

MAY 2024 NEWSLETTER

Welcome



Magnesium – Grass Staggers

Hypomagnesaemia, more commonly known as grass staggers or grass tetany, occurs when there is a low level of magnesium in the blood. It is most commonly seen in lactating cattle and ewes a few weeks post lambing, particularly if grazing lush fast growing spring/autumn grass with a low magnesium content. When dietary magnesium intake does not meet the demands of body which are increased during milk production a deficiency occurs causing hypomagnesaemia. Magnesium contributes to nerve inhibition and muscle control resulting in some distinct clinical signs.



Signs to spot:

- “Staggering”- unsteady in walk, incoordination, muscle tremors/twitching
- Hyperexcitable/nervous behaviour
- Frothing at the mouth, teeth grinding, increased salivation
- Recumbent
- Sudden death – with evidence of thrashing.

Cases must be treated promptly and further investigation maybe required. Diagnosis can be based on clinical signs alone, alongside blood magnesium levels. Treatment includes administering magnesium, but prevention as always is better than cure and discussing measures to reduce or prevent further cases is important.

Ways to reduce the risk:

- Supplementary feed/roughage during high risk periods.
- Magnesium supplements in feed, water or boluses.
- Ensure soil testing is used prior to application of fertilisers, high levels of potassium or nitrogen fertilisers can reduce the uptake of magnesium by grass.

REMINDER:

Schmallenberg and Blue tongue: Please remain vigilant for possible cases of Schmallenberg and blue tongue. With increasing midge numbers, blue tongue cases are anticipated to increase. If you have any suspicions of disease, please contact the practice as soon as possible.

Farm Clubs

Flock club meeting

Our next Flock club meeting will be held on the 20th May, 7pm at Welford. We will be discussing Flock Economics. A hot dinner will be provided.

This meeting is for Flock Club members only – if you would like more information on our Flock Club or would like to join, please ring the office on 01455 710935.

Sarah Greene



WELCOME

We would like to welcome Sarah to the CCFV team. Sarah has joined our farm support team this month taking over the TB admin and will begin her ATT training soon. She is excited to meet you over the coming months.

2024 Show Time

We will be at the Blaston show on 30th June, don't forget to come along to say hello.

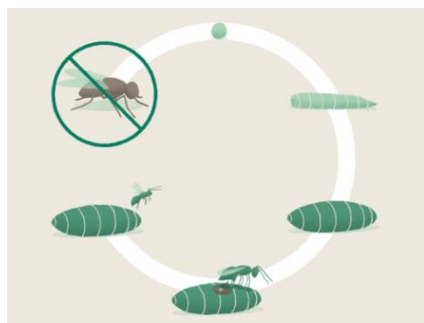
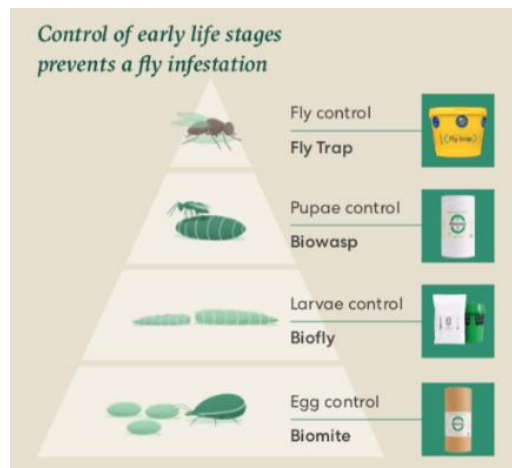
Biowasps

An increasing number of livestock farmers have discovered an alternative to chemical pest control. Beneficial insects have proven to be the most effective and environmentally friendly strategy against flies in and around the livestock farm.

Flies cause a serious nuisance to both livestock and humans. They are known vectors of disease, costing the livestock industry thousands in control methods as well as through production losses due to decreased milk yields and growth rates.

During the summer a female fly can lay up to 1000 eggs within 10 days. This rapid life cycle means that an infestation of nuisance flies can happen extremely quickly and it is therefore important to gain control early on in the season. Numbers within the fly population are represented by a pyramid where the youngest life stages are the most abundant, meaning that even when a small number of adult flies are visible, a much larger number of larvae and eggs are already developing on the farm.

The Biowasp is a parasitic mini wasp which controls flies in and around livestock units without the use of insecticides and chemicals. The Biowasp naturally controls flies by targeting fly pupae in and around farm buildings with straw bedding or where dry manure is present. They target the housefly (*Musca domestica*), the lesser house fly (*Fannia canicularis*) and the stable fly (*Stomoxys calcitrans*). These 3 species represent about 95% of the nuisance flies present on the farm.



The wasp works by drilling a small hole inside the pupae of a nuisance fly, where they lay their eggs. These eggs will develop into a mini wasp larvae, which will feed on the contents of the fly pupa. A new mini wasp will grow inside the fly pupa about 3 weeks after parasitisation. Once a fly pupa has been parasitised, only mini wasps can hatch from it, breaking the life cycle of the fly whilst increasing the population of the beneficial organisms. For effective control re-application of parasitic wasps is necessary during the fly season.



The use of parasitic wasps should formulate part of an on-farm control plan which generally includes additional methods to target different lifecycle stages and problem areas. A farm specific plan and assessment can be carried out by Lauren our VetTech. Lauren can continue to support you throughout the fly

season with application of parasitic wasps and monitoring of the situation. Please contact the practice on 01455 710935 if you are interested in discussing their use further.

Joke of the month



WHAT DID THE COW SAY TO THE HER CALF?
IT PASTURE BEDTIME.



Cross Counties Farm Vets

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