

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. Please note that some of our upcoming courses are being held at our **new centre at Mole Avon, Axminster.**

Safe use of Veterinary Medicines for commercial sheep flocks

5th March 10.30am—2.30pm at Evershot (£75 + VAT)

“How do we realise full potential from our investments in medicines?” and “How to use them effectively and safely”.

It is now a Red Tractor Recommendation that one person from each farm has attended a course on the handling and administration of veterinary medicines.

Our course satisfies this recommendation and is aimed at commercial shepherds and members of the team administering or handling medicines. Lunch included.

Certificate for Flock Plan at end of course

Practical lambing for commercial flocks

9th March or 31st March 9.30am-3pm at Evershot (£75 + VAT)

We will discuss the importance in preparation for lambing, including the pros and cons of housing, nutrition, body condition scoring and what equipment is necessary. Using our lambing simulator we will learn how to approach some of the most common lambing difficulties, knowing when to intervene and when to call a vet

Faecal Egg Counting Workshop

2nd June 10am -3pm at Evershot (£100+ VAT)

Back by popular demand, this is a general parasitology course looking at we can reduce the risk of developing anthelmintic resistance in our flocks and control parasites in a sustainable way. Guidance as to what equipment is needed will be given.

Please let us know if you have an interest in attending a Welfare of Sheep and Humane Slaughter Course for commercial flocks. We are looking to run another course this year with the Humane Slaughter Association, which will include captive bolt use and maintenance and a wet-lab practical session. If there is suitable demand we will be able to arrange a course this summer.

#TopTweetsBleets!

Clover Crosse @CloverCrosse · Feb 10
Our first Challenge Sheep meeting of the year, brilliant to have more than 50 people turn up! #teamsheep #challengesheep #forwardthinking #progressive

StuartB@KennedyCreek @KennedyCreek1 · Feb 9
Replying to @Agrivetbusiness
Very true - results in a worse result than would be anticipated from assessment purely on the % of rams that are not "ideal".

Here is a quick twitter survey for anyone interested #TeamSheep.

How often do you collect scrotal circumference measures on your ram team?

Every year	18.8%
At time of purchase	6.3%
Never done it	68.8%
What is scrotal circ?	6.3%



Dispensary News....

SEASONAL PROMOTIONS:



ECTOFLY
2.5L £33.70
5L £58.90



CLICK EXTRA
2.2L £105.00
5L £195.00

All prices EX VAT. For a full list of promotional items please contact Synergy dispensary on 01935 83682. Offer ends 31/05/20.

Betamox LA – Change to Withdrawal Period

Please note that the meat withdrawal period for Betamox LA has recently changed from 16 to 19 days. Depending on when you had your health plan updated, your flock treatment protocols may not have had this change included.

Next issue in June



Sheep News

I am sat writing this newsletter hiding from the rain- all sheep jobs at the moment needing an extra 30 minutes allocated to them (for drying time). We are in midst of one of the windiest and wettest months I have experienced in my time in Dorset. Scanning results have been very variable and fluke outbreaks have been cropping up across the practice and Scab continues to run rife. The strong ewe and lamb trade had buoyed some spirits. We've

had a busy month with meetings for AHDB Challenge Sheep, talks for the Hampshire Sheep Group and forage analysis coming in thick and fast. We are taking waiting list details for our Welfare Course so let us know ASAP if you would be interested. Remember this is a good time of year to have your health plan tweaked and combine this with ewe bloods 3-4 weeks pre-lambing to assess your feeding programme. Make sure you have your

#everylambcounts

Challenge Sheep Update

On 10th February we ran a meeting with AHDB and Rob and Anna Hawke's Challenge Sheep discussion group with a focus on minimising the impact of the wet weather. Probably a reflection of the incessant rain, we had over 65 people in attendance! There were lots of good discussions afterwards.



Key take home messages were:

- In the middle trimester of pregnancy ewes just require maintenance energy requirements. Feeding them preserved forage to requirement now is much less energy demand than feeding them to their needs in lactation. Set stocking and topping up now is likely to be more cost effective than topping up in lactation.
- Get your forage analysed to optimise hard food requirement.



March 2020

- Challenge Sheep Update
- Euthanasia on farm
- Summer Campaign: Lameness in Sheep
- Trace Element Control
- Fly Control
- Round-up from the Lamb Loss Meetings
- Meetings and Training
- Dispensary News
- #TopTweetsBleets

white boards set up for lamb losses and the magic rule #colostrumisgold (400ml per kg per day and of that 50% given within 6 hours!).

Good luck for lambing from #teamsheep

Emily Gascoigne



You may have a perfectly calculated diet but if there is insufficient feed space not everyone will have unlimited access.

- Feeding in lactation to need when grass is below 4cm is an investment in ewe condition, lamb growth and next year's fertility
- Weaning is a movable feat based on ewe body condition score, feed availability and lamb growth rate.
- Blood samples taken 3-4weeks pre-lambing help double check dietary provision for pre-lambing ewes.

If you would like to join the Challenge Sheep emailing list, please let reception know.

Emily Gascoigne



Euthanasia on farm

Whilst not a nice topic to talk about, it is really important to have a euthanasia protocol on farm for unmarketable stock. The plan needs to include who performs euthanasia and by which recognised method. It also needs to consider that the method may change depending on the class of stock in question i.e. a young lamb vs mature ram. There must also be a back-plan for when your go-to strategy is not available

e.g. the hunt kennels can't make it out to you today.

Our most recent flock health plans include a summary table for you to formulate this plan alongside your vet. Furthermore, when there is enough demand we run a "pain and welfare" course alongside the Humane Slaughter Association, which covers captive bolt use. You do not need a firearms license to own a captive bolt gun and when used and

maintained correctly it is a very effective, humane method of euthanasia for any class of stock. We have had some recent interest in this course so we hope to run a course this Spring. If you would like to book on, please contact the practice on 01935 83682.

Charlotte Mouland



Summer Campaign: Lameness in Sheep

For the last two years we have held successful summer evening meetings at the practice focusing on big, topical issues. Two years ago it was 'Sheep Scab' and last year the topic was 'Haemonchus'. Our plan for this year's campaign is to think about lameness. Whilst certainly not a novel, unusual or re-emerging disease, sheep lameness continues to be one of the biggest drains on UK sheep production and welfare.

It is estimated that around 10% of the national flock are lame at any one time and that having 10% lameness could reduce flock profitability by more than £14 per ewe. Furthermore, lameness has been identified as one of the key areas to be addressed in order to reduce antibiotic use in the industry.

Lameness control requires consideration of all the pieces of the puzzle: how do I prevent bringing in lame sheep? Are there ways I can prevent new cases? What am I doing with reoffenders?

A piece of the jigsaw that is currently under-utilised in the UK is the use of vaccination to reduce lameness. Footvax is licensed for

the prevention of footrot and reduction in lesions in active cases and can help bring down lameness prevalence in a flock quickly. At the meeting we will also be launching our #TeamSheep Vaccination Service – which involves vet techs delivering vaccine to your farm and administering the product themselves. The aims this service being: labour-saving for the farmer and gold standard storage and administration of the vaccine. Vaccines are huge investment for farms and ensuring that they are administered to a flock to the label, ensures we get the absolute most out of that investment. **Watch this space for more information.**

Charlotte Mouland



Trace element control

A seasonal reminder for flocks with previous history of cobalt deficiency- taking a fresh grass sample for mineral analysis in February/March is a useful tool. Cobalt in grass varies from year to year and is highest in grass throughout the winter. Our lamb demand for Cobalt is highest through the grazing window (which can clash with seasonal lows in Cobalt). Taking a fresh grass sample for analysis can help predict the season's outlook. **Please speak to your vet about sample submission £68.50 + VAT. It is essential that samples do not include plant roots or soil as this can skew the figures. Take a representative sample from a pasture that will be grazed by lambs in the early part of the season.**

****Please be aware that Calciject 6 has been discontinued from the market. Until further notice we will be dispensing Calciject 5 for the treatment of hypocalcaemia (calcium deficiency) in ewes. This product is not licensed for sheep, therefore it must be prescribed by a veterinary surgeon and using it will incur a 28 day meat withdrawal for individually treated sheep. Please speak to your sheep vet for more information ****
VAT.

Emily Gascoigne



Fly Control

With warmer wetter winters, the fly season of recent years has been extending (March – December), so we need to ensure adequate steps are taken to prevent flystrike.



Flystrike is caused by the greenbottle fly and it is estimated that 80% of flocks in the UK will have at least one case of flystrike per year. The female greenbottle fly is attracted by the smell of decomposing matter from wounds and soiled fleece and will lay up to 250 eggs. These larvae hatch after about 12 hours and feast on dead tissue. However, if more females lay their eggs and the larvae become overpopulated, they can start to attack living tissue.

The first signs you might spot of strike include fleece discolouration or agitated behaviour. If not picked up and treated early, flystrike can be deadly, as living tissue is attacked and infections of the bloodstream can quickly take hold.

Remember, flystrike control is multi-factorial. Having a strategic worm control plan on farm will reduce scour and therefore soiling of the fleece around the back end. Dagging is also an important management tool to

remove soiled fleece, which will attract flies. Using appropriate flystrike products also forms an important part of control.

Insect Growth Regulators (IGRs) do not work prevent the female greenbottle laying her eggs but do stop the larvae fully developing and therefore prevent strike. Other products repel females from laying their eggs but are only effective on clean fleece where the product has been applied. Be sure you know which kind of product you require, how to apply it and when to use it. Speak to one of our SQPs or sheep vets for more information.

Charlotte Mouland



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Round-up from the Lamb Loss Meetings

Before Christmas we had three lamb loss meetings run by the Sheep Team. It was yet another successful year of these evenings with great turnout across all three regions. Thank you to our sponsors CEVA for supporting the event for the sixth year running.

After a round up of the last years' figures (and great to see lots of new flocks involved in the study) we moved onto a talk about lamb 'Mutilations'. This talk focused on castrating and tailing lambs and it certainly provided food for thought



and a healthy discussion. We want to reassure our flocks that they are not any legislation changes in the UK currently,

but the aim of the talk was to promote proactive thinking and encourage you to question routine procedures on farm to establish if they are still relevant in 2020 or not. For example, with big strong single lambs that exit farm before sexual maturity – is castration really necessary? Similarly, for early lambing flocks where lambs fatten before the fly season kicks off, do we need to tail dock? Do these procedures have an impact on production and welfare?

Some shepherds across the regions have already stopped tailing and/or castrating some of their lambs for a number of different reasons and we want to ask... would you like an option to record the percentage of lambs uncastrated and untailed in the flocks as part of our lamb loss survey next year?

We wish you all the best with lambing season and please chat to one of the sheep team for if you'd like more information on tailing and castrating.

Beth Reilly

