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Newsletter February 2013

Schmallenberg Virus (SBV)

As you will be aware there is a high incidence of deformed lambs associated with Schmallenberg virus in this area. There are reports of deformed calves but we have not seen very many yet. The typical signs are deformed head, twisted neck and deformed limbs.

Abortions and empty ewes are unlikely to be SBV. Abortions have not been linked to SBV and there are many causes of abortion so we advise investigating all abortion problems. The common causes of sheep abortion are still around including enzootic abortion and toxoplasmosis.

Liver Fluke in Sheep

We have been diagnosing a lot of liver fluke including triclabendazole resistance. Infective larvae are still present on pastures. It is well worth considering a fluke treatment while your ewes are housed for lambing with a product other than Triclabendazole (e.g. "Fasinex", "Combinex", "Tribex" etc), such as "Flukiver", which contains Closantel. "Flukiver" is available from the Practice.

Pain relief for Ewes

The use of pain relief in ewes at certain times can have dramatic benefits. If a ewe has had a tough time lambing, she is bruised and sore, a single treatment of "Meloxidyl" (Meloxicam) reduces pain and swelling, speeding up recovery and treatment success, and also increasing feed intake, milk production and therefore improves her lambs. Use of "Meloxidyl" in ewes which are lame or suffering mastitis also has huge benefits and her lambs are more likely to thrive and grow well. The cost of treatment is between £1 and £1.50 per ewe.

If you wish to discuss abortions, empty ewes, poor doing ewes, fluke treatments, pain relief or anything else to do with your flock's health and welfare please contact us in the Office or email reception@steffanvets.co.uk.

BVD & Lepto Vaccination Reminder

We are now entering the time to start thinking about and preparing for turnout! It is the time to boost your BVD and Lepto vaccinations. All cows should be boosted and don't forget to boost the bull as well.

This year we are introducing "Spirovac", Leptospirosis vaccine. This is an alternative to "Leptavoid H" and we are happy that it is just as good. It can be used as a booster to Leptavoid without needing to start a primary course again. We are also assured that it can be used on the same day as BVD vaccination. It is a 2ml dose under the skin and switching to "Spirovac" from "Leptavoid H" is straight forward. The advantage is that "Spirovac" is cheaper.

All heifers over 8 months of age, which are likely to be put to the bull (or AI) in the next 12 months should receive a primary course of vaccination. This is two injections of each Spirovac and Bovilis BVD, 4 weeks apart. The primary course should be completed at least 4 weeks before going to the bull.