

OCTOBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

Welcome



CATTLE HOUSING CHECKLIST:

The winter housing period is approaching, presenting opportunities for essential husbandry tasks to ensure optimal herd performance. Use this checklist to prepare:

- **Building Design and Preparation:** Assess the suitability of your housing. Clean, dry, and disinfect before introducing animals. Ensure appropriate stocking density, hygiene protocols, and ventilation without draughts. Minor management choices can make a big difference. For more, read the AHDB resource: <https://ahdb.org.uk/knowledge-library/improve-beef-housing-for-better-returns>
- **Vaccinations:** Are you vaccinating for BVD, IBR, or Leptospirosis? Order boosters in advance. Pneumonia vaccines can protect youngstock at risk in poorly ventilated buildings. Contact us for information if you have concerns about infectious diseases.
- **Parasite Control:** Not all cattle need worming at housing. The information provided by COWS (Control of Worms Sustainably) is a useful resource. Use faecal egg counts (FECs) to check if youngstock require treatment. If risk is high, use macrocyclic lactones (ML) to target inhibited Ostertagia worms. Adult cattle should not require any treatment for gut worms. There is no natural immunity to liver fluke so assess all stock for liver fluke (Blood test a group of first season grazing calves (as sentinels) two weeks after housing to check whether they have been in contact with liver fluke in the summer), and monitor forecasts and abattoir returns. Consider lice and mite treatments, and reach out for herd-specific advice.
- **TB Testing:** Are you due for TB testing this winter? Book your test ASAP and consider additional diagnostics while animals are accessible (pregnancy diagnosis, infectious disease, trace elements).
- **Pregnancy Diagnosis:** Use housing to scan spring block calving herds for early detection of non-pregnant cattle, allowing for prompt treatment of fertility issues.
- **Trace Element Investigations:** We can test copper, cobalt, selenium, and iodine levels via blood tests post-grazing. This data can guide spring supplementation and help prevent health issues related to deficiencies.
- **Infectious Disease Investigations:** For the Annual Health and Welfare Review (AHWR), we need to blood sample 5 youngstock for BVD. Use the housing period to engage with this funding initiative. Sign up on the government website for your AHWR number.
- **Lameness and Body Condition Scoring (BCS):** Assess lame or low BCS animals as they come in from grazing. Aim for a BCS of 2.5-3.0 at calving, ensuring proper grouping and feeding to optimize condition.

By following this checklist, you can enhance your herd's health and productivity this winter.

New Law for Poultry Keepers!

If you became a keeper of poultry or other captive birds before 1 October 2024, you must register immediately if you have not done so already.

If you become a keeper of poultry or other captive birds after 1 October 2024, you must register within 30 days of becoming a keeper.

Register online at www.gov.uk, or ring 03000 200 301.

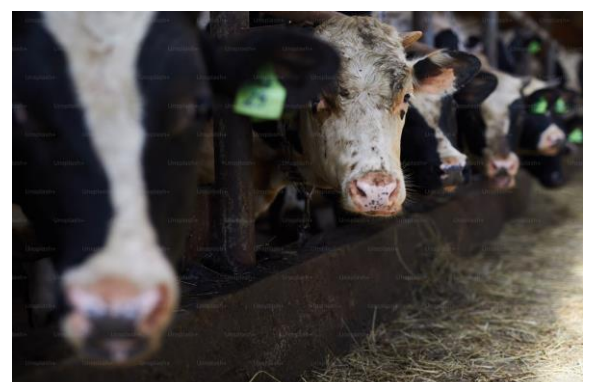
BLUETONGUE

The bluetongue situation is rapidly changing, and we are doing our best to keep informed of the situation. If you have any questions, or want to chat through any concerns, please ring the office to speak to a vet. Please make sure you are getting your information from the correct sources:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/bluetongue-information-and-guidance-for-livestock-keepers>

<https://ruminanthw.org.uk/bluetongue-virus/>

Farmers are urged to take part in the survey, which can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/BTV3survey>





Scab & Lice in Sheep

Scab and lice are a major concern in the UK sheep industry.

Lice:

There are two types of lice that effect sheep – chewing lice and sucking lice. They feed on skin debris and hair. They are not normally an issue in low numbers, but animals in poor health can be heavily affected – the severity is dependent on health, breed and fleece length. Lice infestations are normally seasonal, with higher levels in Winter. Spread is worse during close contact, such as periods of housing or trough feeding. Infestations develop over several months, as the life cycle takes 4-5 weeks. They are highly irritating and affect both the welfare and the production of the sheep. Lice live exclusively on sheep, and are spread by contact with neighbouring sheep, or from bought in sheep. Lice can be seen with the naked eye, but not seeing them doesn't mean a negative diagnosis. Skin scrapes performed by your vet can also be helpful. Treatment is with pour ons such as Crovect, Spot on and Dysect, or plunge dipping– but correct application is very important. Shearing also reduces the issue. Injectable wormers do not treat lice.

Scab:

'Scab' is the name for a dermatitis caused by the mite '*psoroptes ovis*'. It is actually the mites faeces that causes an allergic response, and is highly irritating to the sheep. Sheep scab multiply quickly, with a life cycle of just 14 days – so mite numbers can double every 6 days. As scab is highly infectious, 60% of the flock may be infected before clinical signs are seen in individual sheep. Scab can live off sheep for 15-17 days, which means they can be spread by contaminated trailers, handling equipment, overalls, wool snags etc. Like lice, scab is a big welfare concern. Bought in sheep is the biggest risk for scab – a careful consideration to quarantining sheep for scab should be made. Scab is diagnosed by blood sampling or skin scrapes. It is treated by plunge dipping, or by injectable ivermectin – but great care must be taken to stick to the treatment protocol – always speak to your vet before treating suspected scab with ivermectin.

NEWS

CHRISTMAS QUIZ!!!

WHEN: FRIDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2024

WHERE: LUTTERWORTH RUGBY CLUB

Please call the practise to get your tickets.

We are also looking for any kind donations into our silent auction



Congratulations to Lauren!!

Lauren has been working hard over the past 2 years at her Veterinary Technician apprenticeship, as a part of the first ever cohort, and graduated with Distinction. We are incredibly proud of our Vet Tech extraordinaire! Lauren works alongside you and our farm vets in a team approach to improve farm health and welfare.

VET TECH SERVICES:

- Fly Control
- Worm Egg Count
- Sampling
- Disbudding
- Vaccinations
- Youngstock Performance Monitoring
- TB Testing
- Body Condition, Mobility & Teat Scoring

Cross Counties Farm Vets

Lutterworth Branch: Elizabethan House, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, LE17 4NJ. ☎ 01455 552117

Welford Branch: Elkington Lodge, Elkington Road, Welford, Northampton, NN6 6HE. ☎ 01455 710935

Broughton Astley Branch: 12 Swannington Road, Broughton Astley, Leicestershire, LE9 6TU. ☎ 01455 282512

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