most treatment options require you to move the animals to a clean area (empty for at least 21 days) except for Golden Fleece dip and Cydectin 2% and 1% (1% can't be used if you also use Footvax). Please remember that dip will not work if the animal is not fully submerged as the scab mites can live in the ear folds so a jetter or shower **will not work**.

	Dip	Injection
Long-acting	Golden Fleece	Cydectin LA
Short-acting		Dectomax

Rebekah Carling

Crypto, Cocci and Scouring Calves.

In early January, we held a well attended meeting at Kirkby Lonsdale rugby club to discuss cryptosporidiosis and coccidiosis in calves, and the new vaccine Bovilis Cryptium. Both diseases are caused by protozoa and cause scour in calves of a few weeks or few months old respectively. Take home messages for both diseases included:

- Severe disease can be fatal, but even mild cases have a significant impact on the calf's gut meaning growth rates are reduced, service delayed and future production limited. It is no exaggeration to labour the point that calthood disease affects lifetime performance of our cattle.
- Any vaccination or treatment option is only a brick in the wall and good calf health relies on many factors including hygiene, consistency of feeding, control of concurrent disease such as BVD and pneumonia, temperature of housing etc.



Crypto, Cocci and Scouring Calves cont...

- Infected calves shed billions of persistent oocysts into the environment, and it only takes a few to infect further calves. Thorough cleaning of buildings, ideally including pressure washing and steam cleaning to remove all organic matter allows disinfectants to work most effectively. Not all disinfectants kill these oocysts so ensure you are using one that is proven, and use it according to the instructions which often includes a prolonged contact time. Pastures can be contaminated with oocysts for over a year so some rotation of grazing of susceptible calves may be necessary to avoid disease from year to year.
- The recently launched **Bovilis Cryptium** is the first vaccine ever available for cryptosporidiosis. Administered to cows in late pregnancy, the calf is protected via the colostrum. Maximum benefit is achieved through feeding colostrum or transition milk from vaccinated cows calved only a few days, for at least 5 days.
- Aswell as providing maximum benefit from scour vaccines such as Bovilis Cryptium and those for rotavirus/coronavirus, extended colostrum or transition milk feeding for several days in dairy calves is now known to have many benefits. These include improved immunity to many other diseases, improved growth rates and improved future production.



Please speak to one of the vets if you feel we could help with calf health on your farm.

Sarah Harker

New Prescribing Rules

As Bob Dylan sung, the times they are a changing, and nobody really likes change especially me when it comes to rules and regulations!

Last November the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) they are like our RPA and APHA but with bigger teeth, brought in new prescribing rules especially for antibiotics. It is our responsibility in our veterinary and agricultural professions to meet these new guidelines, to help safeguard the future of antibiotics. Which to be honest many of us, let alone our stock wouldn't be here without them!

What we need to start to implement are

- We need orders for POM V medicines to be given 24 hours in advance so we can check that the medicines are appropriate for your needs and they are checked by a vet
- A vet needs to check and approve the dispensing of medicines. Clients who come in for medicines that are not pre-ordered will have to wait while the order is checked. Just think of it like going to a human pharmacy.
- We need the reason you are requesting the medicines and we will be putting this on your account. The VMD want this so there is a record of the reason for use of the medicines.
- Antibiotics used in calf milk (Chloromed and Parofor) are being regulated a lot more. We have to give justification every time we give it out and we need to visit the farm after we dispense it to talk about management and how we can change things to stop us having to use them



Red Tractor have also brought in a few new requirements from the 1st of February. Here are the highlights

- Every dairy farm needs someone to do a medicine course every 5 years. This will affect a lot of farms over the next few months.
- If a farmer has 2 AB failures in a rolling 12-month period, they must do a BCVA or dairy UK investigation.
- Specific reference to dry cow therapy in your Health Plan with regular reviews.



Jim McKinstry

We Can Add Even More Value to your Geld Sheep



Recently I have been getting reports of slightly higher geld rates than normal at scanning. Nothing major but anything over 2% is deemed abnormal. The temptation to sell geld sheep is high this year with prices where they are but it is always worth sampling these sheep before they go to screen for major causes. **We can even sample sheep at Lancaster and J36 on the way to a sale - just ring us to book it in.** As normal from the first of Feb we have access to subsidized testing for Enzootic and Toxoplasma abortion for unvaccinated flocks. Even in vaccinated flocks if you have a high geld rate, we may be able to get access to some Schmallenberg testing on a case-by-case basis so give us a ring.



Finbarr O'Sullivan Greene

- We haven't been given any certainty over **Orf and Enzootic abortion vaccines** again this spring. If you know numbers and have a decent fridge we advise that you please order early.
- 2025 Lambing Lists available in the office, please ask.

Practical Lambing - Saturday 22nd February 2025, 9.30am—12.30pm, £47 inc. VAT



To book please phone the practice on 015395 67899
 **Free place for Farm Gate Sheep Club members

- Aimed at all levels of experience we cover-
- A presentation on all aspects of ewe and lamb husbandry.
 - Practical lambing techniques.
 - Disease prevention and simple treatments.
 - Hands on training in general skills including injections and stomach tubing.
 - All Welcome, light refreshments provided.
 - An ideal Christmas gift!
- Farm Gate Vets, Unit 2B Rural Auction Centre, Crooklands, LA7 7FP

Happy Birthday Kathrine!

It didn't go unnoticed at Sedbergh last month when Kathrine left her 20's behind. Wishing you a very Happy 30th Birthday from all of the team.



Lancaster Office

Tel: 01524 60006
 Open 8:30am-5pm
 Monday-Friday
 9am—12noon Saturdays
 CLOSED Sundays

J36 Kendal Office

Tel: 015395 67899
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 9am—12noon Saturdays
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Sedbergh Office

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