

## **Farm Newsletter July 2018**

### Pre-breeding Tups MOT!

Would you like to find out how well your tups are going to work this year? In order to have a tight lambing period and avoid those stragglers, you need a tup who can work effectively through the tupping period. We offer a 'Tup MOT' where we can assess your tup's semen volume, sperm motility, teeth, feet and body condition score. This will help you determine which tups will work best for you this season.

Ideally tups should be tested 10 weeks prior to starting work. This gives time to rectify any problems or purchase replacements. The aim of the exercise will be to decrease the number of barren ewes and put more lambs on the ground. A sub-fertile tup can be a costly pet in your field!

On the subject of sub-fertile tups, why not use them to tighten your lambing period by vasectomising them? Vasectomising tups means cutting the spermatic cords so they can't inseminate any ewes, but leaving them with the testicles and testosterone and pheromones to bring the ewes into heat. Summer is the best time to give the tups the snip as they need at least 4 weeks to heal before they work. The best tups to pick are shearlings that don't make the grade as a tup, but mature tup lambs can be used.

If you would like your tups MOT'd this summer, get in touch and speak to one of our vets.

### Red Tractor Farm Assurance

As you may know, the Red Tractor farm assurance now requires an antibiotic collation and review as well as the annual performance review for Beef, Sheep or Dairy. These documents are usually provided, or you can download them from the farm animal factsheets section of our website. If you would like to complete these forms and make an appointment to attend the surgery, then we can review them and sign them off. This review is a good opportunity to discuss health issues affecting your stock and finding ways to improve them.

### Fluke

Over the past few years we have seen triclabendazole resistance on some of our farms. Triclabendazole (eg. Fasinex, Tribex, Endofluke) is one of the most effective treatments for immature fluke (so ideal for treatments in autumn/early winter when acute fluke is most likely). With this year's unusually dry summer, we would expect/hope that fluke challenge this autumn is going to be less than recent years, so it is an ideal time to establish whether or not there is triclabendazole resistance on your farm.

A triclabendazole resistance test involves collecting an individual muck sample from 10 individually marked ewes, then dosing them with triclabendazole. Two weeks later 10 muck samples are taken from the same 10 sheep. We are looking for a reduction in the adult fluke after the treatment as demonstrated by the test results.

Please phone to speak to one of our vets who will help to organise this, after discussing your fluke history including recent treatments. Informed choice of fluke treatments throughout the year can then be planned.

### Summer meeting

We are having a farmer meeting to discuss the sheep related topics mentioned above. The meeting will be on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July at 7pm and will be held at our Egremont surgery. Spaces will be limited so please contact the surgery and speak to Allison or Jo to book your place.