



Newsletter October 2024



Welcome

Kendal Show evokes mixed emotions for me. It's great to see so many of you enjoying the "craic" and the exhibitors showing what's so great about agriculture and its produce from this area. Saying that it's one of the last shows in the summer calendar, marking the turn of the year to "back end".

The weather has played a big part in events this year including the rise of diseases such as Blue Tongue and Haemonchus. Winter is coming and although I don't wish it to be long one; a short hard spell would just help to get rid of some of these bugs that belong a lot further south.

Mark Stott

Healthy Heifer Meeting

In August the Pickthall family kindly hosted our latest healthy heifer meeting. The topics of discussion were **Mycoplasma bovis** and **milk powders**, as well as a look around their calf rearing facilities and a good pie for lunch!

M. bovis is a bacteria that can cause pneumonia, ear and joint infections as well as mastitis (though this is rare). We did some on farm surveillance to see how big an issue it is in our area and 71% of blood samples showed calves had been exposed to the bacteria – so it is definitely out there causing issues! The bacteria are spread by close contact as well as a potential for spread in milk to calves – however this is a lot more likely in pooled or waste milk. Treatment can be an issue as the bacteria is not targeted by a lot of commonly

M.bovis Results 71% positive on 14 farms tested



used antibiotics. There is now a licensed vaccine coming to the UK to protect calves from 7 days old. If you are worried about mycoplasma on your farm or would like to take advantage of subsidised lab testing for it, then get in touch. .. **Continued**



Included this month

- **Healthy Heifer Meeting**– Hannah Tatham
- **AHWP and Endemic Disease Review**– Hannah Tatham
- **Blue Tongue**- Sol Elliott
- **Poisoning**– Sol Elliott
- **News and Diary Dates**



Please let us know if you are interested in completing any of the below courses-
-Red Tractor Medicines Course -First Aid for Feet (Cattle, 1 day) - MilkSure
Please phone the office or e mail linda@farmgatevets.com to be added to our lists.



Healthy Heifer Meeting Continued...



Milk powders were discussed – what is actually in them? How much energy are your calves getting out of it? and is this enough for them to grow well? and most importantly is it worth the money you are paying for it? This led to an interesting conversation and some consideration as to whether the current product is the right one. If you'd like to discuss your milk powder with us let us know and we'd be happy to chat it over with you.

Thank you again to the Pickthalls for being excellent hosts and thank you to Zoetis for their support and insights into M.bovis from their vet Iain. If you want to know more about the Healthy Heifer Scheme please talk to one of our vets or vet tech.

Hannah Tatham

Animal Health and Welfare Pathway and Endemic Disease Review.

In light of the reducing BPS payments there are a couple of grants available to farmers to be taken advantage of. The Annual Health and Welfare Pathway (AHWP) involves a vet visit to discuss any disease concerns for your flock or herd alongside compulsory testing for BVD in cattle or a worm egg count reduction test in sheep. The funding for this is set amount per species (see below) and the application process is done online, and we will provide you



with a report to be submitted when you claim the funding. The link for signing up is at: <https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/start>

Following on from this you can now also apply for an "Endemic Disease Review". This is an extra grant where you can investigate disease and production limiting factors on your farm. The focus in cattle is BVD whereas in sheep a wide range of health issues are covered e.g. MV, trace elements, fluke, lameness, abortion... basically anything that can go wrong with a sheep can be looked at! Again the review involves a visit and a report. You can sign up for the endemic disease review following the above link as long as you have completed and claimed for the AHWR within the last 10 months.

You can reapply for the above cycle for funding every 10 months until June 2027. If you have any questions or difficulties with the application process then let us know and we're happy to help.

Funding Available

Species	Annual Health & Welfare Re-	Endemic Disease Review
Sheep	£436	£639
Dairy Cattle	£372	No BVD - £215
Beef Cattle	£522	No BVD - £215

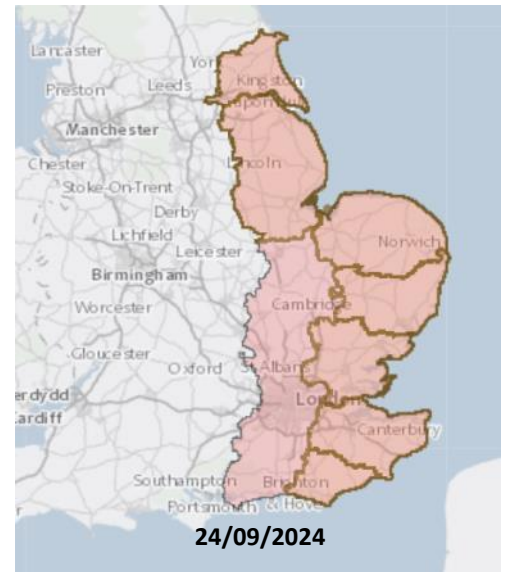
Hannah Tatham

Blue Tongue

You may be receiving lots of APHA notifications about the cases of Bluetongue (BTV3) in the UK at the moment, with 70 premises currently infected as I write this, the closest case being in East Yorkshire. Naturally this is a worrying time for farmers, alongside what has already felt like a poor year with the relentless weather and Schmallenberg, another virus spread by midges, rearing its head particularly in the south.

A reminder for our clients to stay vigilant – for our cattle keepers it is worth noting there may be no signs of bluetongue, or very subtle signs such as milk drop in dairy cows. However, signs such as nasal discharge, swelling of the head and teats, ulcers in the mouth and drooling may be seen. It can look similar to when cows get photosensitisation from eating certain plants! For our sheep keepers, sheep show much more severe signs similar to the above as well as swollen faces, reddening of gums and the coronary band and in the later stages, the classic swollen ‘blue tongue’ from lack of oxygen.

The virus cannot spread from animal to animal, it is only spread by the Culicoides midge. There are no insect repellents licensed for the control of this midge and there is no evidence to suggest any repellents prevent onwards transmission of the virus.



The first question asked when BTV3 is mentioned - “is there a vaccine?”. A recent update from the AHDB September technical webinar confirmed that vaccination will be rolled out under a general licence in certain high risk geographical locations in England. It may be possible to obtain a specific licence outside of high-risk areas (our clients will not currently be in a high-risk area) if there will be a great benefit of vaccination for your business, and APHA will assess this application on a supply and demand basis. More information is slowly becoming available to vets about pricings of vaccination etc, so do get in touch with us if this is something you want to know more about. It is worth noting that the vaccine does not prevent animals from being infected with BTV3, but rather reduces the effect of the virus on the animal.

To monitor the BTV3 situation there is an interactive map available which highlights infected zones and at risk areas for Bluetongue.

<https://defra.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=514ec88edec74575958d860f0196d2ea>

Sol Elliott

Poisoning

As winter approaches and livestock start to seek alternative forage and shelter, we generally see more cases of poisonings cropping up. Some common plants that cause toxicity include ragwort, yew, bracken, acorn and rhododendron. Fly tipped car batteries and lead paint are also common causes of poisoning, particularly in inquisitive youngstock.

We commonly know **ragwort** as the cause of white skin falling off cattle; keeping them inside and away from direct sunlight is the best thing you can do if they are going to survive, although important to remember this plant can cause severe liver damage. **St John’s Wort** causes very similar looking signs but does not cause damage to the liver.

Sheep that like to escape into gardens are particularly prone to **Rhododendron poisoning**. An anecdotal treatment for these cases, as well as drugs prescribed by us, is the use of cold tea (I much appreciate the looks I have received from you when I suggest making your sheep a brew). The tannins are said to neutralise the toxin from the plant. Sheep that have recently moved to a new location (or visited somewhere they shouldn’t have) that are suddenly laid flat out, frothing at the mouth and looking like they have extreme abdominal pain are prime suspects for Rhododendron poisoning. Interestingly, this plant is the only plant that will make a ruminant vomit.



While little can usually be done for these poisoned cases, supportive treatment with fluids, pain relief/anti-inflammatories, antibiotics in the secondary event of aspiration pneumonia and in the case of Rhododendron, cold tea will likely be recommended by your vet. As with any sudden death case especially if there are multiple, please do give us a call.

Sol Elliott

Westmorland Show 2024 Gallery



A Fond Farewell to Charlotte—Good Luck

Last month we said cheerio and good luck to Charlotte who has left us to pursue a more “back friendly” career in Small Animal Practice nearer to home. Charlotte joined us in 2021 and has brightened up the office with her kindness and warm smile ever since. Compassionate, kind, supportive, thoughtful, honourable, decent, a truly lovely lass are all words our colleagues used to describe working with Charlotte. Not forgetting her side kick Carlos, the best named Lancashire Heeler dog there ever was.

An excellent vet and an even better Christmas Quiz writer, we’ll miss you so much, please keep in touch!!



Wedding Bells

Congratulations to Helen and Tony who celebrated their wedding last month. Helen joined our J36 reception team a little while ago so many of you will have met her.

Wishing you all the very best from all of us.



Please return any spare cool bags you may have lying around, we are getting low. Thank you!



Sheep Meeting, All Welcome— The Rising cases of Barbers Pole Worm (Haemonchus) and Tackling Sheep Lameness. 7pm Tuesday 8th October 2024 at Kirkby Lonsdale Rugby Club. Pie and chips included and kindly supported by MSD.

Please book by phoning the office 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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