

April 2011.

The lambing season is well under way, with many of you reporting remarkably **high lambing percentages** despite the awful winter. Having got the lambs this **far lets keep them going!!** I shall re iterate last months worry regarding **nematodirus**. The lab has seen a couple of cases already so please be on the look out. If you suspect it then get a **poo sample to us straight away**. If confirmed then treat with **either a white drench or levamisole**.

With the spring calvers just starting at the risk of sounding like a broken down record make sure the calves are **getting enough good quality colostrum**. It can be difficult in the beef animals with out getting your heads kicked in. If you are vaccinating with **Rotavec then don't forget the heifers**, as these often produce the worst quality colostrum and so this needs a boost. If in doubt regarding colostrum we can take **blood samples and check quality**.

Crypto is definitely on the increase. Unfortunately there is **no vaccine** for this so the age old, good hygiene is very important. There is a product called **halocur** which should be given for the **first 7 days of life**. Don't over dose as it will **kill them**.

Crypto is **spread in muck** so try to limit this as well as limiting the mixing of age groups. If possible keep calves of **no greater than a 3 week age gap together**. This can be difficult to achieve but we have had excellent results with this.

Pre-turnout alert: Preventing sudden cattle deaths may require clostridia protection

- As many as **one-in-four sudden cattle** deaths are attributed to blackleg but may have been caused by any of the members of the Clostridium family.
- Blackleg incidence is **higher at grass** than during housing
- A survey in 2007 found that about half of cattle farmers have experienced sudden deaths in cattle. Among a multitude of possible causes from lightning strike to lead poisoning, one of the more commonplace is likely to be a clostridial disease.
- **Financially**, preventing the loss of just one animal can cover the cost of vaccination for 10 years,
- In the sheep industry it is estimated that 70 per cent of the national ewe flock is vaccinated annually. Yet among cattle producers, the threat and reality of clostridial disease appears to be rather under-estimated."
- Clostridia bacteria are widespread in the environment, so good biosecurity is no defence
- Most of the strains are present in the gut, organs or muscle tissue of healthy animals with the **trigger factor** for them becoming a toxin-spewing killer being trauma be that from stress, physical injury or forced exercise. Parasites such as **liver fluke can** also be a trigger.
- Although different strains can cause different symptoms, often the **first sign of clostridial disease is a dead animal**. When a vet's diagnosis can be made while the animal is still alive, treatment is rarely successful. It is frequently the best animals in a group, the fastest growing and most heavily muscled, that succumb.
- **Talk to us at the vets about the use of Bravoxin 10.**

Kidney stones in fattening lambs.

Up to 40% of lamb deaths in the winter are said to be attributed to this. With **young, male lambs** being the most prominent.

Prevention is the key as treatment is often unsuccessful and economically unviable.

1. **Fresh, clean water** should be provided at all times. This flushes out the kidneys.
2. Offer **salt and salt blocks** to encourage water uptake.
3. **Feed good quality roughage** to encourage maximum saliva production.
4. Make sure the mag : phosphorus levels don't exceed 0.23% : 0.4%.
5. Keep **off sugar beet pulp**.
6. Add up to 1% ammonium chloride to the diet.

Dairy cell check:

Average S.C.C	149	Average lact yield	7.5	1 st recording >200scc (%)	18.8
Ave % cows preg by 100 dys	33	Ave calving interval	465!!	% dry period cure	66
Average 305 yield	6.6			% dry period protection	83