

Vet Viewpoint

A regional round-up of key veterinary issues

Jono Cooper

Minster Vets
York



Although I'll have missed the very early lambers, this is a plea to any of you that have not yet introduced your tups

to the ewes. It is well worth your time and expense considering semen-testing your rams. Most farms will have sub-fertile rams whose lack of fertility is disguised by other fertile rams in the group. Unknowingly mixing too many of the sub-fertile rams together will result in a less concentrated start to lambing, or worse, empty ewes.

Testing is simple and inexpensive. While testing will not 100% guarantee fertility, it will go a long way to eliminating surprises.

Semen production takes about six to eight weeks, therefore it is

important to avoid using rams that have been sick or lame in the couple of months preceding tupping, even when at tupping they appear perfectly healthy. The lag time in sperm production means you are risking poor semen quality.

Charles Marwood

Clyde Vets
Lanarkshire



Lanarkshire farmers have finally had a well-deserved summer, with warm dry weather allowing excellent silage and even some good hay to be made. Livestock have thrived with the sun on their backs and are looking very much better after the long winter and cold spring.

Fluke in cattle and sheep has been troublesome in the past 12 months, but despite a much better



Fertility testing two months before tupping will identify sub-fertile rams.

summer we have already seen fluke early in the season. With huge pasture contamination last year, fluke infection has occurred at significant levels, with adult fluke found at post-mortem in August. Infection has been seen even in well-managed flocks. It is important not to leave dosing for fluke too late.

Lungworm has also been a problem, with all classes of livestock from spring-born beef calves to lactating dairy cows affected.

Fluke and lungworm infections can be controlled with appropriate health planning and treatment regimes, so contact your local vet to discuss the most suitable dosing for your farm.

» Read more on effective fluke and worm control with *Farmers Weekly's* new Winter Health Academy. You can refresh your knowledge and then take a test to earn CPD points at www.fwi.co.uk/winterhealthacademy

VET VIEWPOINT

A regional monthly round-up of key veterinary issues from members of the XL Vets group. For more information, go to www.xlvets.co.uk