

OVINE ABORTION

As tugging is fast approaching, it's a good time to start thinking about vaccinating all your ewes against the two most common causes of ovine abortion; enzootic abortion and toxoplasmosis. Abortion in sheep is very common but not inevitable. There are many things we can do to prevent abortion. The most likely causes of abortion in sheep are:

-Enzootic Abortion

-Toxoplasmosis

-Listeria

-Campylobacter

-Salmonella

-Border disease

Enzootic abortion – *Chlamydomyia abortus* is a bacteria spread through vaginal secretions and placental membranes at lambing time. Typically, sheep are infected during one lambing season and abort the next. Abortion is the primary sign of infection, however if a sheep is infected during late pregnancy the lambs will be live but weak. A few abortions one year could lead to abortion storms the following year, with over 30% of the flock being affected. It is important to note, that this may also happen after vaccination as the ewes may have been infected before their vaccination course. Toxoplasmosis – caused by the protozoa *Toxoplasma gondii*. It presents with different clinical signs depending on the stage of pregnancy.

-Early pregnancy – barren ewes at scanning or returning to the tup

-Mid pregnancy – mummified and aborted foetuses.

-Late pregnancy – weak or even normal lambs.

-Ewes are likely to have altered placentas as the cotyledons (round balls on the placenta) look a bit like a strawberry (pink with white spots).



The protozoa go through a lifecycle in rodents and cats before infecting ewes through the cats' faeces so a lamb born to toxoplasma infected ewes is not necessarily a carrier for the disease. Antibiotics are not effective against toxoplasmosis and vaccination offers the best form of protection.

CARE – many of the causes of abortion can infect humans.

Particularly toxoplasmosis which can infect pregnant women. It is important that pregnant women are not in contact with lambs or ewes during lambing. This also includes any items of clothing worn during the lambing period.

What can you do to prevent ovine abortion?

-Vaccinate all breeding ewes and ewe lambs/ yearlings with vaccines against toxoplasma and enzootic abortion. At Belmont we use Cevac and Toxovax. Details of vaccine schedules can be seen below.

-All replacement animals should be sourced from **enzootic abortion free flocks** and vaccinated before tugging.

-Keep all food stores (as well as hay), protected from cat faeces.

-Isolate all aborted ewes away from the remainder of the flock for 4 weeks. Remove and burn all bedding from lambing pens and disinfect between ewes.

-Keep aborted foetuses and placentas and submit to us or APHA veterinary centre for further **investigation** and diagnosis of cause.

-Do not foster lambs onto ewes which have aborted as the cause of abortion may pass onto the lamb. Equally, do not use surviving, weak ewe lambs for breeding next year.

-Record which ewes have aborted. If greater than 3% of flock have aborted, it is important to do an investigation into the abortion.

Cevac – 1 dose between 4 months and at 4 weeks prior to tugging. Ewe lambs intended for breeding can be vaccinated from 5 months of age. Re-vaccination required after 3-4 years.

Toxovax – 1 dose between 4 months and 3 weeks prior to tugging. Ewe lambs intended for breeding can be vaccinated from 5 months of age. Re-vaccination is advised after 2 years.

A 10% discount is available on the above two vaccines if payment is made on collection and your account is up to date.

Please be aware that for **Toxovax** orders we require at least 10 days notice. Once we take delivery of it, Toxovax has a very short shelf life of just **7 days**.

If you would like any more information please phone the office and ask to speak to a vet.

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

Vets: Dominic Alexander • Will Allman • Mike Bellamy • Hazel Birch-Ellis • Andrew Cooke • Joel Galloway • Nick Gibbon • James Hipperson • Louise Lavin • Hannah Mitchell • Matthew Pugh • Caroline Rank • Harry Walby • Charlotte Watkins • Sarah Watson

TB Testers: Jacek (Jack) Andrychiewicz • Petre Balanescu • Lin Irving • Ovidiu Mircea-Oltean • Emma Parkinson • Tudor Patcas •

Diego Sainz Garcia • Mark Wrathall

Support staff: Megan Corrick • Sadie Davies • Michelle Harris • Lucy Hughes • Sybil Legge • Laura Langford • Alice Mainwaring • Ros O'Sullivan • Sophie Powell • Sharon Powell • Andrea Smith • Pam Strange • Vicky Tully • Katherine Whistance • Millie Whitlock • Evelyn Williams

PASTURELLOSIS

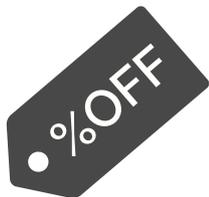
As the autumn approaches the change in weather will bring with it a trickle of pasteurilosis cases in lambs in certain areas.

Any sheep can be affected including ones that have been vaccinated in the spring. This is due to the Pasteurella component of the vaccine only lasting for a limited period. Some of you will have a well-documented history of cases in your flocks and will be boosting ewes and any remaining lambs at this time of year already but for those that are not it would be recommendable to get any sudden deaths in the flock investigated by us. If pasteurilosis is identified as being an issue a single booster of Pasteurella vaccine will protect against any further losses. This can be done with either Heptavac P or Ovivac P regardless of the primary vaccine given and will not affect the timing of your usual annual booster with your normal vaccine pre-lambing.



£ DISCOUNT REMINDER £

Please remember that most of our drugs are offered with an additional 10% discount if your account is up to date and they are paid for at the time of collection. Who doesn't like a discount!



NEW RECRUIT

At the beginning of September we will be welcoming another member to the Vet team at Belmont. Ellie Collins will be joining us having qualified from RVC (London) this summer and will be dealing with both farm and equine patients. We are sure that you will give her the usual warm welcome that all of our new recruits get!



THE KNEE BONE IS CONNECTED TO THE...

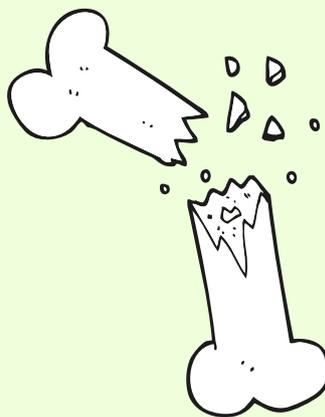
For many years now radiographs or x-rays have been common place in almost all small animal practices and on the equine yards, but sadly this diagnostic tool is a rather under used resource in our farm animal patients.

Investigations of lame animals using x-rays are particularly useful for diagnosing and planning the treatment options in the following situations:

- Suspected broken or fractured legs (calves and small ruminants)
- Unknown causes of lower-leg lameness and / or joint swelling
- Tooth root infections in camelids

Patients will usually require sedation to ensure they remain still whilst the x-ray is taken and to ensure a well-defined and non-blurry image is produced.

Images can usually be interpreted by the vet in the field but occasionally may need reviewing by the team.



Emergencies and Out of Hours

In the unfortunate event that your animal requires veterinary attention out-of-hours please dial the usual office number where you will be given the telephone number of the on-duty vet.

It may be useful to keep a pen and paper handy to take this number down.

On the rare occasion that the duty vet is out of reception your call will be forwarded to a helpful member of our answering service who will ensure someone attends the emergency as soon as possible.

The answering team at Kernow can be contacted directly on 01432 381 440, if for any reason you are unable to reach the duty vet.

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