

Dear All,

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter, apologies these are a little sporadic!

Hopefully as this comes out we are coming to the end of a fairly successful lambing season, if things haven't gone as well as expected please do let us know. Blood sampling barren ewes can be a useful way to check you don't have a grumbling fertility issue in the flock, and when the dust has settled is the time to have a general chat and make plans to improve things next year.

We've had a few new developments on the farm animal side, many of you will know by now we have upgraded our ultrasound scanning to a battery operated machine so we can now much more easily scan cattle for pregnancy or fertility investigations, and don't forget for whole herd or groups we can charge by time to keep costs competitive.

We have just taken delivery of a new machine which can perform worm egg counts in house to a greater degree of accuracy than we have been able to before, so our in house results should be faster than and equivalent to sending tests off to the lab.

We have also been training Hannah Hawes, one of our qualified Veterinary Nurses as a TB Tester, which should mean we can increase our testing capacity. As a vet nurse, Hannah can also take blood samples (eg for BVD monitoring) or help with giving treatments under veterinary direction.

This issue I've written a piece about the new pathway funding which most of you will be eligible for – this is the start of the replacement for the Basic Payment Scheme, so is funding I would encourage everyone to take advantage of as it replaces your previous entitlements, but unfortunately it is much more restricted in how you can use this money.

Stijn has written a short introduction to our new equine dental service, and Suzanna discusses the importance of BVD monitoring and keeping up the momentum gained by the projects over the last few years in reducing this important disease of cattle, while Cam discusses egg count reduction testing.

As always if you want to discuss anything in this newsletter please do give us a call on the usual number, or you can email me on ashley.rubens@moorgatevets.co.uk

Pathway to Animal Health and Welfare: Get a funded Annual Review



You might have heard of the "Farming Transformation Fund" which is part of the package that is designed to replace the basic payment scheme as this is phased out. Most of our farming clients will be eligible to apply for some funding from this to support animal health and welfare objectives on their farms, and I would encourage you all to do so as this funding has been put aside for you, and the scheme itself should deliver benefits in terms of improved productivity and welfare.

You can apply for funding for a vet to carry out a review of health and welfare on the farm, and carry out some disease testing. The review is optional and is not an inspection! APHA state that the review is not going to be used for compliance or monitoring.

Any farm is eligible for the scheme if you have a CPH and SBI number linked to it, you should have either 11 or more beef cattle or 21 or more sheep to apply for either scheme, and you can apply for both, and this funding is scheduled to run yearly as long as you leave more than 10 months between reviews.

The beef scheme will cover the cost of BVD monitoring testing, which could be part of ongoing monitoring on your farm, and the sheep scheme will cover the cost of an egg count reduction test, to check if you have any wormer resistance on farm.

Funding also covers time for us to perform a review of health issues on the farm (e.g. lameness or watery mouth), biosecurity and medicines usage. It is up to you to choose which topics you would like to focus on. We will then write you a report to summarize which you can use for farm planning and to claim the funding from the RPA.

For more information and to apply for funding you will need to visit the website: <https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply> you are entitled to **£522 for beef herds and £436 for sheep flocks**.

Gut parasites like worms affect all animals (including humans), but are especially relevant in farm animals due to their high risk of infection and susceptibility to large burdens. Since the advent of easily administered treatments, there has been a good response in live animals and parasite burdens are generally lower. However, with overuse, we are seeing the signs of resistance to treatments and are beginning to encounter higher parasite loads.

With our new OvaCyte™ faecal analyser, we are able to investigate and quantify this issue. A **faecal egg count reduction test (FECRT)** is a simple procedure that identifies if there is resistance in a population of worms. A fresh pooled faecal sample of 5-10 individuals should be taken prior to treatment, and then the same samples taken 14 days after worming. The analyser counts the number (and species) of eggs per gram of faeces, with the percentage decrease after worming calculated. This can help our vets to identify resistance to worming treatments, and to suggest a more appropriate option if necessary.

The faecal analyser provides results with an equivalent accuracy to an external laboratory, but can be run on the same day at our Bovey Tracy Branch, meaning we can advise about the appropriate course of action promptly and with a high degree of accuracy. Contact either the Bovey Tracy or Moretonhampstead branch if you would like to ask any questions or to enquire about price. cameron.dee@moorgatevets.co.uk

BVD (Bovine Viral Diarrhoea) is a contagious disease of cattle that can cause a wide range of clinical problems including:

- Weakens the immune system leaving animals more susceptible to other infections such as scour and pneumonia in calves
- Reproductive problems, including failure to conceive, early embryonic death, abortion and birth defects
- Calves that survive infection during early pregnancy are born persistently infected (PI) with the virus. These animals can survive quite long periods of time before developing a fatal condition called mucosal disease. Before this, apparently normal animals will act as a persistent source of virus. They can be undetected in a herd whilst having a huge impact on the performance of the rest.

The effect of these problems can be dramatic if an acute outbreak or insidious if chronic-chipping away at the health of the herd and economic performance of the individual and national herd. BVD is often introduced into a herd by buying in PI animals, buying pregnant cows carrying a PI calf, contact over the fence, shows, break-in or -out contact with infected animals and sometimes visitors and shared equipment/buildings.

BVD can be tested for by a youngstock screen. This involves testing 5- 10 animals between 9-18 months of age to see if they have been exposed to the virus. Depending on the results we are able to determine a program to eliminate and protect your herd going forwards.

BVD Free England is a national voluntary scheme for farmers which a large number of you are already a part of. It is quite likely that BVD monitoring and testing will become mandatory in the future as it has such an impact on the national herd. If you are already involved that is great and please, please keep up your efforts.

A lot of farmers are well on the way to having a BVD Free herd but it is important to keep up with annual monitoring and reviewing progress. If you would like to become involved and get your herd screened, please get in touch so we can arrange a visit or discuss it with you. The new pathway funding can contribute to these costs. We would very much like all of our herds to be involved and have a BVD control program in place. The overall impact of all farms with cattle doing this on a national level will be enormous and well worthwhile. suzanna.payne@moorgatevets.co.uk

PRACTICE FACILITIES

24 Hour Emergency Service
In-House Laboratory
Ultrasound scanning
Lambing Club
Herd and Flock Health Planning
Red Tractor Reviews
Bull Breeding soundness examinations
Semen Collection

BOVEY TRACEY SURGERY

Mill House, Station Road,
Bovey Tracey, Newton
Abbot, TQ13 9AL
TELEPHONE – 01626
833023
EMAIL:
admin@moorgatevets.co.uk

MORETONHAMPSTEAD SURGERY

31 Court Street,
Moretonhampstead,
Newton Abbot, TQ13 8LG
TELEPHONE – 01647
440441

CHRISTOW SURGERY

Old Mines Road, Christow,
Exeter, EX6 7PL
For appointments/repeat prescriptions etc.

FOR OUT OF HOUR EMERGENCIES PLEASE TELEPHONE: 01647 440441

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"Just a trim or the usual three bags full?"