



THE
WOOD
VETERINARY
GROUP



Christmas is on the horizon and I'm sure we are all looking forward to a bit of rest and relaxation. However, we have scanning and housing to consider first before we think about the mince pies!

Scanning – Do you routinely scan?

For many of you, scanning will be a major event in your sheep calendar – and may have already been completed or still be taking place.

For others, it may be something that you have trialled or haven't done before.

Why scan?

Scanning is typically completed at **40 – 90 days** of gestation and can provide an enormous amount of information:

- **Profit expectations** - your fertility is one of the biggest drivers for profit in your flock. Poor fertility will mean low lamb numbers. Scanning can help you anticipate outcomes and will give you information from which to plan your costs going forward.
- **Fertility diseases** – your scanning percentage can give an early indication of any underlying fertility diseases. Your scanner should not only be able to give you the number of barren ewes but also whether there is any indication of re-absorption. This can suggest diseases such as Toxoplasma and the need for further investigation.
- **Lambing diseases** – by scanning you will have the number of ewes expected to have singles, twins and triplets. This allows for important management decisions; where possible running separate groups to easily feed according to fetus number and so helping to avoid diseases such as Twin Lamb.
- **Records** – even if you do not have the means to run separate management groups, scanning will still provide you with really important information. **You can not account for what you have lost from tugging to lambing if you do not have the information.** Comparing scanning results against the true lambing percentage can highlight health, handling or nutritional issues that go unchanged without scanning.



Barren Ewes

A scanning barren rate of **3% or above** should warrant investigation; this can easily be carried out with a blood test to check for common diseases implicated in a higher barren rate.

MSD's Barren Ewe check scheme – running from the 1st January to March 2018 the scheme will subsidise up to 8 bloods from unvaccinated barren ewes from flocks with barren rates over 2% to check for Toxoplasmosis. At a small extra charge they can also check for Selenium, Cobalt and Copper.



If you have any concerns regarding your scanning percentages, please phone the practice to discuss the outcomes and for more information about what to do next

Ewe Body Condition Monitoring

Ewes will now be in mid pregnancy if lambing in February/March.

During this stage of pregnancy, the placenta is rapidly developing. It is important that ewes maintain good body condition to ensure maximal placental development for optimal lamb birth weights.

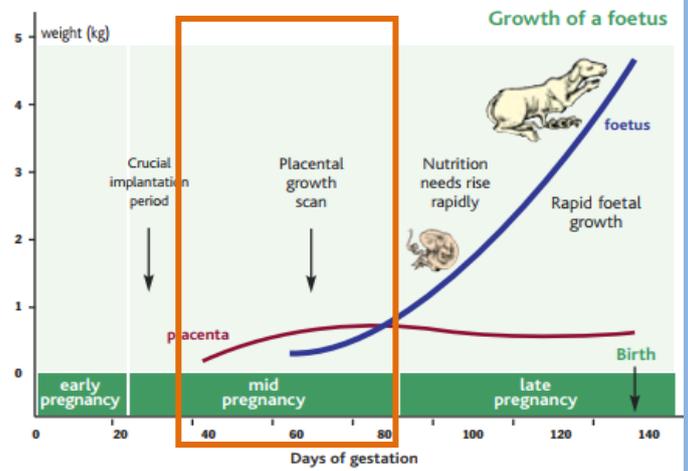
Over feeding during this mid pregnancy stage can disrupt the effectiveness of the placenta and may also increase the likelihood of lambing problems e.g. vaginal prolapses.

- ➔ Aim for a body condition **score of 3-3.5** for ewes now and ensure they keep this condition. Ewes should not lose or gain more than ½ a body condition score during this period.

➔ Over fat ewes (e.g. score 4+) can afford to lose up to 0.5 of a BCS in this period.

Bear in mind once ewes are in their final trimester, you are too late to change over conditioned ewes. Trying to reduce body condition at this stage will increase the risk of metabolic conditions and won't stop difficult lambings.

➔ Thin ewes must be a priority, they will only become thinner! Adequate nutrition to maintain body condition scores is critical at this stage.



Winter housing Checklist

There are a few key management points that need consideration during winter housing preparation:

✓ Lameness Treatment

Gathering stock for winter housing poses a real risk for rapid spread of infectious lameness conditions. It is crucial that lameness is spotted and treated as early as possible to prevent lameness spreading during the housing period.

Remember – adult ewes need treatment with an injectable antibiotic (e.g. Oxytetracycline) to treat Footrot OR antibiotic spray (e.g. Oxytetracycline) to treat Scald.

If you are unsure, always speak to one of us to confirm a diagnosis!

✓ Footvax

Many of you will be using Footvax as part of your lameness protocol. Footvax regimes are tailored to each unit and should be timed ahead of risk points; therefore, vaccinating at scanning or at winter housing can be ideal. Whole flock vaccination, including the rams will provide the best results. It is safe to use during pregnancy **BUT** cannot be used 4 weeks either side of lambing or 8 weeks prior to shearing.

Ideally, 2 weeks should be given between using Footvax and any other vaccination.

✓ Fluke treatment

If your stock have been running on known fluke risk pasture in early Autumn, a fluke treatment on housing may be beneficial. If stock show clinical signs e.g. evidence of bottle jaw/poor fleece/depressed or you have had any sudden deaths, a Triclabendazole treatment (e.g. Fasinex) should be used now. Otherwise, a Closantel treatment (e.g. Flukiver) can be used in January to clear out any mature fluke.

✓ Plan for lambing housing

Check ewe body condition scores with/without scanning results to organise groups for feeding and estimate how much space you will need for lambing pens/separate groups e.g. triplet groups.

HEPATAVAC P

It's that time of year to plan when to start your Hepatavac P boosters.
Ewe lambs will need **2 vaccines 4-6 weeks apart**.
Booster vaccines and 2nd vaccines must be completed a minimum of **4 weeks** pre-lambing.
This is essential for colostrum transfer of clostridial/pasturella protection.
Call the practice to order your vaccine

SCABIVAX

If you have a **known** Orf issue on farm and use Scabivax in ewes, now is the time to vaccinate. Orf vaccination must be completed **7-8 weeks before lambing** to allow the infectious scabs to drop off. During this time ewes should be kept **well away** from intended lambing areas.
If you have any queries regarding Orf, please speak to us at the practice



A Face Lift - The reception and the farm office at Quedgeley are undergoing a refurb and so for the next few weeks the farm team is moving upstairs to the meeting room. Services and calls will run as normal, but the office staff will need more time to process medicine orders – we will process orders twice a day so please avoid turning up. We are excited for the new layout in 2018!

THE FARM TEAM WISHES YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!