



CLEVEDALE NEWSLETTER May 2013

Spring has finally arrived! The sun is shining, grass is growing, lambs are frolicking around the fields and a few cows are getting a taste of fresh grass, so here's to a better summer than last year...

Schmallenberg - an update: this spring has probably seen us hit harder than we'd hoped for with regards to cattle; most sheep flocks seem to have been impacted less severely. Our understanding of the disease is that the more serious deformities in sheep are seen where infection occurs in the second month of pregnancy but for cattle this is more likely in the 3rd and 4th months of pregnancy. This goes some way to explaining the problems we've been experiencing in cattle in the last couple of months - if SBV first started infecting stock in our area around August/September, cattle served in early summer were susceptible to the abnormalities which we have seen at calving some 5 months later; on the other hand, the majority of ewes bred in October/November may already have become immune along with the fact that the main period of risk for sheep occurred after the onset of cold weather reduced midge activity. There is no news of a vaccine as yet although we are led to believe one is imminent...

A couple of dates for your diary:

"Dairy Heifer Management" 730 pm Wednesday 22nd May - the first in a series of dairy management meetings to be held this summer. This meeting aims to discuss ways to improve efficiency of heifer rearing and improve the lifespan of replacements in the herd using up to date research. There will be a practical component to this meeting to be held on farm before retiring to a local hostelry for refreshments. Please contact the surgery to register - the venue will be confirmed nearer the time subject to grass growth and silaging!

"After a Wet Year" - Davison Farm, Egton (courtesy of Peter and Guy Prudom) Thursday 30th May, 1030am start - an EBLEX / Uplands Grassland Event with independent grassland consultant Chris Duller looking at managing sward and soil damage and future management strategies. Please contact EBLEX on 01904 771214 or email brpevents@eblex.ahdb.org.uk to register for this free event

"BVD Free 2013"

Following on from our push within the practice to highlight the problems caused by BVD virus (Bovine Viral Diarrhoea virus) and the benefits of eradication, there is a new DEFRA and EU funded RDPE initiative for BVD control at national level entitled "BVD Free". Local vet practices are taking part to help map the disease across the country and further encourage control and eradication. We have limited funds available to do initial testing on units to see if BVD is active on your farm; if you are interested in finding out more, please contact Babs, Wendy, Pippa or Dawn.

****ALERT: NEMATODIRUS RISK**** - as the weather has suddenly warmed up, so we need to be on our guard against Nematodirus as the change from cold days and frosty nights causes a mass hatch of over-wintered parasites.

Nematodiosis is a particularly nasty disease in lambs, causing a high number of mortalities and stunting the growth of many others. It is caused by the worm, Nematodirus battus, which has a different life-cycle to other sheep worms. Under certain climatic conditions it can strike very quickly, with little or no warning.

The main difference in the life-cycle of Nematodirus battus compared with other parasitic worms, is that development to infective larvae takes place within the egg and infection passes from one lamb crop to the next year's crop. Cold weather delays hatching, so when we get a sudden change in temperature, as we have this year, it can trigger a mass hatch. If this coincides with the time when lambs are starting to take in significant amounts of grass (over about 6 weeks old), the result can be devastating.

The main risk factors to consider are:

- A sudden, late cold snap followed by a period of warm weather
- Lambs grazing pasture that carried lambs last spring
- Lambs that are old enough to be eating significant amounts of grass (generally 6-12 weeks old but this year may be younger with ewes struggling to milk)
- Groups where there is also likely to be a challenge from coccidiosis
- Lambs that are under other stresses e.g. triplets, fostered, on young or older ewes

If you are worried about Nematodirus please speak to one of us at the surgery and remember that the wormer of choice for Nematodirus is usually one of the "white" (benzimidazole; BZ-1) drenches.

And finally, those of you who have missed "Ubro Yellow" mastitis tubes will be pleased to know that it is once again available; its milk with-hold remains the same at 132 hours.

