



## Congratulations Llinos!

Llinos has passed her formal assessment and is now a fully approved TB tester. Llinos has been working hard over the last few months completing the theory assessment and gaining experience TB testing alongside our vets, well done Llinos!

## Latest on Bluetongue Virus in the UK

Bluetongue (BTV) affects sheep, cattle and other ruminants. It is a viral disease and is spread by midges. The current strain in the UK is BTV-3 which is a relatively new strain and was first reported in September 2023 in the Netherlands. The strain worked its way through European countries and the first case was confirmed in the UK on 10 November 2023.

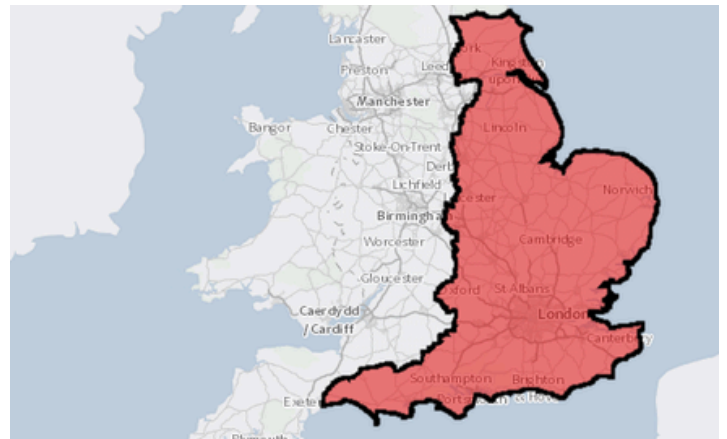
Symptoms vary across ruminants, but include fever, lesions, redness of the mouth, eyes, nose, reddening of the skin above the hoof, excessive salivation and nasal discharge. However, animals may show little or no clinical signs. Bluetongue does not affect humans, the meat and milk from infected animals safe to eat and drink.

What can we do to limit the risk of Bluetongue?

Animal movements can be a source of infection and can spread the virus further, please be especially weary if you have over wintered ewes in the area highlighted in red on the map. A large proportion of England are under bluetongue movement restrictions, currently there are no restricted zones under control measures in Wales, however this might change as the disease progresses.

Additionally, Defra have now permitted the use of bluetongue serotype 3 vaccines. Unlike the Bluetongue vaccine in previous years, the latest vaccine claims to reduce the amount of virus circulating in the blood. This means they may not prevent your animals from being infected but there will be a great reduction in clinical signs and mortality.

Speak to one of our vets to discuss vaccination options further.



Bluetongue is a notifiable animal disease. If you suspect it you must report it immediately. Failure to do so is an offence:

- England – call the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301.
- Wales – contact 0300 303 8268.

## Schmallenberg Virus

This year there have been cases of schmallenberg virus (SBV) confirmed across England and Wales so far, including: Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Hereford, Isle of Wight, Kent, Leicestershire, Oxfordshire, Pembrokeshire, Shropshire, Somerset, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire.

SBV is a viral disease, spread by the same midges that can carry bluetongue virus in the autumn, and can cause clinical signs in both cattle and sheep. Lambs and calves may be stillborn, or be born with contracted tendons, fixed joints, brain deformities, spinal cord damage, blindness, or difficulty walking. While the most recognisable sign is deformed lambs or calves there are other indicators of infection within your stock.

In sheep, SBV can cause fertility issues and early abortions, so decreased scanning percentages may be the first visible sign of schmallenberg, before lambing even starts. Cattle on the other hand can show mild clinical signs such as milk drop, high temperatures and diarrhoea.

The good news is that APHA is providing free testing again this year, in England and Wales. As well as taking the samples, we may need the following information from you:

- Details of the deformities seen (including photos if available)
- Whether the affected animals were abortions or born to term
- Whether there was an increase in barren ewes or cows/heifers
- Whether the affected dams were home-bred or bought-in

If you have any suspected animals, or would like any further information please get in touch with the practice on **01978 311 444** to discuss sampling.

## Medicine collection

Just a reminder, when collecting medicine from the practice e.g. antibiotics and vaccines, this needs to be prescribed by one of our vets. Please can you allow us a few hours between ordering and collection to ensure that the order is complete to minimise your waiting time.

## Changes to Red Tractor Standards

Changes to the Red Tractor Farm assurance scheme are now active. As mentioned in our previous newsletter, farmers and their staff will need to refresh their medicine training every five years to keep up with the latest practices in responsible medicine use. At least one person on the unit must have undergone training in the last five years – either a refresher course to follow a course taken previously, or a full course approved by Red Tractor if it's the person's first training in this area.

We are intending on holding another course in the next couple of months, so get in touch to express your interest if your previous course is nearing this period, or should you wish to get further members of the farm team trained. Please email [allison@dalesidevets.co.uk](mailto:allison@dalesidevets.co.uk) to get your name on the list!

