

## March 2014.

Lambing is now under way and the weather seems to have improved slightly which is a God send. The ground is still very wet and so please make sure that the lambs have **dry, clean areas to shelter**.

- If it is starting to look mucky under the hedges, if possible try to **move the sheep** as a mucky outside environment can be as bad as inside for the **spread of joint ill, cocci and scours**.

We are **not seeing major problems** at the moment which is excellent.

1. We have had a few bizarre **calcium deficiency problems** in both inside and outside ewes.

- Make sure they have good quality licks at all time, access to forage and they are not getting too stressed!!

2. We have had a **few twin lamb diseases**, these are very difficult to cure and so prevention is definitely the key.

- Making sure the sheep are fed according to **condition score and number of lambs**. Make sure they have good access to a good quality forage and again molasses licks are ideal. Molasses not only provides an excellent source of energy but it also works well against acidosis which a lot of the ewes can get if they over eat concentrates and under eat forage.

3. We are having a **few prolapses**. In one case we solved it by changing their feeding regime.

- Originally the sheep were fed forage every other day. They then gorged themselves on the first day and didn't eat as much on day 2. By feeding them every day this stopped the prolapses.

4. Many of you are bringing in poo samples looking for **fluke eggs**: so far this year there has been surprisingly little evidence of fluke in the sheep.

- I suspect this may be on account of there being a relatively dry back end with lots of grass. By testing before dosing it has saved you money and held off the development of triclabendazole resistance on your farm.

There was a meeting with DEFRA over **TB**. It was rather heated and they didn't resolve anything.

**A few more contentious issues were raised:**

1. There is a **consultation over tabular valuation for reactors**.

- This will very much affect all the poor people that do lose reactors and so do try and respond if possible.

2. Glyn Davies gets lots of letters **regarding saving the badgers** but has only had one in favour of the cull.

- If you support the cull put pen to paper.

3. **Risk based trading** was also mentioned: Where by your TB history will be demonstrated at sales!!

**Neospora:**

- Infection can cause **serious disease in pregnant cows** and result in **abortion**.
- There is no evidence to say it affects humans.
- It was first **detected over 30 years ago**.
- It does seem to be on the **increase**.
- Naïve cows grazing forage **contaminated by dog poo** are susceptible.
- The pregnant cow may show **no signs, other than abortion**.
- Some calves survive gestation and are born with **nervous signs or born dead**. Others are **healthy and harbor the parasite**.
- An **abortion storm** can occur when the farm is infected for the first time.
- Not all infected cattle will abort, but those infected **are 3 – 7 times** more likely to.
- Abortion is more common in **heifers** and **recently infected cows**.
- Infected cattle stay **infected for life**.
- The parasite can become **active at each pregnancy** leading to abortion or infection of calf.
- It is thought that **5% abort multiple** times to neospora.

### Microchipping dogs.

Soon it will be law for all dogs to be microchipped.

We have **60 FOC microchips** we must use by the end of March.

Bring your Collies to us if you are visiting the surgery.

### English holding numbers:

There is the **FFIS** grant for equipment. Look at DEFRA website asap.

### Welsh holding numbers:

Farming connect grants are now available for **80% funding**, for work carried out by the vet. In the last round we had very satisfied customers so take advantage of this.