

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

17th December 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

Lamb Post Mortems for commercial flocks

28th January 9.30am -3pm at Evershot (£100+ VAT)

How to approach neonatal lamb post mortems, to help you make real-time observations and decisions at lambing time. Covering the common causes of lamb mortalities around the time of lambing, how to spot these causes at post-mortem and how to try to avoid them.

Barren Ewe Checks

Is your barren ewe rate higher than expected at scanning? Could infectious diseases or trace elements be impacting on your flock fertility? Blood sampling barren ewes after scanning can identify flock-level issues. Speak to your vet for more information.

#TopTweets!

Synergy Farm Health @SynergyFarmVets · Oct 4
We could not be more proud of @Em_the_SheepVet, first ever female nominee in the 2019 Livestock Advisor of the Year category @FW_Awards #teamsheep



Emily Gascoigne @Em_the_SheepVet
A glass ceiling well and truly shattered, the first ever female nominee in this category #FWAwards Well done to all winners. Red Squirrel Over and Out #teamsheep
Show this thread

Sheep Breeders RT @SheepBreeders19 · 15 Nov
@LizGenever year 1 data: If you don't manage and aim for **tupping** and scanning target weights for ewe lambs - expect progeny weights to suffer #SBRT19

M Priestley @PriestleyFW · 6h
#SBRT19 Signet EBV: "do what they say on the tin", says @80yTheFarm A high index ram could make £1,665 more over its lifetime

Ram 1's over all Slaughter price was £5.55 more than Ram 2 after commission & Transport. (real money 2018)
£5.55 x 75 Lambs/year to slaughter = £416.25
£416.25 x Life of the ram (4 seasons) = £1,665
£1665 MORE income (on 1 ram) just by purchasing a ram with good EBV's and doesn't have to cost any more money.



Practical lambing for commercial flocks

7th February or 9th 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

Lameness In Your Flock for commercial flocks

22nd January 10am -3pm at Evershot (£75+ VAT)

Brand new course reviewing the latest advice for infectious and non-infectious causes of lameness. There will be a particular focus on sustainable antibiotic use and how to tailor the AHDB Five Point Plan on Lameness to suit your flock. In the afternoon we will be visiting a nearby sheep farm to practise mobility scoring.

Dispensary News....

SPECIAL VACCINE OFFERS

Order before the end of December to make the most of these fantastic vaccine prices*:



Heptavac P Plus

50ml = £21.64 100ml = £40.18
250ml = £88 500ml = £165.50



Footvax

20ml = £27.50 50ml = £58.00 250ml = £235
For a price on more than 1,000 doses please call Dispensary on 01935 83682

Scabivax

Please call Dispensary for a price on 01935 83682

*Prices ex VAT. The special offer prices above expire 31/12/19. Vaccines to be ordered before the end of December 2019 to qualify for these prices, however they can be used at a later date. Call the Dispensary for further information on 01935 83682.

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 March



Sheep News

Perhaps things are looking up, the rain has stopped whilst writing this and lamb price is continuing to creep higher. One thing I think we can say for certain (whichever way the country votes in December) is that we need to sing louder about British meat. This does however come with a constant responsibility to uphold the highest welfare standards. Sheep scab is a threat to that standard and depressingly widespread in the area. Remain vigilant when buying in stock, and if in any doubt about scab status, assume contaminated. Speak to one of the sheep team for advice on how to prevent introducing scab and other diseases into your flock.



to London for the Farmers Weekly Awards, where Emily reached the final three in the “Livestock Advisor of the Year” category. An amazing accolade, confirming Emily’s reputation as one of the leading sheep vets in the UK. The large flock group also travelled up to Rutland to visit the Leighfield Lleyn flock. With 2000 ewes including 200 pedigree, performance recorded Lleyns, the trip provided plenty of discussion and food for thought. The



October saw the Synergy Sheep Team travelling

December 2019

- XL Vets Liver Fluke Sentinel Project Update
- Forage analysis
- Orf Vaccine use
- The Lamb Kitchen
- Change to Red Tractor Standards
- Scab reminder
- Trace element analysis
- Meetings and Training
- Dispensary News

journey home was not such a success with a bus breakdown making it a very long night indeed! Thanks again to our extremely patient, good-humoured sheep farmers for continuing to crack jokes at 4am!



Charlotte Moulard

XL Vets Liver Fluke Sentinel Project Update

We are nearing the end of the liver fluke surveillance project run by XL vets. The main aims of this study were to raise awareness of serological testing to monitor/forecast fluke infection on a flock level and to get farmers and vets talking more about fluke. The blood test works by identifying antibodies to liver fluke and can pick up infection from two weeks after exposure, so is the most sensitive tool we have available to us.

There are 30 vet practices across the country involved in the project, from Orkney to Devon. At Synergy we have one flock enrolled with the project and have been blood sampling 6 new season lambs at the start of each month. So far our flock has tested negative, which reflects results around the

Southwest, but there have been a number of ‘positive flocks’ further up the country. More details of this can be found: <https://xlvets-farm.co.uk/fluke-sentinel>

The project has been a great success and has caught the interest of the industry. There is hope to develop the work further and allow farmers to share information up and down the country, enabling us to make real-time liver fluke treatment decisions on a year-by-year basis.



Forage Analysis

Forage is the cheapest food source we have available to use, so particularly given the uncertain times facing us, we need where possible to make the absolute most of out it. This process starts by getting an accurate analysis of what you have available, be that silage, hay or fresh grass for outdoor lambers.

Feeding around the time of lambing needs to be tailored to meet the needs of our ewes and unborn lambs and to optimise colostrum and milk quality and quantity; it should not be left to chance. Getting forage analysed in plenty of time before lambing will allow us to make informed feeding decisions.

We have some limited free forage analysis available so have a chat with your vet to utilise this. Remember condition scoring and pregnancy scanning are also important components in planning ewe nutrition. Getting nutrition right for lambing not only impacts this year’s lambing and lamb growth rates, it will also have a rolling effect on next year’s ewe fertility and production. Think about forage analysis NOW to ensure diets are prepared well in advance of the start of the last 6 weeks pre-lambing. Speak to your sheep vet now.

Orf Vaccine use—are you using it correctly?

Some recent work by MSD showed that 43% of farmers are using Scabivax (Orf vaccine) incorrectly, which may impact the efficacy of the vaccine at a farm level. Some of the issues found with administration included:

- ⇒ Delayed vaccine administration in ewes pre-lambing (should be vaccinated 7-8 weeks before lambing and NO LESS than 7 weeks before lambing). Vaccine can be administered to lambs from **one day old**.
- ⇒ Use of vaccine in farms where Orf has not been confirmed – the vaccine is a LIVE vaccine which means we are actually infecting the sheep with the virus (in the armpit where it won't cause an issue) and

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allowing the animal to develop a protective immune response, **so should not be used in farms that do not have Orf.**

Not using the correct applicator – the Scabivax applicator is designed to break the skin and administer the vaccine via a minor scratch. Remember, **sterimatic systems CANNOT be used with this product as it deactivates the vaccine.**

Using the vaccine too long after opening – because this is a live



vaccine, it must be used within 8 hours of opening.

Remember, it is also strongly recommended that 7-10 days after administering the vaccine a group of sheep are checked for “vaccine take”. This appears as a line of scabs along the scratch site. For more information on Scabivax, how to get the most out of the vaccine and whether vaccination is appropriate on your farm, speak to one of the sheep team.



Charlotte Moulard

The Lamb Kitchen

TeamSheep were recently at the national Sheep Veterinary Society conference (held in Wareham) and attended a very interesting talk from housing expert Jamie Robertson about calf (and lamb) housing and he got us thinking about the concept of a “Lamb Kitchen”.

Whether an indoor OR an outdoor lambing system, do you have an area outside of your own kitchen (!) which is a focused on lamb care and hygienic practices? This is important for optimising lamb health and reducing antibiotic use (oral infection has been identified as a risk for joint ill- is your tubing equipment clean?).

Things to ask:

Do you have access to hot water on tap or a kettle?

Is this area disinfectable?

Do you have somewhere to wash equipment (a sink or bowl) and allow kit to air dry?

Do you have a detergent available for cleaning fatty milk or colostrum residues from equipment?

Do you have a sterilising fluid bath (such as Milton) to soak lamb feeding equipment between use?

If using a teat preparation cup for iodine treatment of navels- is this cleanable or do you have a change of applicator if the first one becomes contaminated?

Are you ear tags/tagging equipment if used now kept in an airtight and clean container?

Do you have a fresh supply of needles and syringes? Small sharps bins are available from dispensary from £4.34 + VAT.

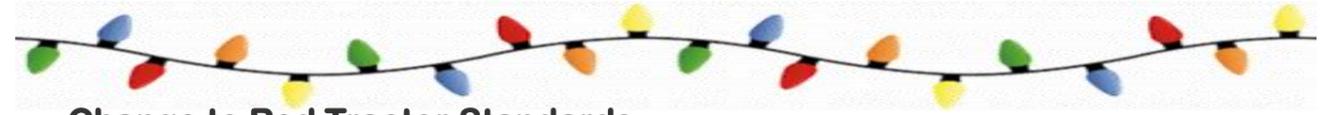
Do you have a whiteboard for notes/handover details

Are your medicines and any artificial colostrums stored in a clean manner?

Remembering the #colostrumisgold and #everylambcounts campaigns and a lamb kitchen is a tool to help both goals. Please send us your pictures of your lamb kitchen to enter a competition to win a Brix Refractometer (a tool to test colostrum quality on farm). Send your Lamb Kitchen photos to emily.gascoigne@synergyfarmhealth.com



Emily Gascoigne



Change to Red Tractor Standards



Remember that some changes were made to the Red Tractor Standards in June 2018:

A written annual health plan and performance review must be undertaken by a vet. The vet must attend the farm at least annually to see the livestock and the review must identify key issues and make recommendations to improve, review records and data, including medicine records. An antibiotic review must be performed, and recommendations made for alternative disease prevention strategies.

It is now a **RECOMMENDATION** that at least one

member of staff responsible for administering medicines has undertaken training in the handling and administration of medicines.

Our ‘Safe Use of Veterinary Medicines’ course fulfils this recommendation and feedback on the course from the over 40 flocks that have already attended has been really positive. The course focuses on how to realise the full potential from our investments in medicines and how to use them effectively and safely. Lunch is included and you will go home with a certificate of attendance to go in your flock health plan. See the “Upcoming Training and Courses” section for more information.

Scab Reminder

We are moving firmly into scab season. Be vigilant. If you have any concerns let us know and we can conduct scrapes of use the *NEW* blood test to assess if sheep have coming into contact with scab. It is better to intervene sooner rather than wait until established throughout the flock, pulling down body condition score.

Because of our concern about scab, and the recently diagnosis nationally of scab resistance to injectables we have

a practice policy of seeing “itchy sheep” at the end of the day if we can and if a concern of scab, we have been cancelling all sheep calls for that vet for the day to enable them to hot wash all clothing and either sending an alternative vet or rebooking for the next day. We would appreciate your continued support in taking biosecurity for this highly infections parasite seriously. Speak to team sheep about screening and flock biosecurity.



Trace element analysis

Every year we identify a mineral deficiency in a commercial sheep flock or beef herd but there may be some early indicators of a problem. The main threats are from Cobalt, Selenium, Copper and Iodine which can cause production limiting disease directly i.e. swayback in lambs or indirectly i.e. cobalt deficiency can reduce immunity and make lambs more at risk of worms. There are often multiple sources of minerals on farm. Forage, water, hard feed and licks or supplements but the latter can be very expensive and we have seen issues in the practice with over use (especially a concern with Copper).

Cobalt is highly variable between farms and even within a farm during the year. We can use **fresh grass analysis** to predict before the grazing season begins if we are likely to run into issues. Cobalt will be at its highest in Winter/early Spring and at its lowest during summer (when lambs need it the most). Fresh grass analysis in February or grass likely to be grazed by

lambs post-turnout/early growing season may identify if Cobalt is already likely to be a challenge. This can be very helpful as allows prompt investigation in lambs before weaning if needed and facilitate early identification of a threat. We know that early stunting is not very recoverable so maintaining growth rates is essential. If you know you are a high risk Cobalt farm or interested in investigating further, please speak to your vet or the laboratory at Synergy to discuss sample collection.

This forage sample costs **£57.10 + VAT.**

TOP TIP Take scissors to cut your samples. Soil contamination of your sample will interfere with results.

TOP TIP 2 Take enough to fill ½ a rectal glove. This is fresh grass so a sizeable sample is required.

Forage Mineral Report

SAMPLE TYPE		Grass	FARMER				
SAMPLE REF		102353	FIELD ID	Fresh Grass			
DISTRIBUTOR		Bimeda AHL UK	POST CODE				
DISTRIBUTOR		Synergy Fm	DATE	18 December 2018			
Dry Matter 11.4%							
MINERAL ELEMENT (DM BASIS)	ASSAY	VERY LOW	LOW	MEAN	HIGH	VERY HIGH	
Calcium	Ca %	0.63	0.3	0.5	0.8	0.7	0.9
Phosphorus	P %	0.56	0.2	0.3	0.35	0.4	0.55
Magnesium	Mg %	0.25	0.1	0.15	0.2	0.25	0.4
Potassium	K %	5.24	0.5	1.0	2	2.5	5
Sodium	Na %	0.41	0.1	0.2	0.25	0.3	0.4
Chloride	Cl %	2.15	0.3	0.4	1	1.4	2
Sulphur	S %	0.34	0.1	0.15	0.2	0.25	0.4
Cation-Anion Balance	meq/kg	700	50	100	200	300	500
Manganese	Mn mg/kg	69	50	75	100	125	200
Copper	Cu mg/kg	14.5	5	4	10	12	15
Zinc	Zn mg/kg	61.5	25	40	60	80	130
Cobalt	Co mg/kg	0.75	0.1	0.2	0.25	0.3	0.4
Iodine	I mg/kg	1.74	0.25	0.5	1	1.5	2
Selenium	Se mg/kg	0.22	0.05	0.1	0.15	0.2	0.25
Boron	B mg/kg	5.6	1	3	4	6	10
Iron	Fe mg/kg	1272	50	100	150	200	350
Aluminium	Al mg/kg	554	25	50	100	150	300
Molybdenum	Mo mg/kg	2.56	0.1	0.25	0.5	1.25	2
Lead	Pb mg/kg	2.40	1	2	2.5	3	10
Relative Copper Antagonism							
Soil Contamination Index							



Emily Gascoigne