Charlotte has produced her first newsletter - we have to commend her for her hard work.

This has been one of the easiest springs we have known. Many of you will have lambed without even seeing the rain. We hear that it has been a good lambing so get your data into the lamb loss survey so that the team can tell you how much better things have been.

**Andy Adler**

### Foot-Rot vs CODD

It isn’t uncommon for us to get called to cases of suspected treatment failure for sheep lameness. Our first query would be, are we quickly and correctly identifying the lesion and giving the appropriate treatment for that problem?

Scald or foot-rot and CODD are the top two most common infectious causes of lameness in sheep. Scald or foot-rot are now thought to be varying severities of a disease process caused by the same bacteria. The infection starts between the claws with reddening of the skin and grey scum, and progresses to cause separation of the horn tissue and a foul odour.

In contrast, CODD starts at the top of the hoof, at the junction between hairy skin and the hoof wall. It begins as a red raw lesion and rapidly leads to separation of the horn, causing the whole hoof case to come away. It sometimes smells and the difficulty in identification comes when severe foot-rot and CODD look quite similar.

CODD and foot-rot require different antibiotic therapies and therefore it is important to check with a vet that we are using the appropriate treatments for the foot conditions we are seeing on farm. Don’t forget, there are also common non-infectious causes of sheep lameness including shelly hoof and toe granulomas, which require different treatment again.

Lameness treatment and prevention should be a holistic approach, so as well quickly identifying and treating lame sheep, flocks should think about: quarantine of animals brought onto farm, isolation of lame sheep, culling policies for repeat offenders and vaccination if appropriate.

A really useful resource is the AHDB Five Point Plan on Sheep Lameness, which can be found online or speak to your vet for more information about tackling lameness in your flock.

**Charlotte Mouland**
Following our recent hot spell, it’s only a matter of time and a good dousing of rain, before worms really start to hatch on our pastures and infect grazing ewes and lambs. Consequently, we will encounter economic losses from poor feed conversions and reduced growth rates due to worm burdens, in severe cases this can become a welfare issue for our sheep with high morbidity and mortality rates.

It is a well-documented fact that wormer resistance is a huge problem in the sheep industry: In a recent study, 94% of flocks had resistance to white drenches and a large proportion of flocks also had resistance to yellow and clear drenches. Resistance means that the wormer is not effective in killing the worms in the animals’ guts, this means that all “susceptible” worms will be killed, leaving only live resistant worms to be shed in the faeces and subsequently allowed to contaminate the pasture.

In the not so distant future, if we continue to use wormers that have resistance we will end up with ewes and lambs which are infected with a population of resistant worms that are non-responsive to treatment. There are only five different classes of wormers available, and currently there is resistance in the UK to three out of five of those. We, therefore, must act now and be vigilant in our pasture management and worming protocols.

Alongside good pasture rotation, it is extremely important that we are testing for resistance following treatment in order to identify which wormers we should be using in our flocks.

We have a couple of options  
1. After treating a group of sheep submit a sample for a “**drench check**” i.e. 7 days after a yellow or 14 days after any other drench submit a mob sample (10 lambs, in individual gloves)
   a. **Advantages:** cheap, don’t need a pre-drench sample, looking for no eggs on this sample. It could be used as a starting point for other investigations. A really useful tool for big farms with lots of holdings.
   b. **Disadvantages:** we cannot assess how well out drench has worked i.e. what percent it has killed

2. If we have a pre-drench sample egg count we can do a **“faecal egg count reduction test”** i.e. by sampling afterwards we can see what percentage has been knocked out.
   a. **Advantages:** we can assess drenches properly and this can be used to diagnose resistance
   b. **Disadvantages:** need two samples

Ideally samples need to be submitted to our lab within 36 hours of taking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wormer used</th>
<th>Time to take 2nd faecal sample</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>10-14 days post-treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>7-10 days post-treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>10-14 days post-treatment</td>
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Please get in touch for advice on worming protocols and pasture management to reduce the development of wormer resistance in your flock before it’s too late!

*Abi Charlesworth*

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**Teasers Reminder**

Now is the time to get your rams vasectomised ready for tupping! A teaser ram can run with the ewes before tupping to help synchronise the ewes, creating a more compact lambing period. The teasers should be removed after 14 days and replaced with the entire rams. Remember, one teaser can run with 100 ewes and more rams may be required to serve all the ewes that ovulating at the same time.
Quarantine Drenching

Worm resistance in sheep is a major factor in farm productivity to the point where we are now actively trying to prevent the progression of resistance through management and improved worming strategies. To put all this effort in though only to then introduce a new population of resistant worms through the buying in of sheep is a concern – something that happens far too often.

A quarantine procedure for new stock is something that should be occurring on all farms as a means of preventing the introduction of new diseases. Part of this should be ensuring that no resistant worms are allowed onto farm and into the ‘genetic mix’, undoing all of your hard work.

Current advice states that this is an ideal time to use one of the ‘newer’ wormers that are known to have little resistance - either Zolvix or Startect. Another wormer is then used at the same time, the idea being that using 2 wormers concurrently will decrease your chances of survivors even further. Furthermore, the ‘other wormer’ could be an injectable macrocyclic lactone such as Cydectin as a way of combatting sheep scab at the same time (a disease which is definitely on the rise!), if plunge dipping with organophosphate is not a practical option.

After arrival and worming remember to keep on a hard standing for 48 hours to allow all eggs that are already in transit to be passed and not come into contact with pasture as these will not necessarily be treated.

If in the unfortunate event you have worms which are resistant to both (!) we try to cover our bases by putting new arrivals out onto ‘dirty’ pasture. Somewhere you know that worm eggs will be present in an attempt to dilute any ‘survivors’ with your local population.

Abattoir Feedback—a really EWESful tool

As well as carcass grades and traits, we can also learn a lot about on-farm disease status from abattoir feedback. This is essentially an additional post-mortem service and should act as early warning system for some health conditions on-farm.

- Liver Fluke – immature liver fluke cannot be detected by faecal egg counts but can be seen by the naked eye tracking their way through the liver tissue! Monitoring when liver fluke first appear in the liver’s of lambs sent to slaughter can tell you lots about the risk periods for liver fluke on your farm and help us to make informed decisions on control and treatment

- Dog Tapeworm Cysts – The larval stages of some species of dog tapeworms can lead to carcasses being down-graded or even condemned. Abattoir reports will highlight any larval cysts found. Remember, all sheepdogs should be wormed every 6 weeks with a product containing Praziquantel and not allowed access to carcasses to prevent problems with dog tapeworm cysts

Lung Lesions – Lung pathology may indicate historic or more recent bouts of pneumonia or it may indicate OPA (ovine pulmonary adenocarcinoma – a wasting disease in ewes). This information can prove invaluable in future health planning for your flock.

Make sure your farm is getting the most out of abattoir reports and ask for full feedback!

Ben Barber

Charlotte Mouland
Meetings and Training

We are committed to our training services for sheep farmers at Synergy and the next quarter is action packed. If interested in any of the below please contact our office to book onto a course.

**The Resistance (nothing to do with Star Wars)**
5th June 7.30pm at The Eagle Tavern, Chard
7th June 7.30pm at The Red Lion, Winfrith

Anthelmintic resistance is both a national and local issue. We genuinely see this as a challenge for our commercial flocks and will be addressing the current situation in a pair of meetings and give updates on Startect and recent drench gun research in practice.

The format will be a pub quiz and there will be prizes!
Dinner sponsored by Zoetis.

**Safe Use of Veterinary Medicines**
14th June 10.30 am—2.30pm at Evershot (£66 pp)

Following the success of our first sheep tailored safe use of medicines course, we are running another one, covering: “How do we realise full potential from our investments in medicines?” and “How to use them effectively and safely”. Aimed at commercial shepherds and members of the team administering or handling medicines.

Lunch included.
*Certificate for Flock Plan at end of course*

**Humane Dispatch and Sheep Welfare course**
13th July 11—2.30 with Emily Gascoigne (£60 pp)

We are running this afternoon course at Evershot in association with the Humane Slaughter Association. Please phone the office for more information or to book a place.

**Metacam Dose Rate**

Those of you who have recently had flock plan updates may have noticed that the recommended dose rate of Metacam has increased up to 1ml/20kg under the skin (formerly advised at 1ml/40kg).

Many of you will know that Metacam (and no anti-inflammatories for that matter) are licensed for use in sheep despite the many opportunities to use in the sheep production year i.e. lameness management, mastitis management, lambing difficulties, joint ill in lambs. As a consequence historically the dose has been extrapolated from the cattle dose rate in the absence of any sheep dose rate work.

However, some recent work from New Zealand has shown the need for 1ml/20kg for efficacy under the skin as a one off dose and we are adjusting flock plans accordingly.

Please speak to your routine vet with any queries about this.

**Top Tip**
To avoid under or over dosing are weigh animals to establish correct weight, and if using in small animals i.e. lambs, use a small syringe such as a 1ml syringe to ensure accurate dosing.

**News from Dispensary**
*Don’t forget to cover your sheep for ectoparasites this summer*

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*Cypermethrin—For the prevention and treatment of blowfly strike and headflies and treatment for ticks and biting lice. Provides 6-8 weeks protection*

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*Dicyclanil - Protection against blowfly strike for 19 weeks*

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*Dicyclanil - Protection against blowfly strike for 16 weeks*