

Vet Viewpoint

A regional round-up of key veterinary issues



Aonghus Lane

Parklands Vet Clinic
County Tyrone

* This September we encountered an unusual parasite

suspect with levels of 4,500-6,500 eggs/g of faeces. The culprit, a sheep tapeworm called *Monezia expansa*, uses a harvest mite to complete its lifecycle and at 1.6m long, looks like it fills the intestine. However, as they only attach at one point in the gut, they do little damage to the sheep. We were able to advise our client and save the time and expense of unnecessary treatment.

Of more concern are the immature form of dog (or fox) tapeworms such as *Taenia ovis*, leading to cysts in the lungs, liver and muscles. This can result in lambs being condemned at slaughter. Control means regular worming of dogs and not allowing dogs to scavenge sheep carcasses.



James Frayne

Millcroft Vet Group
Cumbria

* This summer many farmers have been reporting

several losses to scour and many calves requiring treatment. Testing should be carried out to identify the pathogen responsible, however these general principles always apply:

* Ensure adequate colostrum intakes (three litres in six hours).

Stomach tubing all calves with colostrum regardless of whether they have suckled is advised. Colostrum intakes can be easily monitored with a blood test.

* Maximise hygiene in calving boxes and calf pens, ensuring the bedding is clean and dry minimises challenge from scour pathogens.

* Prepare milk replacer carefully according to the instructions as incorrect temperature or concentration will cause nutritional scour.



Matt Hylands

Lambert, Leonard and May
Lancashire

* With some poorer quality first-cut silage

and having seen many "colicky cows", it is important to pay attention

to ration presentation.

To maximise intakes, a feed space width of 70cm a cow is advised and all efforts should be made to avoid any bullying. Dead-end passages should be avoided and feed passages should be wide enough to allow two cows to pass behind the feeding cows. Water trough space is vitally important with 10cm a cow recommended.

Feed space width becomes irrelevant if the diet isn't palatable.

Pay careful attention to keeping the silage fresh and the clamp face sharp to avoid unwanted spoilage. It may be worth feeding poorer quality first-cut silage to lower priority stock and keeping the best ration for the high yielders.



Rupert Kirkwood

Penbode Vets
Devon

* It has been a fantastic year down here in south-west

England, both in terms of weather and grass growth. When the weather's good, all animals are healthy and there is no work to do, farm vets sit around and worry about the future of their business. But there's something

wrong this year. We've barely had time for a single cup of tea. Instead we've seen an endless succession of sick cows – mostly after calving and mostly displaced abomasums (DA) – and it is very evident when we open them up that there is excess fat in the abdomen.

It would seem that the summer has been too kind to these cows and they are laying down too much fat, which is kicking off the DAs as well as other complications relating to fatty livers.

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www.xlvets.co.uk



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