



# FARM NEWS CLEVEDALE VETERINARY PRACTICE JULY 2012

## E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Thank you to those of you who have already let us know their email address.

For those of you who haven't, please can we remind you to let us know what your email address is the next time you contact the practice – as the price of postage increases we are looking into sending invoices and newsletters by email to try and minimise our overheads. Thank you.

Contact us:

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## TO WORM OR NOT TO WORM - FAECAL EGG COUNTS AVAILABLE AT UPLEATHAM

Deciding upon the correct timing of worming can be difficult but is essential to reduce the risk of gastrointestinal parasitism adversely affecting lamb (and calf) growth rate and costing you money. However, drenching too frequently may select for resistance; drench too late and long term parasite damage to the gut may occur reducing growth rates for weeks to come.

In general, if lambs are to be dosed and moved to new safe pasture, they should be allowed to carry some anthelmintic-susceptible worms over onto the new pasture to avoid selection for anthelmintic resistance. For example, a proportion of the strongest lambs (perhaps around 10 per cent) could be left untreated, or the lambs allowed to graze the contaminated paddock for several days after treatment before moving to safe grazing (unless a persistent anthelmintic is used).

**To help judge the correct time and type of treatment (is it worms or cocci causing the scour?), faecal worm egg counts can be used to help determine whether dosing is required:** Lambs can be gathered into a corner of a field or in a concrete-based pen and left for half an hour before collecting approximately 10 equal-sized faecal samples into a polythene bag. In our lab at Upleatham we will take an equal amount of each sample to form a "pooled" sample and determine the average worm egg count. This will help us decide which, if any, anthelmintic treatment is necessary or whether it should be delayed until after another sample is analysed in 10-14 days. This can save many hours unnecessary work gathering and dosing lambs as well as reducing the onset of the appearance of anthelmintic resistance on your farm.

## ORF AND THISTLES

Every summer we see outbreaks of Orf in lambs and it is often associated with fields where there are lots of thistles – lambs are inquisitive things and the scabs from orf form due to the superficial trauma to the lips/mouth. Now is the time to take a good look at your sheep pastures and spend a few happy hours with the scythe making sure there are as few thistles as possible – remember to remove the cut thistles. The virus which causes "Orf" Disease can be introduced into a flock by carrier sheep with no obvious skin lesions. Infection can remain viable in dry scab material in buildings for many months and is the likely reason for persistence of infection from year to year on the same premises. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of lambing accommodation/pens etc may therefore help to break the usual annual appearance of disease....another job for you after you've finished cutting the thistles!

**Sheep Lameness** At the end of June we held an update on lameness in sheep where some debate was had as to whether we were actually doing any good trimming sheep's feet. Other issues addressed were the need for prompt treatment and consideration to whole flock treatments. If you were unable to attend but are interested in anything which may have been discussed, please ring the surgery and ask for one of us to get back to you.