

September 2014.

- What are we seeing at the minute?

In the sheep..... a) After the drought we are seeing **increased worm burdens**.

- This is the time of year to use a totally different group of wormer such as **Zolvix** or **Startect**.
- They **do not have any extra persistency** nor are they stronger. In other words if you drench with them now the worms may still re occur in 3 weeks' time.
- What is **unique** about them is that there is **no resistance** to them. At the moment there is about **80% resistance to white drench, a lower amount to levamisole and around 30% to the clear drench**. This resistance may not be obvious, in that the worms will be checked but not reduced to zero. The sheep will be still **losing food conversion efficiency**. By using these new wormers you are **prolonging the development of resistance** on your farm and keeping the growth rates of the lambs up.

b) When the weather changes we are seeing **sudden death**, from either **clostridial disease or pneumonia**.

- If you are getting **dead lambs vaccinate asap** and also cover with a **shot of penicillin**. Often the stress of gathering can lead to further death and the penicillin is good at reducing this.

c) We are also taking **lots of bloods** to assess the **selenium, copper and cobalt** levels.

Selenium: Low levels around mating can lead to **early embryonic deaths**.

In lambs it is seen as a **reduced growth rate** and a poor fleece growth.

In new born lambs it can lead to **white muscle disease and death**.

Copper: Low levels again results in **poor growth rates, anaemia, fragile bones**.

It can also lead to a **compromised immune status** and so the animals pick up more diseases.

High levels in sheep can **kill**.

Cobalt: Low levels in the ewe shows as **increased still births** and **deaths** in new born lamb.

In growing lambs it leads to **poor growth rates** as well as **watery eyes** and **scabby ears**.

In the cattle:..... a) Increased incidence in **mastitis**:

Summer mastitis is the major cause.

The flies have had a bumper year so keep on treating the cows.

In fresh calved cows this will often be on account of **dry cow infection**.

- Use **orbeseal** in the drys and may be even in the heifers .

Keep the areas around the feed and water troughs **as clean as possible** and try to move the troughs around.

Any **pasture grazed by dry cows** should be used for a **max of 2 weeks** then **left for 4 weeks** to reduce the bacterial load. This may involve using an **electric fence** which is still easier than treating lots of cases.

b) **Pneumonia in calves**. When the **weather changed** we saw an increase in disease.

- To reduce pneumonia in sheds there are critically 5 things to think about:

1. Moisture: Keep this to a minimum, so make sure the pens are freely drainable. This will also **save on straw**.

Make sure your **gutters are up to it**.

You want to keep humidity in sheds down **below 75%**

A cow produces 50 litres of water /

3. Air speed:

There should be air movement but **not draughts, nor a hurricane**.

If the bedding is moving something is wrong.

A **fan every 60 feet** can create good air movement.

2. Fresh air:

This is an **excellent killer of pneumonia** bugs.

Make sure the air flow is such that the most **vulnerable animals** ie the calves are **up stream**. Have you got enough **inlets and outlets**. A calf needs **0.04m² of outlet** per calf where as an **adult cow needs 0.1m² of outlet** per animal.

- There should be **twice the amount** of inlet to out let.
- The outlet is often what lets a shed down. The awful **cranked ridges** allow **0.67m² of outlet**. (crap)

4. Hygiene

Think of chickens and the rigorous cleaning involved.

Why are our calves any different? Between batches:

- a) **Remove** all organic matter.
- b) Wash down with a **steam hose** not a pressure hose.
- c) Apply **disinfectant** at the correct dose and for required time.
- d) Allow to **dry**

5. Temperature.

The lower critical temperature of a calf is **12C**. This increases if wet etc.

Use **jackets / lamps or insulation**.