

NOVEMBER 2023

LIVER FLUKE

As we approach the Autumn, we enter the period of higher risk for liver fluke. Over the last few years, we have seen very few liver fluke diagnoses, so many farmers will have been treating unnecessarily for liver fluke. Not only does this waste time and money, but it increases the risk of resistance to fluke products developing. It is becoming more difficult to predict if and when treatments for liver fluke are necessary, but there are various diagnostic tests that can be used to help us.

Testing strategies will depend on the type of stock kept and the fluke risk.

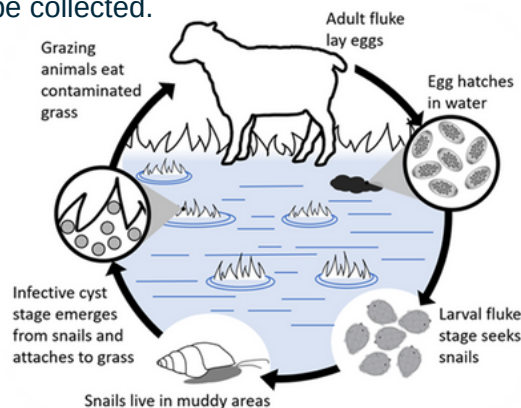
For sheep, blood testing lambs for fluke antibodies once a month from August to December can pinpoint when they become infected. As soon as they become positive, the whole flock/group should be treated with a product that targets immature fluke. Products containing triclabendazole e.g. Endofluke are very useful at this time of year, unless the farm has confirmed triclabendazole resistance. Alternatively, closantel products e.g. Solantel could be used.

Alternatively, 5 -10 faeces samples can be tested which are pooled at the lab to pick up infection from 6 weeks up.

For cattle,

- Farms with a history of fluke could blood test for fluke antibodies in first season grazing calves at housing.
- For older groups of cattle or farms with a lower fluke challenge, a faeces test can be used about 6 weeks after housing. Samples from 5 -10 individual animals should be collected.

**PLEASE COLLECT
YOUR FREE
SAMPLE POT PACKS
FROM THE
SURGERY OR
MARKET**



CLIENT MEETINGS

Nadis- Sheep Parasite Control Part 2- Thursday 9th November

Nadis- Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD)- Thursday 23rd November

Nadis- Feeding the Flock- Thursday 30th November.

**Smallholders Meeting- First Aid on Farm- Monday 4th December -
Location TBC**

Nadis- Youngstock Health Part 1- Thursday 7th December

All Nadis meetings will be held at

Monmouthshire Livestock Market at 7pm.

Please give us a call at the surgery to book your place.

FC FUNDING

Don't forget that farms in Wales have access to a lot of funding via Farming Connect. This can include updating your health plan, investigating a disease outbreak or looking into ways to improve the general health and performance of your livestock. If there is any area that you would like to improve on, please have a chat to us, and we can discuss ways to make the most out of the funding that is available.

LAB REPORT EMAILS

Just a reminder that we will usually call you to discuss any lab results shortly after we get them back, and this will be followed up by an email copy of the results, which will have a comment added to it by the case vet. This will summarise the interpretation of the results and the advice given, so they are well worth reading and keeping for future reference. If the results come back to us on several reports, we may not email each one out to you, as the final one will have all the results on it. Just be aware that the email address the results come from may be from labreports@farmfirstvets.co.uk, depending on your settings, these may go into your spam box, so please check it.

CALF HOUSING DESIGN

Efficient feeding is crucial in calf husbandry and requires significant investment of money, time, and effort. Optimizing housing design can make feeding easier, benefiting both the farmer and the calf.

Best Practices for Feeding Calves. Feeding area design plays a crucial role in the amount of feed a calf consumes. Although trough feeding milk to groups of calves is a simple, low-maintenance option with easy-to-clean feeders, it can lead to uneven milk intake and inconsistent growth rates. Alternatively, some systems incorporate self-locking feed barriers to regulate individual milk intake ensuring even growth rates. Using a teat feeder for milk feeding is the best method for calf health and productivity. Group pens with teat feeders should be designed to allow easy access for the stockperson to assist all calves in the group to access a teat. The ideal group pen size should be determined by the milk feed system used on the farm.

To limit spoilage and easily monitor daily intake, individual calves' dry feed should be provided in shallow bowls or buckets. Placing a trough for dry feed more than 2 meters away from a drinker will reduce feed ending up in the drinking bowl. The feed face and other requirements, like a water trough, will determine the minimum width of a pen front. Maintaining groups during the growing period is preferable, as it reduces short-term stress from mixing and frequency of contact with other sources of infection. For optimal rumen development, a trough or rack feeder is necessary to provide long chopped straw.

Improving Calf Care with Automatic Milk Feeders. Automatic milk feeders (AMF) can decrease labour needs per calf while monitoring milk intakes. However, they can increase disease transmission risk within groups of calves, and some calves may require assistance adapting to the AMF. To maintain cleanliness in AMFs, teats and cleaning water should be directed to underfloor dirty water drainage near each pen. Floor design can include a concrete plinth with a slope towards a gutter or drain for easy cleaning. Local drainage helps to manage increased cleaning needs around the feeder. To enhance drainage around a feed station, placing it on a section of concrete pig slats designed for grower pigs can be an effective solution in certain pen designs.

Designing a Calf Kitchen / Feed Preparation Area. A calf system can have a built-in feed preparation and cleaning area, including a calf kitchen, which can enhance calf health and growth. It can also increase labour efficiency and make the task more enjoyable. To facilitate cleaning, items should be stored off the floor, and the floor sloped to a drain. Shelves, racks, and pegs can be provided for drying feed buckets and utensils, while bagged milk powder and dry feed are stored adjacent to the feed preparation area. The facility should have a source of heated water and large-volume sink for cleaning, with all sinks draining directly to the waste system. The facility should also be vermin proofed.

CALF ORAL REHYDRATION FLUIDS

We have reviewed our calf oral rehydration products and will be adding Life Aid Extra back into our selection. So, from now on we will have 3 options:

1. HydrFAST- this is our premium product with the highest levels of energy and bicarbonate precursors. We feel it is definitely worth the extra cost of this product for sicker calves which are dull, dehydrated and sunken eyed.
 2. Rehydion- comes in a liquid form in a bottle which has the flexibility of varied dosing options- mixing with water, milk or for direct oral administration to calves or lambs.
 3. Life-Aid Xtra – this is the cheapest of the three options and is the ideal product to use for calves which are scouring but not too severely affected.
- Remember, if a calf is very weak or recumbent a vet can administer intravenous fluids, which is the best way to rehydrate them, replace electrolyte losses and get them back on their feet.

We have reviewed the pricing of these products and purchases of a full pack i.e. 24 HydrFAST, 12 bottles of Rehydion and 48 Lifeaid Extra will qualify for a 20% discount.

**20% DISCOUNT
GIVEN WHEN
PURCHASING
WHOLE PACKS**

