



## Sheep News

With lamb prices seeming to stay above the average level for the last 5 years, as well as way above last year, it looks like the sheep industry is enjoying the lower pound caused by Brexit.

This newsletter unashamedly is focusing on how to improve the productivity of your flock. If you have not taken part in the Lamb Loss Survey then how do you know where you are now and where you can get to? Sheep clients are now using the data collected to benchmark their performance year on year, as well as against similar farmers in the area. This is really important to

allow continuous change and learning.

Also, it is the time of year when tups are being bought and sold- really important to make sure that you do not bring problems in with them, as well as making sure they are not receiving anything nasty from the sheep already on farm.

Finally, you will notice two new names writing in this addition. Charlotte Moulard who is married to a local sheep and beef farmer and qualified from Bristol Vet School and Abi Charlesworth has joined the team after graduating from the Royal Vet College in

London and having seen practice with us. I know you will all

make them welcome and join with us in allowing them to learn and develop both their clinical and business skills to enable them to become valuable members of the farm team.

## October 2016

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## The Lamb Loss Survey

Thank you to all the flocks that have already sent back their lamb loss forms! We are processing the results.

We will be holding our two annual meetings which you are all invited to. These meetings will cover

- ◆ The results of the lamb loss survey
- ◆ A brief outline of a lamb post mortem project from Emily's research work
- ◆ A costing exercise for lamb production- how much does it cost to produce a baby lamb to 0 hours old ?

The meetings details are:

The Eagle Tavern, Chard 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016, 7:30 start

The Royal Oak, Bere Regis, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016, 7:30 start

Please contact our office to reserve your space on 01935 83682



*Andy Adler*



*Emily Gascoigne*

## Itchy News

Sheep scab costs the UK sheep industry over £8 million per year due to production losses through reduced condition in ewes, poor growth rates in lambs, damage to sheepskins and wool damage. We've had three possible cases of sheep scab in the practice within the last week and calls to see itchy sheep don't seem to be letting up anytime soon. Sheep scab is widespread and common within the UK and it is vital that all sheep owners remain vigilant with their biosecurity practices to prevent scab from entering the flock.

Sheep scab is in fact an allergic skin reaction to the faeces of the sheep scab mite. Scab is most commonly spread by direct contact between sheep, however the mite can also survive 16 days off sheep so contaminated clothing, shearing or handling equipment or even infected tags of wool attached to

brambles or fences etc. can be potential sources of infection.

Clinical signs that we can see with sheep scab include:

- Yellowish scabs
- Restlessness
- Scratching
- Wool-loss
- Head tossing
- Loss of condition

However, in the early stages of infection sheep scab can be difficult to spot and in some cases infested animals may stop showing symptoms and appear healthy. These animals may still harbour mites around their eyes or ears or in the crevasses around their legs and act as a reservoir of infection to other sheep.

Good biosecurity is key to prevent scab and other diseases coming on farm; some key points include:

**Quarantine** – treat any incoming sheep with a product licensed for sheep scab treatment and isolate animals for at least 3 weeks before mixing with the main flock

**Good fencing** – well-maintained fencing should prevent contact with neighbouring flocks which may pose a disease risk

**Quick diagnosis** - if you suspect sheep scab in your flock contact your vet ASAP in order to get fast and accurate diagnosis. There are a number of other parasites that can cause similar signs to sheep scab so it's very important to get the right diagnosis.



*Charlotte Moulard*

## Seasonal Summary

We have done a substantial amount of lab work this summer looking at resistance testing in house. Most of these flocks have been **routine work**

i.e. not in the face of drench failure. We have identified a spectrum of results

including a **TRIPLE RESISTANT FLOCK WHERE MOXIDECTIN ALSO FAILED**. This is not an uncommon picture and reflects work published recently in Wales.

Establishing your resistance status is imperative for flocks. Speak to one of our SQPs or vets about how you can establish status and use it to inform your management decisions.



**Remember:** worms are not an issue... **IF** we can kill them. Monitoring and management can help reduce their impact for growth and disease, but if we don't have effective products, the programme falls apart.

## Quarantine

Remember to include cost of quarantine when considering cost of buying in replacements including rams. For flock specific advice, please speak to one of our team, but you should be considering

- a) A new derivative wormer i.e. Startect/ Zolvix

- b) A scab treatment such as Cydectin 2%  
c) A fluke protocol to prevent introduction of Triclabendazole resistant fluke

We can dispense individual doses or higher volumes i.e. for those buying individuals vs. groups of sheep.

Please speak to one of our vets to discuss more in depth quarantine. **Remember, when buying in ANY sheep without quarantine, your health status drops to become as poor as the lowest status flock you are buying from.**

**Quarantine prices (excluding VAT)  
for 1 ewe at 80kg:**

**Zolvix: £1.44  
Cydectin 2%: £1.36**

**Remember correct  
weights of animals is  
important,  
do not underestimate!**

Prices correct September 2016

## Checklist for Tupping

### Tupping checklist

- ✓ Body Condition Scoring ewes – grouping ewes for flushing (remember it takes 6 weeks to put 1 body condition score on)
- ✓ Vaccines – *Toxoplasma gondii/Chlamydomphila abortus* (at least t minus 4 weeks pre-tupping)
- ✓ Checking feet - isolating and treating lame sheep (DO NOT routine trim)
- ✓ Ram fertility testing including general health check (ideally 6-8 weeks pre-tupping)
- ✓ Quarantine and drenching new stock
- ✓ Selecting homebred replacements
- ✓ Check ram:ewe ratio (average is 1 ram to 40 ewes)
- ✓ Raddling rams
- ✓ Pre-tup shearing/crutching

*Abi Charlesworth*



# A date for your diary: Sheep Health and Welfare Conference



**Wednesday the 16th November 2016** at Sixways Stadium at Worcester it's open for sheep farmers and advisors and we will be going. Tickets are £40. If anyone is interested in going, please let Emily know (she's presenting and would appreciate friendly faces in the audience!)

*Theme: A business approach to health and welfare*

- 09.30 Registration, breakfast rolls and coffee
- 10.00 Welcome
- 10.15 **Improving flock performance** with Lesley Stubbings (LSSC) and farmers Ben Anthony and Diana Fairclough
- 11.00 Coffee
- 11.30 **Improving health and welfare through monitoring** with Ben Strugnell (Farm Post Mortems), Emily Gascoigne (Synergy Vets) and Fiona Lovatt (Flock Health)
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.00 **How do we make the most from the investment in medicines on farm?** with Lesley Stubbings (LSSC), Phil Stocker (NSA), Grace O'Gorman (NOAH) and Rebecca Mearns (Biobest)
- 16.00 Finish



## Top Tweets ....

Fiona Lovatt Retweeted  
**Meadows Farm Vets** @MeadowsFarmVets · Aug 22  
 Don't forget to check **#rams** now!  
 Remember 5 T's **#toes #teeth #testicles #tone #treat**  
**#teamsheep #ramis50%oftheflock**



**Emily Gascoigne** @Em\_the\_SheepVet · Jul 13  
 1000 lambs dropping back 50g of potential DLWG/day, equivalent to 50kg of potential lamb/day **#drivingthoughts #lostpotential #inefficiency**

**Focus Farm Vets Ltd.** and 65 others follow  
**British Texel Sheep** @BritishTexel · Sep 2  
 NADIS Parasite Forecast Sept. **Liver Fluke**, Quarantine Purchased Sheep, Worms in Lambs, Gut and Lungworm in Cattle. [textel.co.uk/node/909](http://textel.co.uk/node/909)

**Next issue in January**