



FEBRUARY 2026

Oral Rehydration Therapy at Lambing Time

Acidosis at Birth: Lambs with acidosis at birth are generally acidotic due to a build-up of carbon dioxide causing decreased vigour and suckle reflex. A difficult or stressful lambing can increase the release of lactic acid and therefore the level of acidosis. Correcting this with oral rehydration can improve colostrum intake.

Scour: Lambs may scour (have diarrhoea) at any age and for a variety of reasons. Scour can be caused by bacteria, viruses, parasites, nutritional issues and other factors. The cause of scour cannot always be easily diagnosed for rapid accurate treatment. All scouring animals will be losing fluids as well as vital electrolytes and therefore fluid therapy that addresses these electrolyte imbalances is an important part of supportive therapy.

How can you treat a scouring lamb?

No matter the cause of the scour, the treatment of a scouring animal should aim to:

- Address the cause, if possible
- Assess and correct dehydration
- Address acidosis/electrolyte imbalances
- Maintain energy

Any scouring animals that are too weak to stand or have lost their suckle reflex should be assessed by your veterinary surgeon as intravenous fluids may be necessary.

Keep scouring animals on milk. It has been recognised for a number of years that removal of milk from scouring

animals does not encourage recovery. Continued milk feeding allows all of the benefits of milk to be utilised by the scouring animal. Milk has a very high energy level that is very difficult to replicate by any oral rehydration therapy. Energy is necessary for maintenance growth and repair, hence continuation of milk feeding has many advantages.

Choosing an oral rehydration therapy (ORT)

There are numerous oral rehydration therapies available, and not all are equal. An ORT must supply the following in order to be of maximal benefit to the animal. Many ORT products contain high levels of bicarbonate or citrate which can affect milk clotting and therefore should be fed separately from milk, by 2 hours, ideally.



Lamb Post Mortem Offer

NOW
£10 +VAT
per lamb
(under 1 week old)

Rehydion Gel is designed to be fed with milk or, if an animal is suckling, given directly into the mouth using the 2ml dosing pump. 1 bottle of Rehydion Gel = 160 doses for a young lamb (2ml per dose). Dose each lamb, at approximately 0.5-1ml/kg, 2 times a day until scour stops.



It is important to note that the animals will continue to scour until the gut is healed, so they may appear clinically well but still have loose faeces.

Type 2 Ostertagia in Calves

Parasitic gastroenteritis is a significant cost to the UK cattle sector primarily through reduced growth rates. It usually affects first and second year grazers but can cause disease in any age if immunity has not developed. Clinical signs are weight loss and green diarrhoea in summer or severe, watery diarrhoea in winter. Disease can be prevented through reducing exposure to high-risk pasture and by effective treatment with anthelmintics, however we are starting to see issues with wormer resistance. These roundworms have the ability to arrest their development (termed hypobiosis) when in the abomasal or intestinal wall. This may occur when animals continue to acquire infection into the autumn. These arrested larval stages then undergo a triggered mass emergence in the late-winter or early-spring. In large numbers this can cause extensive gut damage and what is commonly termed "Type 2" disease. Typically, the signs are diarrhoea and weight loss, but it can cause sudden death, sometimes before diarrhoea is even observed.

If any cattle suddenly start to lose weight or scour, consider Type 2 Ostertagiasis even if they have been wormed. Faeces samples are not always positive for the presence of eggs as the larvae rather than adults are causing the damage. The increased cases of wormer resistance in the area emphasise how important it is to only treat when necessary and to avoid using the same group of wormers all the time. Please contact us for advice when worming your stock.

In house Calf Scour Tests

NOW
£5+VAT
per calf
up to 10 days of age

Maximum 2 samples per farm. Offer ends 31st March 2026



Barren Ewe and Aborted Ewes - Subsidised Testing

Once again, we are able to offer some free lab fees for testing of blood and some other samples from barren and aborted ewes. **Barren ewes** at scanning can be blood tested for Toxoplasma, as well as some other causes of poor barren rates for example trace elements. MSD, (suppliers of Toxovax) will cover the cost of the Toxoplasma serology, but not the additional tests. **If ewes are aborting** it is most useful to bring in samples of placenta and aborted fetuses, and Ceva (suppliers of Cevac Chlamydia) will cover the cost of tests for Enzootic Abortion from the placenta or foetus and/or blood samples from the ewe. If you have had more barren ewes than normal (target under 5%), or have a high abortion rate (over 2%), please give us a call to discuss your options.

Health and Safety

We would like to remind all our clients that our staff should not be handling animals of any type on their own. Normal procedure would be for the farm staff to restrain the animal or move it into a crush, to enable our staff to work on it safely. If you do not have sufficient staff to enable this to happen, please let us know in advance so that we can work out a solution.

Joke of the Month

What did one cow say to the other on Valentine's Day?

I'll love you for heifer!



If you know a good joke, please send it to us - you might see it in our next newsletter!

Upcoming Meetings

Tuesday 10th February 7pm - Trace Elements: Did You Know Trace Element Deficiency Could be Reducing Your Herd's Productivity?
Kindly sponsored by Virbac. Monmouthshire Livestock Market, NP15 2BH

Thursday 12th February 7pm - NADIS Sheep Lameness
Attendance counts towards Sustainable Farming Scheme CPD points
Monmouthshire Livestock Market, NP15 2BH

To book onto a meeting please phone the office on 01873 840167

We're Recruiting!

We are seeking a full time receptionist to join our team. Please phone Natalie Parsons on 01873 840167 for more information. Closing date 20th February