



Daleside
Veterinary Group

FARM NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2020

Happy New Year To All Our Clients from all at Daleside Veterinary Group



PRE-LAMBING MEETING 'GIVING YOUR FLOCK A HEALTHY START'

Location: Cross Keys, Llanfynydd LL11 5HH
Date: 16th January 2020
Time: 7:00pm
Hot supper to start!

Please book by contacting Lauren Arndt at lauren@dalesidevets.co.uk or by calling the practice 01978 311444.

 @DalesideFarmVet
 @DalesideFarm



Please join us at our pre-lambing meeting on the 16th January where we will discuss all the points raised in this month's newsletter and other questions you may have. To book a place, contact Lauren in the office on 01978 311444.

Calf Vaccination Service

Our new service aimed at making calf pneumonia vaccination on farm more organised and effective - as mentioned in last month's newsletter - has already prompted a lot of interest from farmers and we are now trying to arrange dates and times etc so if you would like to be included or just find out more, please contact Lauren in the office on 01978 311444

Help With TB Testing

With all the other work farmers have to do at this time of year, the added burden of gathering cattle for jobs such as a ministry TB test or vaccinations can be most unwelcome. Many farms have already used our technician, Huw Roberts, and have benefitted from having a skilled extra pair of hands to move cattle allowing them to get on with other jobs.



If you would like help at your next TB test please contact the office on 01978 311444 for further details.



Mastering Medicines

Thank you for all the positive feedback we have received from you about our recent medicines Mastering Medicines and MilkSure courses. It is good to know that they have stimulated thought and discussion about the appropriate use of medicines. If you missed them, don't panic, we are planning to run another course in February to get more people compliant with Red Tractor requirements.



Preparing For The Lambing Season

Some of you will already started lambing and for others the start may still be several months away but, either way, it is still important to prepare thoroughly for this hectic time.

Ewes In Late Pregnancy

1. Abortion

Having worked hard to get your ewes pregnant, it is frustrating when some abort. Low levels of abortion are common, but should the level rise above 2% of ewes aborting you should contact us urgently to investigate the possibility of an infectious cause such as Enzootic abortion (Chlamydia), Toxoplasma or Campylobacter. Funding may be available to test for some of these diseases.

Any aborting ewes must be isolated immediately from the flock and aborted material and contaminated bedding should be destroyed. Any ewe lambs fostered onto aborted ewes should not be kept for breeding.

2. Ewe Metabolic Problems

Twin lamb disease (pregnancy toxaemia), hypocalcaemia (calcium) and hypomagnesaemia (magnesium) are three metabolic diseases that commonly affect ewes in late pregnancy and can look broadly similar but require different treatments. If in any doubt when you see a suspect case please contact us for advice.

3. Nutrition of the Ewe

The final 2 months of pregnancy are vital for a ewe. 70% of the lamb's growth occurs in the last 8 weeks. Lower birth weight lambs have the highest mortality rates. Ewes need to be fit at lambing, meaning that poorer ewes or ewes carrying multiples require preferential treatment. Good hay or silage and a high energy, high protein concentrate are required to meet the demands. Lactation continues these demands.

A ewe feeding twins may need three times her normal maintenance requirements.

4. Metabolic Profiles

It is good practice to scan ewes to determine the number of lambs they are carrying. This allows the farmer to group and feed the ewes according to their body condition score and the number of lambs they are carrying. To ensure that ewes in the last month are receiving enough energy and protein in the ration Daleside vets can blood sample 20 ewes 2-3 weeks before lambing is due to start to assess energy, protein, magnesium and copper levels. The wrong nutrition at this stage of pregnancy can produce weak lambs that are more prone to disease and ewes that are at higher risk of twin lamb disease.

To find out more about Metabolic Profiling in ewes speak to one of the vets on 01978 311444.

Lambing Time

Lambing Area

Whether indoors or outdoors, good hygiene of the lambing area is vital. Lambs need dry, clean bedding away from the wind, rain and snow to thrive. Pens need to be well bedded and cleaned and disinfected between occupants. You will need sufficient pens to house 12-15% of the total flock due to lamb (or more if they have been synchronised). Each lambing pen should have a floor area of 1.5-2m² (15-20 ft²)

Surveys suggest that 70% of ewe deaths are caused by problems lambing. If you need to intervene, wash your hands thoroughly or, better still, wear disposable, arm length gloves. If, after 20 minutes of trying, no lamb has been delivered call us on 01978 311444.

Colostrum

Colostrum provides energy and antibody protection to the newborn lamb. To get the best start, a 4kg lamb needs 200ml colostrum in the first 4 hours of life and another 800ml before



the end of 24 hours. So check the ewe's udder for problems that could reduce the quality and quantity of her colostrum. If the mother cannot provide enough good quality colostrum then frozen ewe's colostrum gently warmed to 39°C or good quality colostrum powder can be used.

Oral Antibiotics To Prevent Watery Mouth

Some farms have routinely dosed all lambs at birth with oral antibiotics (e.g. Spectam Scourhalt). This will become harder to justify to the regulatory authorities as blanket treatment of all newborn lambs is unnecessary, costly and increases the risk of bacteria on the farm becoming resistant to that antibiotic. Healthy single lambs born in the first week of the lambing period in clean and dry conditions and receiving adequate colostrum do not need antibiotics at birth.

Dosing should be reserved for lambs at higher risk of infection:

- low birth weight lambs
- triplets
- lambs born later in lambing period into less hygienic environments where cases have occurred
- lambs born to ill or thin ewes

To discuss any of these matters ask our vets on 01978 311444.

Lambing Checklist

- **clean buckets, warm water and towels**
- **lubricant (NOT liquid detergent)**
- **arm-length gloves**
- **at least 2 sets of lambing ropes**
- **lambing snare**
- **disposable syringes and needles**
- **sharps container**
- **antibiotic injection (discuss with your vet)**
- **antibiotic spray**
- **navel dip iodine**
- **colour stock markers and/or ear tags**
- **colostrum - either (preferably) frozen**

- **natural or artificial milk replacer**
- **bottle and clean teats**
- **tube feeder**
- **thermometer**
- **calcium injection**
- **glucose injection**
- **rubber rings and Elastrator**
- **head torch and spare batteries**
- **notebook**
- **shepherd's crook**
- **infra red lamp and box for weak/orphaned lambs**



Immucol Platinum Calf Colostrum

We now have supplies of Immucol Calf Colostrum in stock.

This is a complete replacement for maternal colostrum for use when maternal colostrum is not available such as orphan calves, or it is in short supply from sick or injured mothers or calves born to heifers. Immucol Calf Colostrum contains exceptionally high levels of natural bovine colostrum and other essential nutrients. All Colostrum is certified EBL/IBR and Johne's disease free. 700g makes up to 2 litres.

For orphaned calves or where the dam has no available colostrum a calf would ideally need two sachets, one in the first couple of hours and a second one in the first 6 hours of life.

For reduced consumption of natural colostrum, supply 1 serving within 12 hours.

