



Welcome

Well lambing time has crept up on us again. We have really got going in the last week of February which is a bit later. It is completely understandable as the premium for spring lamb is no longer there. Cows are getting going now that silages are stable and diets are being consistent. This may change if silage stocks are running low and other products start to creep in. Remember cows are ruminants and need fibre for their rumens to work correctly. We have seen a few displaced stomachs this month and they have been due to diet changes in the dry period and early lactation. You will be seeing some changes in the dispensing of medicines this month. We need some more information and it is a must that all prescription only medicines are checked by a vet before dispensing. This will take a bit of time and pre-ordering will make the new rules less of a pain.

Jim McKinstry

Bestico Fly Control

As spring approaches we all hope for an increase in temperature but with this comes nuisance flies. Studies in cattle have shown that fly worry can cause growth rate losses of up to 0.3kg a day and 0.5L a day milk loss, mainly due to reduced feed intake.



Once you start seeing flies in buildings then the population has already exploded making them hard to get on top of. Early control is key if you want to make the summer months more pleasant for your stock and yourself. Conventional spot on control in cattle works to kill adult flies but only after they have landed on/bitten the animal first. Using extra measures to target all stages of the fly lifecycle will greatly reduce the amount of adults hence the amount of nuisance caused.

As a practice we used biological fly control with a number of farms for the first time last year. This novel solution uses small non-nuisance flies, wasps and mites that target the problem flies to prevent them breeding and reaching their adult stage with promise of an even more marked reduction in the second year of use. It is suitable for use on all farm types and can be combined with other fly control measures. For those who used the products last year or are open to the idea we are planning a lunchtime meet up to discuss with Bestico at J36 on Tues 18th March 12.30pm. Check out the website at <https://www.bestico.co.uk/> and come along for a brew, sandwich and buzzing social!

Hannah Tatham



Included this month

- **Bestico Fly Control –** Hannah Tatham
- **Getting the most from your Footbath–** Beth Thornton
- **Dosing Gun Injuries–** Beth Griffiths
- **Calf Conference –** Evie Ford
- **Flockdown 2025–** Sol Elliott
- **News and Diary Dates**



New—WHATSAPP ORDERING

Please add **07442 862092** to your Whatsapp contacts and use to place medicine ORDERS, 24 hours in advance. This enables prescription medicines to be approved and packed prior to collection.



Getting the most from your Footbath

Digital dermatitis (DD) is present in most UK dairy herds. Regular foot bathing is important for the prevention of new lesions and reduction in acute lesions turning into chronic, scabby lesions that are hard to cure.

Below are a few points to consider when 'auditing' your foot bathing routine:

- Clean feet prior to bathing are ideal. Either hosing off or through a clean water bath is ideal.
- Work out the volume of your footbath. For each cow passage, at least 1 litre of solution should be used.
- Ensure that the correct amount of chemical is added (usually formalin or copper sulphate). This needs to be measured out, a jug or two will not do the job. Too much, could act as an irritant, too little and it won't do anything.
- Concentration of chemical can be varied. On farms not daily foot bathing, a concentration of 4% is usually acceptable, on farms that might be foot-bathing daily or more e.g. robotic milkers, a lower concentration of 1-2% should be used.
- Foot bathing frequency should be tailored to farm needs. On high incidence herds, a frequency of at least 4 times per week should be used. For low incidence herds, a frequency of 2-3 times per week should be sufficient.
- Depth of solution should be at least 12cm deep, allowing for correct immersion of the foot. Ideally, each foot should be immersed twice.
- A case of DD costs about £326 per year, when treatments and lost milk are taken into consideration. Adding in an injection of Ketofen for pain relief to cases of DD will help the cow and get her back to production.



Beth Thornton

Dosing Gun Injuries



This past year we have seen a few drenching and bolusing injuries to sheep. These often present as sudden deaths in sheep (but this will also apply to cattle) that have had a history of being dosed/bolused up to several weeks prior. On post-mortem a small tell-tale hole is present at the back of the throat and these often have abscesses behind these holes in the soft tissue of the neck, they sometimes even have the bolus material present within the abscess. Whilst in severe cases like these, the sheep have died, less severe damage will reduce daily live weight gains due to difficulty eating, plus the bolus or drench may not be getting to where it needs to go, wasting the cost of the bolus/drench. These cases have been distressing to the farmers involved. Refreshing best practice for bolusing and dosing is useful to avoid being in this situation and either of these videos from AHDB and SCOPS <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0TFBU75DiM> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxnjBG1lkn8> are very good resources to check your technique.

The main takeaways for me are to use the correct dosing equipment with the correct bolus (to avoid boluses falling into the airway), be gentle at the back of the throat, restrain the sheep well to help to facilitate this and to reduce frustration levels at the time of dosing.

If you do see a sudden death, it is always worth remembering that our sheep club members get sheep post mortems included within their membership.

Beth Griffiths

Calf Conference

The Calf Conference was an event held in Dumfries in January with a line up of industry speakers and aimed at everyone involved in calf rearing. Mark attended with Vet Techs Gill and Evie, here are some key points they took away -

- We were reminded that growth and development is not complete of newborn calf at birth, colostrum contains essential growth factors, hormones and bioactive substances. These are essential to maximise calf production.
- Use detergents like washing up liquid and hot water to break down fatty colostrum/milk scum, this will prevent bacteria from harbouring in your buckets and feeders. Colostrum must be stored correctly to avoid the opportunity for bacteria to proliferate. Colostrum can be stored in the fridge for 2-3 days and up to 12 months in the freezer.
- Around 20-30% of calves do not get enough colostrum, this can be checked by blood sampling calves in the first week of their lives.
- Smooth weaning transitions (method, timing and duration) are essential for rumen development and calf performance.
- To achieve calving down at 24 months it's essential that we provide the dry cow and young stock with optimal nutrition and management.
- We shouldn't forget about calf nutrition after weaning. As this is just as essential for achieving the correct weight at first service.
- Optimising the environment ensures that calves get the best possible start to life which in turn creates a strong and healthy future herd.
- Regular cleaning and disinfecting of all areas in a calf shed is essential to minimise disease risk. Having a foot dip on entrance to the calf shed will also help prevent disease from entering.



The Calf Conference goes ahead every year and in our opinion would be a great opportunity for any calf rearers to learn some valuable information from some industry specialists. Further article to follow on Rumen Drinking.

Evie Ford (Vet Tech Apprentice)

Flockdown 2025



If you've spent long enough on farm with me, I may have let slip about my secret passion for poultry. If you're signed up to APHA alerts either by email or text, you'll have received lots of messages about the housing order measures in place across various parts of England, including Lancashire and North Yorkshire. While it might not seem worth the hassle to keep poultry inside, it is important to note that in the 2021-2022 outbreak of Avian Influenza (H5N1) over 30% of cases were in backyard or small holder flocks. To protect our fellow commercial livestock keepers and public health, please do keep your birds inside where possible. A spare old stable is ideal! For those of you who keep ducks, geese or poultry kept for restocking of game and feel that complying by the strict biosecurity measures (which include housing your birds) would likely have a negative impact on animal welfare, you may be able to apply for an exemption. This requires a statement from yourself and one of the vets who can then work

with you to find ways to minimise the risk of the disease to your birds.

Sol Elliott

Whatsapp Ordering

You will be aware by now that the regulations on prescription only medicines have tightened significantly and we need a vet to sign off each order for POM V medicine. To make this go smoothly for you and us, we are asking for 24 hours notice for medicine orders. This will avoid frustrating waiting periods in reception while our staff track down a vet.

To make this easier we have introduced a Whatsapp Order number-
07442 862092



Please include-

- Name and Farm Name -
- Collection from - Lancaster, J36, Sedbergh or Tynedale Greenodd.
- Medicine requested and quantity
- Reason for use - e.g. lame cows.

For those not familiar with Whatsapp please call the office as normal.

Mistaken Identity !! 😂

Is this Mark, or Davros the leader of the Darleks?? This was a question raised by a facebook follower this month on a post about Mary's TB testing trainer!



**UPDATE Re
Veterinary
Attestations**

As part of our Sheep Club subscription you now have an option to include your **VAN number certificate** instead of a Flock Health Plan.

A reminder of what's included is as follows-

- **Flock Health Plan** visit and written plan - assurance scheme standard including a worming and vaccination calendar. OR **VAN Visit & Certificate**
- **One other 1 hour visit** e.g. for diagnostics, lameness or abortion investigation, metabolic profile or trace element blood testing.
- **Unlimited faecal egg counts** - for targeted worming and prevention of wormer resistant. Includes drench testing.
- Regular member only **discussion group meetings**, visits and trips.
- **In house post mortems** (not including any lab fees). Knowing sound reasons for losses benefits the rest of the flock.
- 20% discount on **tup vasectomies and tup fertility** testing for compact and successful tupping time.
- A place on our **lambing course** for yourself or a family or staff member. A useful course for all levels of experience.



Practical Lambing Course - Saturday 22nd March 2025—9.30—12.30pm at our J36 Practice

Our final course of 2025, please call the office at J36 to book in, 12 spaces available. All welcome, for delegates who are not clients payment is required at the time of booking.



Bestico Fly Control - A Review of Last Year and Plans for 2025 - Lunchtime

meeting at our J36 Practice Meeting Room, Tues 18th March 12.30pm. Last year we held an on farm meeting to introduce Bestico Fly Control to clients. This meeting is for existing users and anybody who is interested in implementing Bestico on farm this year. We will be joined by a representative from the company. To book your place please phone the practice or e mail linda@farmgatevets.com

Lancaster Office

Tel: 01524 60006

Open 8:30am-5pm

Monday-Friday

9am—12noon Saturdays

CLOSED Sundays

J36 Kendal Office

Tel: 015395 67899

Open 8:30am-5pm

Monday-Friday

9am—12noon Saturdays

CLOSED Sundays

Sedbergh Office

Tel: 015396 20335

Open 8:30--5pm

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