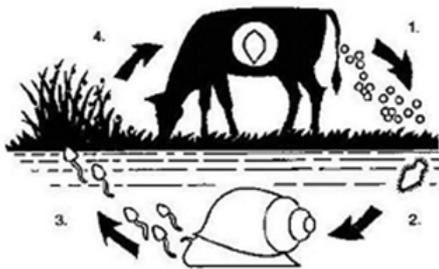


FARM ANIMAL NEWSLETTER

Liver fluke

Liver fluke is a common parasitic disease and is estimated to cost the cattle industry £23 million annually and £3 - £5 per head of sheep. It is caused by the trematode Fasciola hepatica whose life cycle requires a snail host (Galba truncatula) and as such is associated with poor wet pasture (where the snails thrive), although any pasture can become contaminated if the parasite burden is high enough.

The essential role that the snail plays in the liver fluke lifecycle means that the adult fluke can only reproduce during the summer months when it is warm and wet enough for the snails to thrive. This means that the infective stage of the fluke are generally present on the pasture from October onwards, and at a high risk of being ingested by cattle before housing. It takes 6-8 weeks for the fluke



to move from the intestines to the liver where they mature to egg-laying adults, 10-12 weeks after being swallowed.

Symptoms of liver fluke depend on the type of animal affected. For

example, classic symptoms of scour and weight loss are worsened by the stress of advanced pregnancy and carrying twins, so spring calving beef cattle are likely to show the most severe clinical signs. In addition to weight loss and diarrhoea, dairy cattle show reduced milk yields and lower fertility rates, and the most at risk group are heifers being grazed away from home on poor pasture. Lambs which show slower growth rates and old ewes may develop a swelling under their jaw with chronic disease and all

occurred as a result of favourable environmental conditions for the snail population.

Diagnosis of fluke can be confirmed on post mortem examination by presence of adults within the liver, or the presence of fluke eggs in the faeces. It is also possible to perform a lab test on blood or milk, though this is a marker of exposure rather than confirmation of an active infection.

Treatment can be effectively achieved with drenches, but these must be timed carefully to coincide with environmental conditions to ensure that they have maximum effect. The only product which is effective against all stages of the parasite is triclabendazole, however, due to its extensive and often inappropriate use, there is now widespread resistance. The remaining products are effective only against older fluke (not their younger larval stages) and as such either a 7 or 12 week window must be left between access to infected pasture and treatment, depending on product used. Please see the below table for a guide of flukicide products and when they should be used, though if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact one of our offices to discuss your situation with one of our vets. **(See table below)**

Recovery from heavy infestations takes time and supportive care which should be based around easily available nutrition and movement to clean pasture to reduce re-infection.

Prevention takes many forms and should include:

- Flukicide treatment strategy discussed with your vet at your herd health plan, ensuring appropriate dose rates and
- All bought in stock should be treated and quarantined on arrival, this protocol should be discussed with your vet
- Fencing off wet grazing areas where snails are more likely to exist
- Avoiding grazing at risk pastures during Autumn and Winter

Liver fluke is endemic to our national herd and flock so make sure you know how best to reduce the impact it has on your business.

Product	Active	Age of Fluke Targeted	Roundworm & Lungworm	Tapeworm	Mites, warbles & Lice	Use	Meat withdrawal	Milk withdrawal
Endofluke 10%	Triclabendazole	2 weeks +				Oral drench	56 days	47 days
Closamectin Pour-On	Ivermectin Closantel	7 weeks +	Y		Y	Pour on	28 days	Not for dairy animals
Solantel	Closantel	7 weeks +				Oral drench	42 days	
Albenil 2.5% Oral Suspension	Albendazole	10 weeks +	Y	Y		Oral drench	Endofluke 10%	Endofluke 10%
Zanil	Oxyclozanide	10 weeks +				Oral drench	28 days	72 hours

HEREFORD: 01432 351471 • BROMYARD: 01885 488440 • LEDBURY: 01531 806129

Clinical Vets: Dominic Alexander · Will Allman · Mike Bellamy · Andrew Cooke · Nick Gibbon · Hannah Mitchell · Alex O'Malley · Matthew Pugh · Caroline Rank · Amelia Stevens · Harry Walby · Charlotte Watkins

TB Testers: Jacek (Jack) Andrychiewicz · Petre Balanescu · Ovidiu Mircea-Oltean · Tudor Patcas · Diego Sainz Garcia · Javier Sisamon · Krasimir (Kris) Stefanov

Support staff: Michelle Harris · Sybil Legge · Laura Langford · Alice Mainwaring · Ros O'Sullivan · Sophie Powell · Emma Savage · Andrea Smith · Pam Strange · Harriet Turner · Millie Whitlock

Worming farm dogs

*Worming of farm dogs is often an overlooked procedure on farm, but is vital to prevent significant economic losses for farmers and meat producers through *Cysticercus ovis*, the intermediate stage of the dog tapeworm *Taenia ovis*.*

Adult tapeworms live in the intestines of the dog where they produce large number of eggs within segments that are excreted in the faeces. If these eggs are deposited on grazing pasture they can survive for over 6 months or will be ingested by sheep. Once ingested the eggs will develop into larvae and then travel to the heart, diaphragm and other muscles where they form fluid filled sacs that harden into cysts. These cysts are referred to as *C. ovis* in slaughterhouse feedback. Large numbers of these cysts can result in carcass condemnation at slaughter. Sheep wormers are not effective against these stages. Dogs are then infected with these larval stages when they scavenge on a sheep carcass.

If *C. ovis* has been found on farm it is vital that all dogs, including working, resident and visiting dogs, are wormed frequently enough to break the tapeworm lifecycle.

Dogs should be wormed with a worming tablet which contains the active ingredient Praziquantel, the only product which actively treats the adult stage of tapeworm. The interval of worming should be less than 5 weeks in order to break the lifecycle between ingested larvae and egg laying adults in the dog's intestines.

Key points:

- **Treat all dogs monthly with a product that contains Praziquantel, this should include visiting dogs. These tablets can be bitter – ensure they are eaten!**
- **Dispose of sheep carcasses rapidly and keep dogs under control when not working to prevent scavenging.**
- **Encourage dog walkers to pick up their faeces, this is even more important for dogs being fed raw meat diets. Consider giving farm dogs a good run around the yard before going into fields grazed by sheep to encourage them to do their business before work!**

Other considerations

Don't forget dogs can also act as a potential source of Neospora infection, an abortion causing parasite in cattle. Preventing dogs from ingesting dead stock and post calving fluids/ placenta as well as keeping cattle feed and water away from dogs is vital to reduce risk of infection.

Pasteurella



As the autumn approaches the change in weather is already bringing with it a trickle of Pasteurellosis cases in lambs in certain areas. Some of you will have a well-documented history of cases in your flocks but for those who don't, it would be recommendable to get any sudden deaths in the lambs investigated by us. A single booster of Pasteurella vaccine in the affected group will protect against any further losses. This can be done with either Heptavac-P or Ovivac-P and will not affect the timing of your usual annual booster pre-lambing.



ENHANCING THE EFFICIENCY & PROFITABILITY OF YOUR DAIRY FARM

THE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

TUESDAY THE 15TH OCTOBER - STARTING AT 7PM PROMPT

ALEXANDER PARK
COURT-Y-PARK
LEDBURY
HEREFORDSHIRE
HR8 2RW

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO WELCOME:
DOCTOR MIKE OVERTON

WORLD REKNOWN DAIRY NUTRITIONIST & VETERINARIAN
WORKING WITHIN THE USA.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
AND TO BOOK YOUR PLACE
PLEASE CALL NOW!**

Join us on the 7th November
at Bun Hill, Bodenham, HR1 3JY
11:30am - 3pm

THE WINTER SUCKLER MEETING

Wanting to get the most out of calving time?
Worried that your cows aren't performing correctly?
Needing to understand more of your cow's nutritional requirement?

For more information and to book your place please call us now!



Out of hours

A reminder that if there is ever any difficulty in reaching the vet on call out of hours, we have a permanent answering service, Kernow, who will take your call and then go on to contact the relevant vet. They can be reached on 01432 381440.

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