



THE
**WOOD
VETERINARY
GROUP**



It's certainly felt a bit more like winter this past couple of weeks, especially with the frosts we've had! In this newsletter we will be discussing pregnancy scanning ewes and lambing preparations early lambers.

Pregnancy scanning ewes

Ultrasound scanning ewes provides us with invaluable information, which should be utilised in the management of the flock. Use this information to:

- Remove barren animals from the flock
- Group ewes according to the numbers of lambs being carried and tailor nutrition accordingly
- Group ewes according to whether they will lamb early or late, this reduces the risk of over-feeding later lambing sheep

This is also an excellent opportunity to be body condition scoring the ewes, as you are gathering them anyway. Poorer ewes with no known history of disease should be separated off and managed with the ewes having a higher rate of nutrition. If ill-thrift is seen across the entire flock, then insufficient nutrition, chronic liver fluke, lameness or sheep scab should be considered. If poor condition is seen in individual animals, then production limiting diseases should be considered (Maedi visna, Johne's, Ovine Pulmonary Adenocarcinoma, Caseous Lymphadenitis) or chronic lameness. These individual animals should be parted off and culled.

Most lay scanners prefer to ultrasound scan around 60-85 days of gestation. As with any contracting personnel, there is a risk that the farm they have been to before yours may have sheep scab/Footrot/CODD. Ask them if they have had chance to wash the trailer down in between clients, and brush down with disinfectant along the floor/sides. Sheep scab can be devastating and can spread very quickly during lambing time when ewes are housed.

New Graduate update!

This month we will scan our later lambing flock to then group our ewes into groups but also move any that are low BCS into a group above.

Our early lambing flock scanned in at 200% back in November, which we were very pleased with! This group is due to lamb at the end of January and will receive their Footvax at the start of this month and their Heptavac P at the end of this month. The use of Footvax should be tailored to each farm, please do give us a ring if you are struggling with lameness in your flock! If you do intend to Footvax, we advise to NOT do this within 6 weeks of lambing. Make sure you leave a few weeks between vaccinations if doing multiple different ones, so the ewes can produce the best possible immune response to each vaccine.



Early Lambing? Here's your checklist to ensure you have everything you might need!

- ✓ **Lubricant** – plenty of lubricant will aid with reducing the risk of vaginal tears when assisting ewes lambing
- ✓ Lambing **ropes/snares** – ensure these are clean and disinfected after use, so they don't spread infection!
- ✓ Stored **Colostrum** – ready for any lambs whose mothers do not have any, colostrum from a healthy single bearing ewe is ideal, but ensure her lambs gets their requirement too!
- ✓ **Non-steroidal anti-inflammatories** drugs (Metacam/Findayne) – essential to reduce pain and therefore improve feed intakes in ewes after difficult lambings, and to reduce a temperature in any animal that is pyrexia. This on-cascade as not licensed for sheep so needs a discussion with your farm vet to prescribe the right one.
- ✓ Broad spectrum **antibiotics** (Alamycin LA or Betamox): if using these antibiotics, alamycin is a one off injection that lasts approximately 2 days. If using Betamox, this must be given as a course of 3 or 5 days and not a one-off injection!
- ✓ **Calciject** to treat any ewes with hypocalcaemia and **Propylene glycol** for any ewes suffering from twin lamb disease. Lots of "twin lamb" drenches on the market don't contain enough propylene glycol so make sure you are using a product with enough glycol in it.

- ✓ Fresh **needles and syringes** – dirty needles can cause injection site pain, abscesses, or even worse, spinal abscesses. Dirty, blunt needles have a direct link to carcass condemnation at slaughter.

Good Colostrum Management – minimising losses from watery mouth

This section is just a quick reminder about colostrum requirements! I know sometimes it can be difficult to decide whether a lamb has sucked or not, but if you're in any doubt, stomach tube it it's requirements anyway.

- 50ml/kg as soon after birth (within 4-6 hours)
- In the first 24 hours of life, the lamb must receive 200ml/kg of colostrum (i.e. a 5kg single must have 1 litre in the first 24 hours)
- Remember – artificial colostrum is a supplement to ewes colostrum and NOT an alternative
- * Lambing pen hygiene, clean out bonding pens in-between ewes or ensure that there is fresh straw and lime is applied to inhibit bacterial growth
- * Ensuring ewes are crutched and do not have soiled back ends. *E.coli* is the cause of watery mouth in lambs and is largely present in faecal matter
- * Hygiene of lamb stomach tubes and feeding equipment is paramount – clean and disinfect in between use

Farming equipment and technology fund - Round One:

This fund provides investment for specific equipment which will improve productivity and efficiency on farm, and are for grants between £2,000 - £25,000. You must submit your application online by the 7th January 2022. This fund is the one most relevant for sheep farms wanting to invest in new pieces of equipment.

Have a look to see what new toys you might be able to get help to buy!

Get in contact with the practice to book in pre-lambing blood sampling to determine whether nutrition is sufficient. These need to be done 4-6 weeks before lambing, this then allows for changes to be made if there is a problem. Doing these bloods and acting on results should reduce the risk of pregnancy toxemia (twin lamb disease) in ewes.

HEPATAVAC P

It's come around quickly! It's time to plan your Heptavac P boosters again.

First time ewe lambs will need **2 injections 4-6 weeks apart**. The second injection and all boosters must be completed a minimum of **4 weeks pre lambing** to ensure adequate antibody levels in colostrum.

Please call the practice to place your orders

SCABIVAX

If you have a **known** Orf issue on farm now is a good time to consider vaccinating. Vaccination of ewes must be completed **7-8 weeks before lambing** to allow time for 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 and vaccination please speak to us at the practice

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A
HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE
FARM TEAM



It's only just December but... CHRISTMAS MEDICINE ORDERS

Please ring ALL medicines orders in by **Friday 17th December** to ensure collection over Christmas and New Year!

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us here at Wood Vets Farm Team!