



DAMORY LODGE EDWARD STREET BLANDFORD FORUM DORSET DT11 7QT
TEL : 01258 452 626 FAX : 01258 453 548 www.damoryvets.co.uk

In this issue: Johne's 30 Cow Challenge. LAMBING SPECIAL: Pre-lambing Vaccination Programmes, Investigating Barren Ewes and Abortion, Pre-lambing Metabolic Profiles and Damory Farm Meetings - Dates for the diary – including our Lambing Workshop.

Johne's 30 Cow Challenge

The National Milk Laboratories (NML) have launched the 'Johne's 30 Cow Challenge'! This programme is open to all dairy farmers who are **not** already screening for Johne's disease through the Herdwise or Herdtracker surveillance schemes.

We will help you select 30 of your most at-risk cows to see if they are Johne's positive.

If all 30 results are low NML will cover the costs. If any of the results show medium or high Johne's prevalence, the cost of testing will be invoiced at £75 + VAT. There will be one 30 cow challenge per customer.



Why should you take the challenge?

You may be harbouring and spreading the disease if you have never tested for it. An effective control programme can only be implemented if you know what your herd status is.

If you don't have any scouring or thin cows

It is impossible to be able to diagnose the disease without testing. Often cows with Johne's disease will leave the herd before showing clinical signs. These cows are often culled due to lameness, poor fertility or mastitis, so often the Johne's goes undetected.

Please contact us to discuss the criteria for selection of the 30 cows. Either we can blood test your 30 cows or after your NMR milk recording the samples can be run automatically. If you are not recording with NMR, milk sampling kits can be supplied at a cost of £12.50+VAT.

Please be aware that a recent TB test could result in false positives for Johne's. Milk samples should be taken at least 42 days after a TB test and blood samples 60 days after a test.

Take the challenge and find out your Johne's status!

FEBRUARY LAMBING SPECIAL

Pre-lambing Vaccination Programmes

Clostridial bacteria exist ubiquitously in the environment and some live in the healthy gut of animals. If allowed to gain entry into the body eg. through wounds or ingestion, under the right conditions the bacteria release dangerous toxins. Often the disease is fatal, with no successful treatment available – prevention is definitely better than cure.

A Clostridial vaccination plan should be a routine part of your pre-lambing flock health programme. The reason we advise pre-lambing vaccination in ewes is so they have a high level of antibodies in their colostrum which can be passed onto their lambs, so they have immunity against these diseases from birth. However, if your ewes have not been vaccinated pre-lambing, growing lambs can still be protected against fatal Clostridial infections by vaccinating them from 2-3 weeks onwards (depending on the vaccination).

Heptavac P plus, must be given to ewes 4-6 weeks prior to lambing and has the added benefit of protecting against Pasteurellosis Pneumonia. **Bravoxin 10**, has a wider window to be given 8-2 weeks before lambing and has the added benefit of covering against *Clostridium sordellii*, which is associated with in-utero death of lambs.



Investigating Barren Ewes and Abortion

We would always recommend that any unexplained abortions or more than 2% of barren ewes at scanning or at the end of lambing should be investigated.

The easiest and cheapest option is to start with a 'Flock Check' blood sample. This would reveal whether your flock had been exposed to either or both of the two most common infectious causes of abortion; Enzootic Abortion and Toxoplasmosis.

Please call to arrange to blood sample up to 8 barren or aborted ewes from each group and take advantage of the free laboratory fees.

If we do find that your flock are positive, there are very good vaccines available to effectively protect and further prevent against these diseases and damaging losses.



FREE LAB FEES!!!!

Pre-lambing Metabolic Profiles

The only way to accurately determine the nutritional status of flock is with a pre-lambing metabolic profile. This will help identify whether the diet is meeting the need of the ewes. Ideally this should be done 4 weeks prior to lambing to ensure you still have a chance to rectify any discrepancies.



The aim is to assess whether the diet is providing enough energy & protein for pregnant ewes, to ensure the health of the unborn lamb, to ensure the lambs born are of good birth weight and that the ewe produces enough good quality colostrum and milk to rear her lambs on. By blood sampling ewes and testing for vital metabolites we can make an accurate judgement on this.

Select 6-10 ewes per group. Group ewes accordingly for example; consider body condition (poor ewes), first time ewes, ewes bearing twins, ewes bearing other multiples etc. To get an accurate picture sample at least 4 hrs after supplementary feeding.

Metabolites include; Urea, Serum Albumin, Beta-Hydroxy-Butyrate and Magnesium.

Please discuss this further with your vet as silage analysis and soil analysis should also be considered.

Damory Farm Meetings - Dates for the diary

Dairy Cattle: Selective Dry Cow Therapy – Matthew Burge

Wednesday 2nd March. 7pm at Longthorns Farm, Wareham, BH20 6HH. (Free of charge)

Sheep: Lambing Workshop – Alice Wilkinson **£50 per person**

Wednesday 9th or Thursday 10th March. 2pm-5pm. Newton Farm, Sturminster Marshall.

We will be covering pre-lambing preparation, ewe and lamb health as well as practical demonstrations. Lunch will be provided as well as detailed course notes to take home.

If you are interested in attending the above meetings please call to book your place.