

Happy New Year

Happy New year, we hope you all had a good Christmas. It was great to see so many of you at our annual Christmas Party and nice to see a few of the Maelor Young Farmers Cub present too (Wearing their Daleside sponsored polo tops!). Have you set your farm any New year resolutions?



New TB Regulations

From February there will be new regulations introduced in the Low and Intermediate regions of Wales.

- Pre-movement testing will be reintroduced into the Low TB Area of Wales (LTBA)
- Cattle moving into the Intermediate TB Area from the High TB area of Wales, the High Risk Area of England and from Northern Ireland will need a post-movement test 60-120d after arrival on farm. This is to be arranged and paid for by the farmer.

To discuss these changes further, please speak to one of our Vets.

EU Animal Health Regulations

Changes to EU regulations EU Animal Health Regulations require farms producing animals for export to the EU to have regular veterinary visits. A temporary measure allowed farmers to self-declare, but as of the 13th of December 2023 UK producers sending animals to market or to slaughter must be able to demonstrate that a veterinary visit has taken place in the past 12 months.

At least some portion of most carcasses is exported which means that most farm businesses will need to ensure compliance. If you are a member of Red Tractor or FAWL farm assurance schemes then you will already meet the requirements and no further action is needed.

If you are not a member of one of these farm assurance schemes then please contact the office on 01978 311444 to arrange a visit for the completion of a declaration form.



Preparing for lambing

As the lambing season approaches, ensuring the health and well-being of ewes becomes paramount, and a key factor in achieving this is proper nutrition. Many diseases encountered during lambing have a nutritional component, making it essential to optimise the flock's diet.

Forage Analysis: Knowing What You Feed

Understanding the nutritional content of the forage being fed to ewes is a fundamental step in formulating a complete and balanced ration. Before lambing begins, we recommend to conduct a forage analysis to assess its quality. Without this knowledge, it becomes challenging to provide ewes with the specific nutrients they need for a successful lambing experience.

Metabolic Profiling: A Window into Ewe Health

Metabolic profiling is an invaluable tool in assessing and managing ewe health. This process involves blood sampling a small number of ewes approximately three weeks prior to lambing. By analysing these samples, we can gain insights into critical indicators such as the ewe's energy requirements, short- and long-term protein status, as well as magnesium and copper levels. Conducting these tests in the weeks leading up to lambing provides a crucial window for making necessary nutritional adjustments based on the results. Taking proactive measures to address any nutritional deficiencies or imbalances revealed by metabolic profiling is essential for ensuring the well-being of ewes during lambing. Planning ahead and allowing sufficient time for adjustments are critical components of this process, as they enable you to fine-tune the ewes' diet to meet their specific needs before

the demanding lambing period begins. Farming connect funding is available for investigations such as metabolic profiling and could potentially cover up to 70% of the cost.

Space Matters: Feeding and Lying Space Requirements

Providing adequate space for feeding is another crucial aspect of managing ewe nutrition. A large ewe, for instance, requires 50cm of trough space for concentrate feeding, 25cm for restricted forage feeding, or 15cm for ad-lib forage feeding. Ensuring that each ewe has sufficient space to access and consume its ration without competition is essential for optimizing nutrient intake. Considering the lying space is equally important. Each ewe should have approximately 1.2m² of lying space in a straw pen. This not only contributes to their comfort but also plays a role in minimizing stress and promoting overall health during the lambing process.

Access to Fresh Water: A Fundamental Requirement

While focusing on the solid components of the diet, it's crucial not to overlook the importance of providing ewes with continuous access to fresh water. Adequate hydration is essential for proper digestion, nutrient absorption, and overall metabolic functions. Ensuring that water sources are clean and easily accessible contributes to the well-being of ewes and, consequently, the success of the lambing season.

Timing and Considerations for Vaccination

Timing is critical when it comes to pre-lambing clostridial vaccination. Administering the vaccine approximately four to six weeks before the expected lambing date ensures that the ewes develop a robust immune response and transfer sufficient antibodies to their offspring through colostrum.

While pre-lambing clostridial vaccination is a cornerstone of disease prevention, a comprehensive approach is advisable. This includes maintaining a clean lambing environment, providing proper nutrition, and implementing good management practices. Adequate colostrum management, sanitation, and prompt attention to sick animals also contribute to an effective disease prevention strategy.

