

Newsletter

Jan
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TB tester update

We are pleased to announce that we are one of 12 vet practices in the whole of the UK carrying out a trial for the APHA of non-vet TB testers. This trial, which will run from now until next year will establish whether the TB testing role can be carried out by para professionals under the guidance of a vet. APHA are researching this before the next round of tenders for the TB testing work in Spring 2020.



The trial will start with a non-vet tester being trained to TB test by one of our vets. The new Approved TB Testers (ATT) will go through a rigorous APHA written training process alongside on farm practical testing under supervision. Once they have tested sufficient animals and passed online and on farm audits they will be permitted to test for the practice.

We interviewed for the post in December and Carmen Norris was successful in getting appointed to the new job. Her training period will start soon and she will start her supervised testing in February.

If the trial is a success then it is likely more ATT's will be trained in the future

Garston Proactive Farmers

We have now reached 19 proactive farmers within the practice including Dairy, Beef and Sheep farmers. The plans have proved to be very useful already and we have uncovered at least two problems on farms that would have gone undetected if it wasn't for the proactive testing included in the plans.

If you want to learn more about how Garston Proactive Farmers can help your farm contact the surgery.



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Lameness in Sheep

Lameness is a major health and welfare problem in sheep, and as we are into the time of year where lameness is at its most prevalent, this article will help understand the main causes and treatments available. Not only is lameness a problem itself, but it can cause other health problems including:

- Twin lamb disease
- Reduced fertility and milk production
- Delayed finishing time in lambs
- Increased costs, ~£90 per case (2016)

There are three main causes of lameness in sheep.

Footrot: This is responsible for 90% of all lameness in sheep in the UK. It is a contagious bacterial infection, often secondary to Scald and the high risk periods are Spring and Autumn.

Contagious Ovine Digital Dermatitis (CODD): Again bacterial but this time it is motile and the lesions start on the coronary band. Any replacement sheep should be quarantined for 6 weeks and footbaths can spread the disease.

Scald: Once again bacterial with inflammation between the toes and often a precursor to footrot above. Most common in the Spring.

Control

Adoption of the 5 point plan will help control all causes of lameness.

5 point plan

1. Cull persistent offenders. Typically a sheep that has had more than one case of lameness, or chronic lameness that's unresponsive to treatment
2. Avoid contact with infectious causes. Pasture management is important. Avoid wet boggy pasture. Move feed troughs and water troughs to avoid poaching. Lime gateways and high congestion areas.
3. Treatment with injectable antibiotics and topical spray. Formalin or copper sulphate based foot baths.
4. Quarantine incoming animals
5. Vaccinate with Footvax (Never treat Footvax vaccinated animals with moxidectin 1% injection, which can in rare cases cause death !)

With vigilance and early detection and control, the national <2% target for lameness can be achieved!

Greg's Useless Fact !

Coldplay lead singer Chris Martin's Great Great Grandfather William Willett is credited with introducing Daylight saving in 1916.

Jeremy Clarkson's Great Great Great Grandfather was John Kilner founder of the Kilner company that produced Kilner Jars.

