



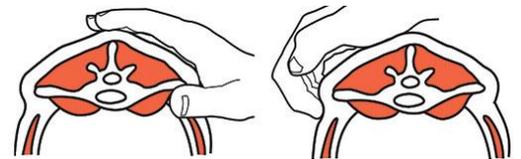
In the last few weeks we have held two successful flock meetings at the practice. This year we reviewed common causes of lameness, key characteristics for diagnosis and how to best manage your lameness incidence on farm. Clients also completed a [5 Point Plan Lameness Assessment](#) questionnaire and went home with individualised [Lameness Action Plans](#). **If you are interested in having a Lameness Assessment completed for your flock, please speak to us at the practice.**

## EWE CHECKLIST

For many of you, your breeding start date is just around the corner, but have you thoroughly checked your ewes? Make sure to use these last few weeks to your advantage; use this checklist to ensure your breeding flock is in optimum condition:

### **Body Condition Scores**

Check ewe body condition scores – be sure to feel ewes, you can't accurately determine condition scores from sight alone! With the difficult grazing conditions this summer, this is a critical factor. Remember we are aiming for a **starting body condition of 3 - 3.5** – it can take up to **6 weeks to gain to gain one BCS!** Are your ewes set to achieve this? Or will they fall short? Consider grouping ewes according to score – you can then manage which ewes need extra feed to reach ideal tupping BCS and which need controlled feeding to prevent further weight gain. If you are still grazing lambs, now is the time to prioritise good grazing for ewes! Creep feed to finish if necessary and get lambs gone; sacrificing good pasture to finish lambs this year will only be to the detriment of your ewes.



### **Cull List**

Year on year we hear 'I know I shouldn't have put her back to the tup'. Now is the time to make strict decisions.

You are in control of the quality of your breeding stock. If she is in poor condition now, be ruthless as problematic animals will only cost you time and money in the long run.

**Your cull criteria should include points such as:**

- ✓ **Repeatedly lame** – two separate lameness cases in one season should prompt a cull!
- ✓ **Chronically misshapen feet** – these animals are persistent sources of lameness infection to the flock
- ✓ **Broken mouthed / aged ewes** – if she can't eat correctly, she won't maintain her BCS
- ✓ **Rejection of lambs** – poor mothering ability means more time and labour for you
- ✓ **Mastitis/blind teats** – be sure to feel the entirety of the udder! Chronic mastitis can often present with fluctuating lumps in the udder. All recorded mastitis ewes from last lambing need to go even if their udders feel normal at weaning/pre-tupping checks.
- ✓ **Barren / Aborted ewes** – don't keep sources of infection!
- ✓ **Vaginal prolapses** – these ewes should not stay in the breeding flock

**This is where good lambing records will aid you in decision making. If you don't have this information stored – challenge yourself this year to record something new e.g. mastitis cases**



### **Ewe lambs & Shearlings**

If you are putting ewe lambs or shearlings to the tup this year, be sure that they have reached correct target weights. The onset of puberty, and therefore fertility, is governed by body weight. Weigh some of your well-conditioned adult ewes as a benchmark; **shearlings should be at least 80%** of adult body weight at tupping and **ewe lambs 60% of their adult weights**. Are your younger stock on target to achieve this? Falling beneath these targets could see your conception rates suffer and lower lamb birth weights.



## NEW STOCK – PROTOCOL REMINDER

Some of you will still be purchasing new rams or replacements. To protect your existing flock from any potential 'bought in' disease, please follow these points:

- Keep **ALL** new stock **AWAY** from home stock in **QUARANTINE** for a minimum of **4 weeks** – no nose to nose contact and no shared yard / handling areas if possible.
- Thoroughly assess feet and consider using **DISINFECTION** footbaths on arrival – **please discuss footbathing with a vet to ensure it's use is effective and not detrimental.**
- Treat all sheep with a **CLEAR OUT** drench e.g. monepantel (**Zolvix**) or derquantel/abamectin (**Startect**) to remove any potential resistant worms and prevent introduction into your flock.
- Consider treating for scab and other **EXTERNAL PARASITES** with moxidectin (**Do not use Cydectin1% if they have had footvax**) doramectin (**Dectomax**) or appropriate dipping.
- Consider drenching against **FLUKE** with an appropriate product based **upon discussion with a vet.**
- Monitor stock for **ANY signs of disease e.g. pneumonia** and treat promptly.

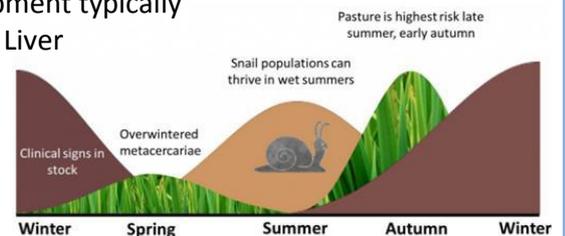


## PARASITE FORECAST

With the hot, dry weather we have had over the last few months, the number of viable parasite larvae on pasture may be reduced in comparison to previous typical wet summers. However there are still exceptions:

### Fluke

In comparison to normal intestinal round worms, liver fluke's development typically means peak risk of infection occurs later during the summer months. Liver fluke is dependent on warm and wet conditions for its development in mud snails. Currently the South West has a **LOW RISK** in comparison to this time last year – but with the warm weather set to continue and further rain, we are likely to have ongoing good conditions for fluke development. Be vigilant particularly if you know you have a fluke risk on farm; any streams, boggy ground or poached areas are the perfect environment for fluke development. **Speak to us at the practice about your fluke risk for more information.**



### Haemonchus

Haemonchus contortis or the '**Barber's pole worm**' is a stomach worm that attaches to the stomach lining (abomasum) and feeds off blood. This worm is also able to better survive on pasture despite the hot weather in comparison to normal round worms. There have been reports across England and Wales in and around our county since July. It can affect lambs as well as ewes as animals produce **NO** lasting immunity to the worm. Large numbers of worms can have a devastating effect in a very short time span causing severe anaemia. Importantly, presenting signs can be very similar to acute fluke infections.



### Key Clinical signs:

- ➔ Sudden death in ewes or lambs
- ➔ **ANAEMIA**(see photo – pale mucous membranes)
- ➔ **NO** scour
- ➔ Lethargic and weak animals
- ➔ Bottle jaw
- ➔ Thin ewes – from chronic infections

**If you have any concerns about Haemonchosis, please speak to us about your farm risks. Faecal samples and drench checks can be useful starting points for diagnosis**

### TEASER RAMS

For those of you using teasers, they should only remain in with the ewes for a **MAXIMUM of 14 DAYS.**

If your teasers have been in for 10-14 days, now is the time to swap them for your fertile rams – your **main tups should go in the same day you remove the teasers**

**Please ensure you are matching fertile rams at a ratio of 1 to 30 ewes – with the group synchronised, they will be very busy!**

### FLY STRIKE

The flies are still out in storm!  
We are still swatting them away on farm, so they will still be irritating your stock too.

Please ensure you are repeating **PROTECTIVE** fly treatments where needed (e.g. **CLIK / CROVET**)

NADIS has a Blowfly Alert interactive map (<http://alerts.nadis.org.uk/>) to keep on track of the likely fly strike risk to your farm. Currently the country is still under **SEVERE risk** status.