



Game Bird Newsletter 2019

As we look forward to the new season, we should take a moment to reflect on the successes and problems of last season and how they may influence our decisions going forward, throw in the unknown complications of Brexit and we can be sure of plenty of challenges ahead.

Antibiotic use

The industry has made great progress over the last couple of years with, as hopefully you are aware, a 51% overall drop in antibiotic use with a 70% reduction in in-feed medication. Albeit starting from a high level, this reduction in antibiotic use is both necessary for our industry and clearly demonstrates that investment in improved bio-security, housing and management will pay dividends.

Last year's hot dry summer, after the initial concerns in the brooding huts, generally resulted in a very good rearing period with a significant drop in the incidence of Hexamita and Coccidiosis. This favourable weather window exemplified the role of stress on the incidence of disease on the rearing field. Every effort should be made to minimise disease challenge and stressful episodes on the rearing field, underpinned by good bio-security.

Mycoplasma gallisepticum /Infectious sinusitis/ Bulgy Eye

This disease complex has increased in prevalence of the last few years becoming one of the most significant challenges in both our laying flocks and also on the rearing field. The recent publication of the BVPA working group in December 2018 detailed their recommendations from the management of Mycoplasma gallisepticum (MG) in game birds and is a very useful list of advice and recommendations. Key points identified are the importance of knowledge of disease status of any breeding stock and poults as the MG can be vertically transmitted through the egg. Management factors including good bio-security, minimising stress,

stocking density, excluding vermin and wild birds and critical attention to water hygiene are all important factors.

Vaccination of breeding flocks does have a role in some instances. As many of you are aware treatment, even using the specific antibiotics is frequently unrewarding and clinically affected birds should be culled.

As the report suggests, bio-security is key and establishment and maintenance of disease free flocks is critical, coupled with an open industry wide co-operation in tackling this disease.

Post mortem submission

A quick reminder to please phone the surgery regarding post mortem submissions so that we can co-ordinate your needs with a vet and also on arrival please report to reception before taking any birds out of the car.

We wish you all luck for the coming season. If there are any points or issues you wish to discuss please contact us at the surgery.

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