



THE
WOOD
VETERINARY
GROUP



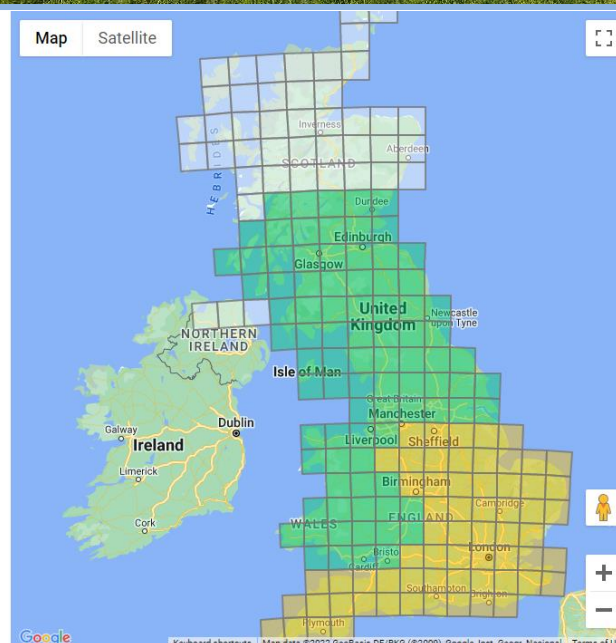
Blowfly strike risk!

With the weather warming up and rain in the forecast, the increasing humidity creates the perfect weather for nuisance flies, therefore we must be on high alert for flystrike! Our vets have already seen some cases this season.

The NADIS blowfly alert is helpful tool that can be used to assess risk. Gloucestershire is marked yellow with a moderate risk and currently they predict that 1 in 500 animals may be struck. When the map turns red, animals are at **HIGH** risk and 1 in 100 animals may be struck.

Tips to help with minimising the risk to your animals:

- Crutch/dag ewes and lambs to remove any muck around the backend
- Faecal egg count lambs regularly to check whether they need worming, to reduce scouring
- Ensure lambs are tailed
- Reduce fly burden around the farm – Clover flies can be used around muck heaps or around the edge of sheds and other fly breeding environments. The offspring of clover flies eat the nuisance flies therefore reducing the burden on farm. Contact the farm team to discuss if they are appropriate for your farm
- Spraying or dipping sheep to prevent strike – lets discuss different options here:



Organophosphate dips (contain diazinon)

- Protects against external parasites for 8-10 weeks and will kill maggots on sheep
- Withdrawal period of 49 days
- Yellow coloured wormers should not be used for a minimum of 14 days from when animals were dipped
- Can only be performed by licensed personnel/contractors
- The only remaining fully effective treatment/prevention for sheep scab

Pyrethroid pour-on (contain cypermethrin)

- Protects against external parasites for 8-10 weeks and kill maggots on sheep
- Shorter withdrawal periods than dipping (check individual product withdrawals)
- Sheep must be crutched before applying these products or at least have clean back ends
- Protection is only provided on areas of the fleece where the product is applied

Insect Growth Regulators

- Work by limiting the development of the nuisance fly on the sheep
- Products need to be applied in a certain way to ensure the fleece is fully protected for the stated length of time, be sure to read the product instructions

- The withholds on products containing the IGR dicylanil vary, but there are some withholds as short as 8 days which is ideal for use when you want security that lambs are protected but with a short meat withdrawal.
- Will prevent but not treat strike

To ensure that the best outcome is achieved with regards to length of protection, ensure sheep have at least 1-2cm of fleece and do not apply any of these products if there is rain in the upcoming forecast.

Had problems with Orf again this year?

Orf has been its usual annoyance this year, being seen with varying degrees of severity on farms. This may be due to the mild winter we had, as the virus can survive many months in cold environments, but is destroyed by very cold or warm temperatures, UV light and moisture. The virus can survive many months in sheds, and there are even reports of it living up to 17 years, hence why we see it year on year on some farms.

Orf is caused by a pox virus and is typically self-limiting, with lesions clearing up within a month in healthy animals. Lesions are seen on the mouth, ears, eyes and can even be seen on teats, inside the groin and on the feet, which can be confused with contagious ovine digital dermatitis (CODD). When the pustules burst, occasionally bacteria invade causing a secondary infection. These secondary infections are the reason why lesions can take a while to clear up.

Engemycin topical spray can be used to treat the secondary infections and in more severe cases, injectable antibiotics and pain relief should be given. In complicated cases, where lambs have transmitted infection to the ewe's udder or vice versa, we advise housing the ewe and lambs for treatment. Milk off the ewe to prevent her drying up or becoming engorged and supplement lambs if required.

Do remember that orf is very easily transmitted to humans, especially if you have any cuts, so always wear gloves!

Every effort must be made to prevent its occurrence in flocks due to the level of morbidity and reduction in growth rates than it can cause:

- Orf can be bought in with carrier sheep that have no obvious lesions, another reason to try and keep a closed flock
- Contaminated stock trailers can also be a source of infection, so make sure stock trailers are cleaned thoroughly after use
- The virus doesn't survive wetting, so thoroughly clean and disinfect sheds before lambing and housing stock again. Ensure any areas that will house pet lambs are cleaned, as they are particularly susceptible to severe orf infection
- Care when drenching lambs not to create cuts on the mouth where orf can invade
- The Scabivax vaccine is a very useful tool in our armoury. It can be used in ewes more than >7 weeks prior to lambing (no antibodies are produced in colostrum) and can be used to vaccinate lambs from birth. Lambs are typically vaccinated on turnout or before the stress of weaning. Vaccination should never be used in a naïve flock.
- Any supplements on the market are aimed at ensuring lambs are healthy and not deficient in any vitamins/minerals but are not a treatment for orf. Take care with the use of any mineral buckets out for lambs, these may act as reservoirs of infection as lambs licking the contents drop infectious scabs into them which will infect any naïve lambs.



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