

Alistair Moir
Minster Vet Practice
York

* Lambing time is here and talk on farm has frequently steered towards Schmallenberg virus and its effect on lamb numbers.

Our hands are tied when trying to actively do anything about Schmallenberg, but more can be done to increase lamb numbers by focusing on common problems that cause significant lamb losses every year.

About one million lambs are lost every year to hypothermia. Joint ill, Navel ill and Watery Mouth are regularly seen at the practice. Lamb losses from these conditions will dwarf those from Schmallenberg. Strict hygiene in the lambing area, colostrum, navel dipping, and warming boxes are still key to a successful lambing.

Rob Smith
Farm First Veterinary Services
Abergavenny

* Commonly, when there is a disease outbreak in young calves or lambs, we nearly always find there is inadequate colostrum intake. As spring progresses, with lambs and calves hitting the ground with increasing frequency, this becomes more important.

Remember the Four Q's: Quantity, Quality, Quickly and Quietly. Calves and lambs need 30-50ml/kg every six hours during the first 24 hours of life, with their first dose within six hours of birth. Calves may need a much larger volume for their first feed (up to four litres).

Colostrum should be of high quality and free from contamination such as faeces. Feeders should be cleaned and disinfected between feeds to minimise disease spread.

Ian Gill
Thrus Veterinary Group
Kirriemuir

* As an east-coast practice, Liver fluke is a relatively new disease to our farmers. Ten years ago it was not recognised, but now more than 40 clients are treating for the disease.

One late autumn treatment usually kept disease under control, but this season we have seen deaths in ewes that received triclabendazole pre-tupping. Deaths occurred after scanning and post-mortem revealed ruptured livers. This flock had to repeat treat, which stopped deaths, but later fluke egg counts showed the problem was not completely controlled. This reminds us climate change can result in drastic changes

Vet Viewpoint

A regional round-up of key veterinary issues

in parasite challenge. Surveillance of fluke egg counts and abattoir reports are invaluable at forecasting changing threats and avoiding heavy losses.

Andrew Cooke
Rutland Vet Centre
Rutland

* A new word has entered everyone's consciousness recently

(including our small animal clients): Schmallenberg.

There is a frustrating lack of information to give any sound advice yet. Within our practice, there seems to be about a 5% prevalence. Most cases are in sheep, but we have seen two in calves.

There have been a variety of reactions from farmers – from near-panic to a stoical: "Doubt it'll be any worse than a bit of enzo."

xLvets
Excellence in Practice

* XLVets is a group of farm animal-committed vet practices that work together, alongside commercial research and manufacturing companies. They aim to share best practice on advice and disease-prevention initiatives.

At the moment it seems we have to ride the storm and see what can be done for next year; of course, this heavily relies on any suspicious cases being reported to your vet.

Replace your whole milk for better all-round returns



Volac milk replacer - made from your milk



- Reduces the risk of Johne's transfer
- Helps you to raise strong, healthy calves with good growth rates
- Made from ultra-filtrated whey protein, formulated to provide optimal nutrition
- Convenient to use and always available

Contact us to find out more
0800 919808 www.volac.com

volac