



Highgate Veterinary Clinic

Farmers Newsletter - February 2007

Lambing Time Special

Abortion – know what you're dealing with!



There's nothing more disheartening than dealing with an abortion storm. There's the extra work, seeing the effort you've put in over the previous months wasted and the money you're losing!

A lowland flock of 100 ewes loses in excess of £5000 over five years when infected with enzootic abortion (EAE). Diagnosis of EAE is very useful as antibiotic and even Mydiavac vaccination will reduce losses when used early in an abortion storm.

The success rate of diagnosing the cause of abortion in sheep is very high. 60% of samples submitted yield a positive result and if you submit three sets of samples from a flock, this increases to 90%.

Also, Lab fees are structured so that discounts are given on testing subsequent samples from the same abortion outbreak so submitting multiple samples are recommended.

But when should you consider investigating abortions? You can always expect the odd abortion but if the incidence rises to 2% of the flock, an infectious cause is likely. Several abortions over a matter of days should also trigger an investigation even if they do not represent the 2% trigger.

But which samples should you submit? Whole lambs and afterbirths from several abortions (in separate bags) taken directly to VLA Penrith is the ideal.

If you have a problem with abortion, please don't hesitate to give us a ring.

Are you tooled up and ready?



Vetlube is the lubricant we use every day. It is a high quality product which we recommend for lambing ewes.

Soap and other products on the market are cheaper but they're a poor substitute. We're sure you'll see the difference!

Vetlube 500ml	£ 2.20
2 Litre	£ 6.50
12 x 500ml	£24.00

Arm length gloves help protect the ewe and you from infections when you're lambing a ewe.

20 gloves	£ 1.50
100 gloves	£ 6.00 plus 500 ml Vetlube FOC

Antibiotic pessaries are handy to put into a lamb bed once you've pulled out dead smelly lambs. Occrycetin boluses contain terramycin and although not licenced for the job they work very well.

Cyclix aerosol is a new antibiotic spray which is a similar price to Alamycin aerosol but is of a high quality. They last longer and empty completely. In addition, when you use it, you'll find that less of the product runs off and so less is wasted. So next time you want an antibiotic spray, ask for Cyclix.

Rehydion

When a calf scours or appears dehydrated its second nature to reach for the lectaid. This tends not to be the case with lambs. They too become dehydrated if they scour or get rattle belly but its often not as easy to give fluids. Rehydion is a new product designed for calves but is handy for lambs as well. It's a liquid that comes in a handy bottle which holds enough for about 100 lamb doses. Rehydion can easily be added to milk or water and given to sick lambs.

Other products

Lambing nooses, feeding tubes, castrating rings, powdered milk and lamb teats are all available from the surgery.

Lambing Contract

We are repeating our lambing contract this year.

The contract consists of:

- ♦ Examination of all sick ewes and lambs one month before until one month after lambing.
- ♦ All lambings/ prolapses etc except caesareans.
- ♦ Costs £120



This Month: February



Routinely dosing each new born lamb with Spectam Scour Halt greatly helps to reduce the incidence of rattle belly.



Worming ewes around lambing time (at most 2 weeks before lambing) will reduce the need to worm lambs later.



Pay particular attention to fertility in dairy cows. In our experience, February is when it often goes terribly wrong!