



As the summer months role on ewes are shorn and lambs are weaned, our attention turns to the forthcoming tugging season and ensuring our ewes are in prime condition. Having a ewe at the optimum body condition score of 3-3.5 at tugging will aim to improve the ovulation and implantation rates ultimately leading to higher lambing percentages.

Take every opportunity when animals are in for handling/dosing etc to put a hand on to monitor the BCS of your breeding flock. Ewe MOTs are as important as the Tup MOT. Over fat or thin ewes are more likely to have poorer conception rates than a ewe at optimum body condition. AHDB provide useful online resources on how to BCS your ewes, the vets are happy to talk you through this if you would like your ewes assessed. Post weaning ideally split ewes into groups according to body condition score, these can then have access to pasture which will enable them to reach optimum condition at tugging. If you have thin ewes which are failing to gain condition further investigation into this may be necessary. Flushing ewes on good feed/to coincide with an autumn flush of grass, 3 weeks before tugging should help to boost ovulation rates. Note of caution – pastures high in red clover can affect ovulation rates as they contain oestrogens, ideally these should not be grazed for 6 weeks either side of tugging.

Studies have shown average flock replacement rates of 20-25% (dependent on culling policy and ewe mortality) and regular replacements aim to remove ewes which;

- Are poor performing/barren/poor BCS or mothering ability
- Are broken mouthed or poor teats
- Suffered with conditions including abortion, mastitis, lameness and prolapse, OPA/Jaggsiekte/MV
- Needed assistance at lambing/caesarean = lambing ease.

Looking to tighten your lambing period? Consider the use of a teaser ram (1 per 100 ewes – replaced after almost a cycle by entire tups). Or sponges/CIDRs to synchronise or advance the breeding season in a group of ewes. We discussed the use of a teaser earlier in the summer and should you want to know more on CIDRs/sponges speak with one of the vets. If you already plan to use these products this breeding season place your orders ASAP as often they go out of stock and there have been issues in previous years with certain products such as PMSG.

NEWS FROM THE TEAM

Beth Williams-Roberts (pictured right)- We are delighted to welcome our new graduate vet, Beth to the farm team. Beth qualified from the University of Liverpool this summer and joins us at the start of August. Beth is already very familiar with the practice and has met many of you already, having completed much of her clinical work experience with us. Beth grew up on a beef and sheep farm in South Wales and her favourite time of year on the farm is spring when she enjoys assisting with a tricky calving or lambing. She now farms in Gloucestershire with her partner so knows her way around lots of the local area already.



Kate Elford (pictured left)- We also welcomed Kate at the end of July, to the farm office team. Kate will be working full time in the office alongside Wendy and Julie covering all aspects of farm office work and co-ordinating the vets out on farm. As Kate completes her training to take over from her in the office, Flick will then be stepping out of the office team to increase her Vet Tech role to full time and start her on farm TB training as another Approved TB tester at Woods. Please give both our new team members a very warm Wood's welcome!

FLIES!!

Flies continue to be a nuisance in this warm, wet weather. Now might be time to review your fly protection and whether repeat dosing is necessary. Caution with the use of longer acting products as these will have longer meat withhold times and will be important if you are looking to dose lambs.

Minimise the impact of flies by;

1. Regularly checking stock – fly strike can take hold very quickly particularly in debilitated animals.
2. Monitoring worm burden and treating as necessary, this will reduce the likelihood of diarrhoea and dags around the tail-end which flies are attracted to - dag any dirty animals as they become apparent.
3. Prompt identification and treatment of lame animals to reduce smell.
4. Use of parasitic wasps to reduce fly burden especially in housed animals.
5. Application of fly prevention products.

Preventative only	CLiK (5% and Extra)	Protection up to 10-16 weeks (ONLY if no rain) Animals cannot be shorn within 3 months of use
Prevent & Treat	Crovect (1.25%)	Protection up to 10 weeks Can be treated as soon as shorn
	Dysect Sheep (12.5g/l)	Protection up to 8-10 weeks Minimum 1cm thick wool for action
Treatment only	Spot On (1%)	No protection Will kill blowfly larvae

ON FARM MEDICINE DISPOSAL

With farm assurance inspections often falling in the summer months, it is a good time to make sure you get your medicine cupboards and disposal records up to date. Under Red Tractor and crucially DEFRA guidelines **ALL LIVESTOCK PREMISES MUST HAVE A YELLOW SHARPS BIN AND GRIFF BIN** to dispose of used needles and medicine bottles. These containers are also for the disposal of medicines that are out of date, contaminated or have been broached for over 28 days. Any wasted/out of date drugs should be noted in your medicine records. These are always available from the practice and the cost includes returning the container to us for licensed disposal. Our summer offer is running for another year:

JULY AND AUGUST
Buy a 27 Kg Bottle Bin and a 2 Litre sharps bin for just £60 +VAT
Ring the Office today to order your summer deal!



Your feedback is important to us and may help other farms along the way. With that said, it has been reported to us there have been issues with carcasses in the abattoir with abscesses in the neck resulting in partial disposal of affected cuts and loss of income. These issues have been attributed to dirty needles, injecting wet sheep or done in the dark so poor technique, use of broached part used bottles, wrong injection site (loin) and vaccination too close to slaughter (some vaccines produce quite a lump post vaccination). It has been noted across the country and is a timely reminder of the importance of good injection technique. Needles and good injection technique are cheap in comparison to downgrading or loss of cuts at the abattoir and so should be reviewed every time you have to inject your sheep.

*** A further reminder to place your orders for Toxovax and Enzovax. Toxovax is a special order vaccine with a short shelf life and so requires prior planning to ensure you can use the vaccine as soon as it arrives. ***