

Armac Vets January Newsletter

SHEEP ABORTION

The two main agents causing lamb abortion are *Toxoplasma* and Enzootic (*Clamidia psittaci*). Most farmers who know they have a problem will vaccinate but if you do start to see problems, prompt diagnosis is key. If you experience abortion within your flock, please inform the surgery ASAP. Diagnosis of Toxo and Enzo is relatively straight forward, if the lab is supplied with FRESH ABORTED LAMBS **AND** PLACENTA.

- ▣ If Enzo is diagnosed, treatment of the flock with Long Acting Terramycin may help
- ▣ Ewes that abort should be isolated until their discharges dry up and they have been tagged for blood sampling/cull (Intervet Shering Plough offer subsidised sampling, 'Flock Check 2011')
- ▣ Pregnant women should avoid all involvement with lambing ewes and should not handle contaminated clothing from those working with lambing ewes or new born lambs.
- ▣ The anticoccidiacidal drug Decoquinatate ('Deccox') fed daily to pregnant ewes in the last two-thirds of pregnancy can aid in the prevention of Toxo.
- ▣ Bought in ewes are the biggest source of infection

ITCHY SHEEP

Itchy sheep need prompt intervention, as sheep scab is becoming an increasing problem on many of our farms. Taking a few samples will help us make a diagnosis and allow appropriate treatment. Sheep scab has now become Reportable which means we have to contact DEFRA if found on farm. There are three main ways to treat scab :-

1. *Dectomax* injection – 1ml/33kg in the muscle. No data available on length of action, but if all sheep are treated on the same day it should interrupt the life cycle of the mite. Withdrawal 63 days.
2. *Cydectin* 2% LA – 0.5ml/10kg under the skin at the base of the ear. Lasts 60 days. Withdrawal 104 days.
3. Dipping – approved dips should protect against re-infestation for at least 3 weeks

Scab mites can survive in the environment for about 16 days

BVD

The subsidised BVD screening test funded by The Scottish Government will run until 31st March 2011. Many of our clients have already taken advantage of the £36 available to put towards BVD testing of young stock. A screening test of 6-8 animals aged 9-18 months in each separately managed group can be used to ascertain if BVD infection is active on farm. Results within the practice have been good. The unfortunate farms that have found evidence of BVD have taken advantage of a further £72 to go towards follow up testing to try to identify a PI (Persistently infected). PI's are produced when a cow is infected with BVD when the calf is in the womb, the calf is born full of virus but unable to fight it and produce immune cells against it. From September 2011 this testing will become compulsory and there will be no funding available so now is the time to test and get ahead of the situation. You have until the 31st March!!

JOHNES DISEASE

Johnes disease is diagnosed within our practice area at least once a week and is becoming an increasing problem on many of our beef and dairy units. Unfortunately, by the time clinical disease is evident and diagnosed, cows are lean and unable to be sold. We would STRONGLY advise testing at a herd level. Biobest and SAC offer health schemes, which give competitive testing rates and accreditation documents (beneficial for those of you selling pedigree stock and replacement heifers). We have negotiated a special deal with Biobest: Scheme membership for the first year is reduced from £75 to £30 (plus VAT), a great deal. Cows are to be tested annually at a charge of £3.90 per sample.

NEW SCANNER

We have recently purchased a new scanner for cattle pregnancy diagnosis. It is a portable battery operated system with a set of goggles to view the image. This equipment is a significant improvement on our old system.

The advantages are:

- ▣ Improved early pregnancy detection rates as it has a much clearer image
- ▣ Portable system which does not require a power supply
- ▣ Water proof so can be used outside

Please contact the surgery for further information

FOOT TRIMMING CRUSH

We are considering investing in a foot trimming crush to allow prompt treatment of lame cows. We are concerned that people without appropriate facilities have lame cows that are being left until a foot trimmer with appropriate equipment is on farm performing a routine visit. Early treatment of lameness should avoid the need for digit amputation or culling. We would appreciate your feedback on this matter.