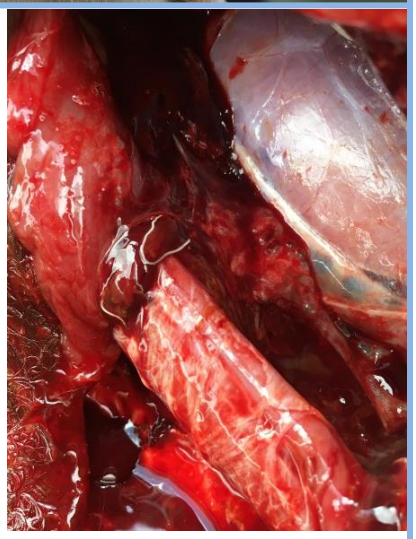
THE WOOD VETERINARY GROUP

FARM NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2023

Vaccinate against Lungworm pre-turnout, or cough up later



Most lungworm cases are reported at the back end of the autumn grazing season. However, lungworm larvae can overwinter on pasture and inside carrier cattle, causing infection from year to year. Naive cattle can pick up infection as soon as they are turned out in the spring. And if they do, it could be very costly.

It pays to vaccinate

Vaccination against lungworm is a no brainer. In a dairy herd, lungworm infection could easily cost you £140 per cow with lost milk production averaging 4kg per cow per day – and that's a conservative estimate – because you can also lose cattle to lungworm.

Home-reared replacement heifers tend to graze on a separate pasture away from the milking herd and are often treated with long-acting wormers, perhaps in both the first and second grazing seasons. When this replacement group enters the main herd, they have no immunity to lungworm and the risk of a disease outbreak at grass is very high. Lungworm is unpredictable and best controlled through vaccination especially targeting youngstock.

Boost immunity through vaccination

Huskvac is a live vaccine, made from irradiated lungworm larvae, which therefore can't cause disease.
Vaccination course:

- 2 doses
- 4 weeks apart
- 2nd dose 2 weeks prior to turnout to grass
- Wormers should not be given until two weeks after the final dose of vaccine

The vaccine allows a small number of lungworm from natural infection to complete their life-cycle. This means there is a continued development of natural immunity throughout the grazing season. Graze vaccinated heifers on old permanent leys avoiding clean pasture. Over-reliance on wormers does not allow this natural immunity to occur.

Vaccination with a pre-turnout course of Huskvac is the most reliable and cost-effective way of ensuring the development of immunity to lungworm. Please give us a call to discuss your parasite control plan for the spring and summer. Turnout may seem a long way off in this cold, wet weather but it will take 6 weeks from starting the course to turnout which will be late Feb at the earliest.

Don't forget that Ellie our Vet Tech is on hand to help administer Huskvac if you need another pair of hands – we know it's not the easiest one to do especially in youngsters or if you have lots to do.

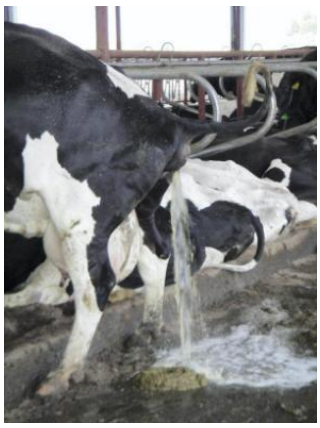
Huskvac is estimated to be available from 20th January this year so plan ahead to time vaccination! We would suggest buying 1st and 2nd doses together where batch expiry dates allow to avoid disappointment! Speak to the office team about how many doses you need and they will help plan order schedules

Leptospirosis

Despite some decline in prevalence, Lepto is still a common source of ABORTION, POOR FERTILITY and MILK DROP, with those that graze at the highest risk. However, year round housing is not a guaranteed safeguard due to the infection route.

The bacteria are shed in milk and from the kidneys into urine and can cause:

- **Reduced conception rate to as low as 15% in clinical outbreaks**
- **Decreased milk yield by 800 litres per lactation**
- **Higher abortion rates**
- **It can also cause 'flu like' symptoms in humans**



Lepto is present on farms due to:

- Contaminated water sources which can include all non-mains water sources including bore holes
- Persistently infected cows that shed despite vaccination (the vaccine prevents clinical disease, not shedding)
- Rat activity contaminating water and feed
- Very poor forages with soil contamination (Lepto can survive for six months in wet soil)
- Indirect contact with the bacteria from bought in animals or co- grazing animals increases likely infection e.g.: Buying in animals, bull hiring, sheep grazing

In line with this, a certain amount can be done to reduce the risks on each farm but vaccination will always be a vital part of any plan:

- Primary course of 2 injections 4 weeks apart
- 2nd dose 2 or more weeks before turnout
- Annual booster 2 weeks before turnout
- Vaccinate all breeding animals – i.e. heifers prior to first service too

Is it a problem on your farm?

Do a BULK MILK TEST or BEEF BLOODS – 1 bulk milk or 10 bloods. Grazing herds can always sample at the end of each summer/autumn to review their risk status.

Speak to us to get these tests booked in.

Animal Health & Welfare Pathway

The animal health and welfare pathway scheme is starting this year, with funding available for cattle, sheep and pig farms. Funding is currently restricted to one aspect of the business, so mixed farms will need to pick which species to focus on. Beef farms can claim back £522 and dairy farms £372, and this money, for the first year of the pathway, must be used to test for BVD and eradicate. This will be 6 bloods in 2 management groups for beef farms or bulk milk tests (PCR/Antibody) for dairy farms.

The scheme is currently open to commercial farms, with >10 cattle, >20 sheep and >50 pigs and who are currently eligible for the basic payment scheme (BPS).

First steps on the pathway:

1. Application process: Apply digitally and agree to complete a review with a vet within 6 months.
2. Vet visit: On farm discussion regarding health, biosecurity and medicines (up to 3 hours) & testing for BVD. We can also signpost you to other financial support.
3. Vet report: We produce a report on the discussion we had on the visit including results, along with other findings and recommendations from the visit.
4. After the review and report: Vet invoices the farmer, farmers submit a summary of the review report and receives funding.

Applications will open in 2023 and must be acted upon within 6 months of application. Speak to us about how best to utilise this funding and target the focus disease on your farm