



**THE  
WOOD  
VETERINARY  
GROUP**



So just like that 2023 is almost over! We can't believe how quickly this year has flown by and we hope it's been a good year for you all. This month's newsletter focuses on preparation for the year ahead...

### It's scanning time!

Some of you may have already scanned, whereas for others scanning may be coming up imminently. Hopefully, the results are good but if you have an unwanted surprise then please get in touch to discuss it with us. Barren animals should be blood tested for diseases such as Toxoplasmosis and Enzootic abortion to see whether disease is looming. Trace element testing may also be worthwhile. It's important to investigate the cause of low scanning percentages so we can improve them next year.



Whilst you've got your ewes together to scan, make the most of the opportunity to body condition score your ewes. 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. These are known as the 'Iceberg diseases' and include Maedi visna, Johne's, Ovine Pulmonary Adenocarcinoma (OPA) and Caseous Lymphadenitis (CLA) – see next month's newsletter for more information. Speak to a vet for advice and investigation planning.

FERTILITY DETAILS			
No. of ewes put to the ram		<b>Scanning Results</b> Number of singles Number of twins Number of triplets/quads Number of ewes barren or enter Scanning %	No of ewes
No. of rams			
No. of purchased in-lamb ewes			
Date ram(s) in			
Date ram(s) out			
AT LAMBING		AT WEANING	
No. of lambs born alive		Average 8 week weight (kg)	
No. of ewes lambed in first 3 weeks		Date of 8 week weight	
Total no. of ewes lambed		Number of lambs weaned	
Date of first lamb born		Average weight at weaning (kg)	
Date of last lamb born		Date of weaning	
No. of empty ewes at lambing time			
No. of orphan lambs on farm			
EWE BODY CONDITION SCORES (Optional)			
<b>Pre mating</b>			No of ewes
Target BCS range -		Below target	
Min <input type="text" value="2.5"/>	Max <input type="text" value="3"/>	On target	
		Over target	
<b>Pre lambing</b>			No of ewes
Target BCS range -		Below target	
Min <input type="text" value="2.5"/>	Max <input type="text" value="3"/>	On target	
		Over target	

Scanning, as well as body condition scoring, provides lots of data for us so it is important to record it somewhere. Analysing data and grouping ewes according to scan results and condition scores now will give you the best chance of optimising body condition and nutrition ahead of lambing. We now have DigiFarm available for sheep data so speak to your vet if you are interested in it.

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 a 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.

### Pre-lambing bloods

Prepare for the season ahead! Get in contact with the practice to book in pre-lambing blood sampling to determine whether nutrition is sufficient. These need to be done 2-3 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.

## 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/snare** – ensure these are clean and disinfected after use, so they don't spread infection!
- ✓ **Stored Colostrum** – ready for supplementing triplets and 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! Measure the quality with a refractometer and freeze anything over >22% on the Brix Scale.
- ✓ **Non-steroidal anti-inflammatories drugs (Metacam/Findayne)** – essential to reduce pain and therefore improve feed intakes in ewes after difficult lambings. This is 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 LA 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! Always discuss antibiotic usage with a vet to ensure the right antibiotic is being used.

- ✓ **Calciject** to treat any ewes with hypocalcaemia and **Propylene glycol** for any ewes suffering from twin lamb disease.
- ✓ **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
- ✓ **Vaccinations** – It's time to plan your **Heptavac P** boosters again. Ewes not previously vaccinated will need 2 injections 4-6 weeks apart. The second injection and all boosters for older ewes must be completed 4-6 weeks pre lambing to ensure adequate antibody levels in colostrum. Also, if you have a known Orf issue on farm now is a good time to consider vaccinating **Scabigard**. 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. Get in touch to discuss vaccinating further.

### **Vet Health Plans**

Why not use this 'quieter' period ahead of lambing as an opportunity to update/create a health plan with your vet? Health planning is a great way to discuss and reflect on the highs and lows you had in the last year so that strategies can be put in place to hopefully make the next year more successful – after all, **PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE.**

Please get in contact with the practice to book in a health plan visit at a time that suits you – this is also a great opportunity to complete vet attestation forms if needed.

**It's only just December but...**

### **CHRISTMAS MEDICINE ORDERS**

Please ring ALL medicines orders in  
by  
**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December** to  
ensure collection/delivery on visits  
over Christmas and New Year!

### **Festive Opening Times**

Mon 18 <sup>th</sup> to Fri 22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec:	Normal Hours
Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup> December:	Emergencies Only
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> December:	Emergencies Only
Christmas Day (25 <sup>th</sup> ):	Emergencies Only
Boxing Day (26 <sup>th</sup> ):	Emergencies Only
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup> to Fri 29 <sup>th</sup> Dec:	Normal Hours
Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> December:	Emergencies Only
New Years Eve (31 <sup>st</sup> ):	Emergencies Only
New Years Day (1 <sup>st</sup> ):	Emergencies Only
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan Onward:	Normal Hours

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



Wood Vets Farm Team



@woodvetsfarmteam