



MAY 24



NEW ADVANCED PARASITE TESTING TECHNOLOGY IN OUR PRACTICE LAB



As we head into the new grazing season, we are pleased to announce that we have invested in the very latest technology to support you with the highest levels of accurate testing for **worms, cocci and liver/rumen fluke parasites**. The VETQAS accredited **Ovacyte analyser** utilises artificial intelligence technology and tests for parasites in Horses, Sheep and Cattle with very **high accuracy**, which is backed up with supporting images which tag each parasite identified. Providing a very swift turnaround (**tests can be completed within an hour or 2 if urgently required**), it means that any required treatment can be efficiently and swiftly administered to the infected animal/s.

OvaCyte's technology was founded on over five years of research and development, in collaboration with the University College Dublin's Department of Parasitology. We are confident that with this technology we will be providing you with the most accurate worm egg and cocci egg counts in the area, and we will no longer have to send fluke egg counts away.

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER

15% off all tests carried out on this machine through the months of May and June (not to be used in conjunction with any other offers or discounts).



CLIENT MEETINGS

Thursday 23rd May 24- SHEEP LAMENESS. Learn about the clinical signs, transmission and diagnosis of the common causes of sheep lameness focussing on infectious causes of lameness, and the biosecurity and biocontainment measures that can prevent and reduce lameness within the flock.

Clients must be registered with Farming Connect. Location: **TBC** Starting at 7pm. Food Provided.

Friday 21st June 24- FIRST AID FOR FEET. Eleri Davies (BCVA accredited foot health trainer & Alan Colebatch (CHCSB approved instructor) will be training both dairy and beef clients. **80% Farming Connect Funding available for eligible clients.**

Venue: Monmouthshire Livestock Market NP15 2BH. **9am to 5pm LUNCH PROVIDED.**

PLEASE CONTACT THE SURGERY TO BOOK YOUR PLACES TEL: 01873 840167

DISEASE STATUS OF PURCHASED ANIMALS

If you are considering buying in livestock, please double check their health status, or ask us to do so, even if the catalogue or auctioneer says that they are on a high health scheme. We recently came across a case where the cattle were advertised as being accredited through the Premium Cattle Health Scheme, but in fact this accreditation was several years out of date and could not be relied upon. Before any new stock come onto your farm, please speak to us so that we can make sure that they are properly screened for **BVD, IBR, JOHNES, LEPTO** and other common diseases. Be wary of the **Welsh BVD scheme**, as there are no biosecurity rules to follow – the herd may be free on the day of testing, but the farmer can purchase an animal the next day with no testing, risking bringing BVD into the herd. Other schemes have rules about testing new stock or sourcing from accredited herds only.

Another place to go for information about the TB status of cattle before purchase is WWW.IBTB.CO.UK which was developed as a free-to-use online mapping tool to inform the farming community of the current and historical bovine tuberculosis (bTB) situation on farms in England and Wales; and to give cattle keepers and their veterinarians a better understanding of the disease threat in their area and elsewhere. The system is being updated with a wider range of current information so that users are better informed about bTB risk when making trading and management decisions.

GRASS STAGGERS IN CATTLE

With turnout being later than anticipated this year, now is the time to be thinking about prevention for cases of hypomagnesemia – more commonly known as ‘grass staggers’. Staggers usually affects recently calved beef cows; however dairy cows are also at risk.

Magnesium (Mg) is not stored by the body therefore it needs to be administered daily to cattle during high-risk periods. These are periods with fast growing, lush pastures which are low in fibre. This increases the rate of transit time through the rumen, leaving less time for the magnesium to be absorbed, resulting in low levels.

Grass staggers is a neurological condition which may present as hyperexcitability, muscle spasms, respiratory distress or progress to collapse, seizures, and even sudden death. There may be evidence of soil disturbance around the recumbent cow suggesting seizure activity. Any cases seen should be treated as a veterinary emergency.

A minimum target intake for lactating suckler cows is 30g of magnesium, and for dry cows the level is 20g; which includes background levels from forage. In areas where potash levels are high (over 2%), then 40g should be the target for the total diet (30g for dry cows). High nitrogen levels in the grass are also thought to interfere with Mg absorption.

There are several ways to supplement cows with magnesium, so it should be possible to find a method to suit individual farms:

- Magnesium in the water**- added as a soluble salt magnesium sulphate or chloride. This is available from local farm supply retailers and usually comes in builder-type cement bags. A small hole should be made in one side of the bag which is then dropped into the bottom of the water tank. This will slowly release magnesium into the water. For this method to work effectively, the drinking trough must be the only source of water available to the cattle out grazing.

- Pasture dusting with calcined magnesite** Grass should ideally be damp when applying so that the dust sticks to the leaf. This will last for 10 - 14 days, however reapplication is required after heavy rainfall.

- Magnesium lick buckets** are commonly used as is a practical method for many farms and can be effective provided all the cows are taking them – individual uptake is not guaranteed, so some cows will still be at risk.

- Magnesium bolus** – the number of boluses will vary depending on the product used and usually give about four weeks protection. The downside to this method is that it is labour-intensive, and boluses can be regurgitated in some cases.

- Supplementing the cows with extra forage at grass**, such as hay, silage, or straw will help increase rate of magnesium absorption.

- High magnesium nuts** – if you need to feed more than 1kg of nuts to get the required level of Mg it can become costly.

Note that anything which affects dry matter intake will impact the cows' magnesium status, increasing the risk of grass staggers. A few examples of this would be rotational grazing, when aiming for a low target residual before changing to a new paddock, harsh weather (cattle tend to shelter in field corners) and stress events such as calving and weaning. If you have any questions about the risk of Staggers in your herd, please call us on 01873 840167.

GROWVITE VIT B12 DRENCH

Vitamin drench supplies vitamin B12 and cobalt plus iodine and selenium, essential nutrients for healthy sheep, lambs and cattle.

Lambs can be drenched from 6 weeks of age at 6 week intervals



STAFF NEWS



We are sorry to announce that Natasha Davey has left Farm First, but we would like to welcome Adam Smith to the team. Adam is an experienced Approved TB Tester, who has worked in both Wales and England previously. He worked in livestock farming prior to training as an ATT, so has a great understanding of the work we do.

