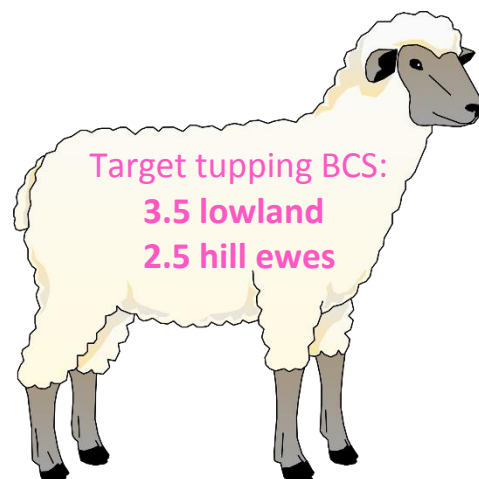




It's certainly felt like Autumn the last few weeks, especially with the amount of rain we had over the weekend! This month we will discuss tupping and early pregnancy nutrition, and fluke monitoring and control.

## Tupping and Early Pregnancy Management:

- Avoid tupping ewes on pastures with high levels of red clover/legumes, or feeding these silages for 45 days pre and post tupping. Clovers contain high levels of phytoestrogens which have negative impact on ovulation/conception
- Implantation occurs in the first month of gestation. Embryos are very fragile around this time, therefore try and minimise any stress on ewes; avoid using dogs to move ewes at this time of year and avoid transporting ewes if possible
- Keep the majority of ewes on a level plane of nutrition, unless you are flushing thinner ewes on improved pasture. Flushing has proved to only be beneficial in ewes that are less than the target tupping BCS and in prolific breeds it can actually increase the number of triplets
- Maintain target tupping BCS for the first 90 days of pregnancy
- Development of the placenta occurs between the days of 50-90 during pregnancy. The placenta is fundamental for lamb survivability and to obtain ideal lamb birthweights. It has also been shown that under nutrition at this stage of pregnancy will affect the reproductive potential of a foetal female lamb – you are already influencing future years lambing potential



## Farm update from Beth - our new Graduate Vet

Down on our farm, we've got the rams in with the ewes and they're all very busy! We use raddle harnesses on our fully grown rams and raddle paint on our ram lambs. Remember to keep an eye on raddle harnesses, as we all know they can come loose or they can be fitted too tight and cause sores. This year I've attempted to try and tame most of our tups so they will come to the feed bucket. This has helped wonders when it comes to changing their raddle colours! It has also helped avoid having to stress the flock by catching the tup to change raddle colours. A small amount of concentrate feed will also keep the tup's energy up during this intense period! This is our two-year old New Zealand Texel ram modelling his harness nicely!



## Protecting Against Fluke Infection

Flukicides such as Triclabendazole and Closantel are the products to be used during the autumn months as they target immature flukes which are the problem this time of year. As detailed in the main farm newsletter, Triclabendazole in sheep is effective against flukes aged 2 weeks and over and Closantel 6 weeks plus. Avoid the use of combination products this time of year, they are unnecessary on most farms, costly and promote the development of resistance.

A study was conducted by Liverpool University in 2013 to determine the level of triclabendazole resistance on sheep farms in Cumbria.

- 16 farms took part in the study, 3 farms had low fluke burdens and therefore were not treated.
- On 5 of the farms, triclabendazole was only partially effective.
- **On 8 of the farms, there was evidence of complete treatment failure** (i.e. the post treatment egg counts were higher than the pre-treatment egg counts!)

What do we see with an acute immature fluke burden in lambs?

- Sudden death
- Anaemia
- Lethargic or dull animals
- Abdominal pain
- Unlikely to see any bottle jaw this time of year

Therefore, we must test before treating with Triclabendazole, so that we preserve its effectiveness and still have it as a tool in the fight against fluke in the future!

How to monitor for fluke?

- Blood testing this year's lambs once a month from August for antibodies against fluke can pinpoint when they become infected and therefore when to treat
- Abattoir returns if you are sending lambs straight to slaughter
- Post mortem examination of fallen stock
- Faecal egg counts aren't very useful this time of year as we were concerned about immature flukes, which aren't at the age that they can produce eggs yet

One of the best strategies is to avoid grazing high risk pastures at this time of year and fence off ponds and seasonally flooded areas using electric or permanent fencing if possible.

## Red Tractor Updates:

From 1<sup>st</sup> November,

- **Health plans must be reviewed, signed and dated by your vet annually rather than every 18 months.**
- **Recommend pain relief for husbandry procedures (tail ringing and castration).**
- **Annual totals of antibiotic usage required.**
- **At least one member of staff on the farm must have completed the course on medicine use and administration.**
- **Any new staff on the farm must receive an induction. All farms with staff should also have a written health and safety policy.**

Follow us on our new social media pages to stay up to date with all the latest news, events, and interesting cases from the farm team!



Wood Vets Farm Team



@woodvetsfarmteam