

**Farm newsletter May 2016**

Welcome to the May newsletter, it has been a busy time of year all round and with lambing and calving drawing to a close on the whole it has been a relatively successful Spring for most. In this month's newsletter we will look at:

* an update on scour in lambs including a link to The SCOPS nematodirus forecast and

information on how we can help to advise on the best treatment for your flock

* a look forward to the breeding season with a focus on bull testing and the benefits it has to offer
* a quick introduction to some of the newer faces here at West Lakeland vets.

Scouring lambs

As lambs are growing now it is often the time of year that scouring lambs can be a problem. At our practice in Egremont we are able to perform Faecal egg samples in house which can help to provide a rapid diagnosis and help to make an informed treatment plan. The main causes of diarrhoea in lambs 3-12 weeks of age are:

1. Nematodirus- microscopic examination of faecal samples from affected lambs can provide a diagnosis in an outbreak i.e. when there are sick lambs but faecal sampling is not beneficial as a tool for predicting an outbreak. Prediction of nematodirus problem and therefore the decision to treat should is based on local knowledge and local parasite forecasts: <http://www.scops.org.uk/alerts-detail.php?AlertID=52>

Treatment- white wormer (Benzimidazole)- treat lambs only

1. Teladorsagiosis- often seen alongside Nematodirus, in house faecal egg counts can assist in the diagnosis of teladorsagiosis during an outbreak but regular faecal egg counts can also help predict when treatment is needed to prevent an outbreak. Treatment- can be resistant to white drenches, may require levamisole (yellow wormer.) Adult ewes can increase the worm burden despite not showing clinical disease, for advise on which animals to treat please contact one of our vets.
2. Coccidiosis- diagnosis not really helped by faecal exam but can be made on the basis of gut sample sent away after PM. Most commonly seen in intensive rearing systems.

Is your bull up to the job?

With calving drawing to a close it won’t be long before the next breeding season begins. With that in mind we wanted to provide some information as to how our team of vets can help ensure these key members of the herd are up to the job. Research has shown that 20% of bulls are subfertile A breeding exam carried out by one of our vets includes a full physical exam and semen evaluation. This can help detect subfertile bulls which can easily go unnoticed until it is too late. We would recommend testing animals at acquisition and then all breeding males 4-6 weeks prior to the bulling/tupping period- so as to provide time for changes to be made as required. Below is a link to the EBLEX better returns programme which provides more general information and advice on issues surrounding buying bulls.

If you have any questions regarding any items featured in this newsletter please do not hesitate to ask by contacting the practice.