

Hello and welcome to the January Newsletter – Happy New Year! I hope you all had a good Christmas and that you all managed to spend some time relaxing with your families.

We had a very wet month in December and quite mild. This undoubtedly will assist some parasites – we are still seeing positive results for liver fluke in stock that were negative the month before. Let's hope this cold snap polishes off a few of them. Just remember that parasites are not always behaving as you'd expect with these unusual weather conditions.

We have started to see the first trickle of lambings. Don't forget, we can do bloods on pregnant ewes to determine whether the nutrition is up to scratch and meeting their needs. We need to blood sample 20 ewes – at least 5 from your singles, twins and triplets, 3 weeks before lambing starts, for a cost of £200 lab fees plus visit/time etc. If you are Farming Connect registered, you can consider applying for funding. Also, we can offer you a check on your diet, this is more accurate if you have an up to date forage analysis.

Schmallenberg has been reported around the area recently, a few of our neighbouring practices have seen it, as have we. If you have any worries, please phone us. There may not be a lot you can do about it as there is no treatment but hopefully we can reassure you.

Tom is doing another lambing course this year, on 3rd February. It is first come, first serve with limited spaces and likely to be very popular again. Please ring the office to book your place, we will not accept people without pre-booking. Please see overleaf for full details

Mini Morgan is doing the article this month – on VAN certificates and prescription only medicines visits. Quite confusing, but read on for an explanation.

Mary

POAO and POM Visits- What you need to know

POAO – Product of Animal Origin.

VAN – Veterinary Attestation Number

As of the 13th of December 2023, if any livestock intended for human consumption are to go to market for slaughter or directly to the abattoir you will be asked for a VAN. This number allows any POAO to be exported to the EU and provides evidence that the animals involved are having regular or at least yearly veterinary visits. You may think you don't need a POAO as you sell store cattle or lambs, but what happens with cull ewes/cows?

A POAO visit must be carried out by a qualified vet and can be done during routine checks such as TB tests. Please pre-book with our receptionist at the time of booking the TB test as we will need to send you some information in advance and bring the correct paperwork and allow a suitable amount of time.

What do you need to do before your POAO visit??

Before your visit you will receive an email containing a list of documents we would like you to have ready on the day, these include a herd health plan including biosecurity section and medicines book.

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What happens on a POAO visit?

During the visit we are required to inspect the farm, assess the overall health of the animals on site, and confirm there are no animals with any obvious signs of notifiable disease. If you have animals present at different locations under the same CPH, we will also need to inspect these locations.

The visit includes an assessment of the biosecurity measures for the farm, where and how medicines are stored and locked away, and how out of date medicines and used needles are disposed of.

Whilst on the visit we may provide suggestions for improvements on safe storage, biosecurity and how medicine is disposed of. We are also happy to help answer any other questions you may have.

Once we have inspected the animals, all applicable farm locations and paperwork detailed above, we will provide you with a certificate containing the VAN. You will need to keep this on your farm as it will be valid for up to 12 months. The POAO certificate will cover the species of animal seen at the inspection.

Does everyone need a POAO to send animals to slaughter?

No – a POAO is not needed if you are part of an approved farm assurance scheme, e.g. Farm Assured Welsh Livestock (FAWL) or Red Tractor.

What is a POM visit?

POM- Prescription only medicine.

POM -V- Prescription only relating to veterinary medicines.

A POM visit is different to a POAO visit. In order to prescribe POMs an animal must be classed as being under our care. Therefore you may be told you need a POM visit if we have not visited your farm in the preceding 12 month period and you have asked for medication to be dispensed.

A POM is a drug that you can only access if a doctor or vet has dispensed or prescribed it for you or your animals. These are typically medicines such as antibiotics and anti-inflammatories, however with increasing resistance issues seen in wormers, we have restrictions in place for some wormers as well (derquantel).

The RCVS have brought in stricter rules from the 1st of September 2023 relating to the dispensing of POM-V drugs. These rules stipulate that a vet must carry out a clinical assessment of the case or animal to obtain an accurate picture of what is going on before prescribing suitable treatment. This may take the form of a telephone consultation or in some cases may require an in person clinical exam of the affected animals in order to determine the most appropriate treatment—there's no use using a drug that is not active against the bugs involved.

The aim of these visits is to work together with you to get the most from your livestock and preserve the drugs used for when they are really needed.

As always, if you would like any further information on anything mentioned in this month's newsletter please contact us at the surgery.

This month's author was "Mini" Morgan Donagh.



Lambing Course

Our very popular lambing course will take place on Saturday 3rd February @ Pencoed College. The course will follow the normal format of lecture and discussion based learning with plenty of practical teaching. The day is aimed at newcomers to lambing and will cost £65 + VAT with lunch included.

By the end of the course you should have confidence in the following:

- Knowledge of the lambing process, what can go wrong and how to prevent it
- Be able to correct simple mal-presentations
- Calculate dosages of commonly used medications and be able to administer them
- Be able to castrate, tail dock and stomach tube lambs

Please book your place by calling the office on 01443 223751, maximum of 12 spaces, first come first served.



Office opening hours

Monday – Friday (Except Bank Holidays)

8.30am - 5.30pm

Emergency out of hours service

Weeknights 5.30pm - 8.30am

Saturday & Sunday all day