



# Belle Vue Vets

Farm Newsletter January 2024



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**On behalf of everyone from Belle Vue Vets, we would like to wish you a Happy and Prosperous New Year.**

### Meeting on Calf Rearing Systems

*What we can learn from the poultry industry.*

Wednesday 10th January 2024

Lunch Time 12pm

Stocksman

Please phone the practice on 016973 42174 to register your interest.

### **Bluetongue (BTV)**

The total number of Bluetongue cases in the UK stands at 35 on 18 different premises (24th Dec 23), mostly picked up by active surveillance within the Norfolk and the Kent Temporary Control Zones (TCZ). These cases are likely due to infected midges being blown across the channel from Europe where BTV serotypes (BTV-3, BTV-4 and BTV-8) have been circulating. This makes the south east coasts of England the highest risk areas for BTV incursion. There is currently no evidence that BTV is circulating in the UK midge population.

However, Bluetongue could also be introduced by importing infected animals or germinal products (semen or embryos) from countries where Bluetongue is circulating. Please speak to one of the vets if you are thinking of importing animals from the continent.

*Signs to look out for include:*

Cattle—lethargy, crusting lesions around muzzle, reddening of skin above the hoof, reddening & erosions of the teats, fever, milk drop and abortion

Sheep—swelling of lips, tongue, head and above coronary band of hoof, discharge from nose and eyes, drooling, erosion and ulceration of nose and mouth, red skin where blood collects below surface of skin, fever, lameness, death.



**Julie Larkin is enjoying her well earned retirement after being a huge part of Belle Vue Vets for 25 years. We will all really miss her but wish her the best for the future.**



**Due to changes in prescription rules, an up-to-date herd or flock plan will now need to be in place before medications can be dispensed. Funding through the Animal Health and Welfare pathway is available to help towards the cost of these plans.**

**Please pre-order all medicines over the phone to ensure we can authorize these medications.**

**We are now able to process Direct Debits.**

**Please contact the Practice to set up this method of payment.**



### **FARM DISCOUNT SCHEME**

**Excellent discounts on selected drugs / vaccines when accounts are paid before the month's end.**

#### POLITE REMINDER:

**When writing a cheque please remember to address it to Belle Vue Vets Ltd.**

**Please pre-order all medications by calling 016973 42174, this will help speed up collection at the desk and get authorisation from one of our vets.**



## Immature Fluke Season

Since the middle of December we have been seeing more problems with acute fluke in sheep, including sudden death. Over the past few years we have seen a trend that acute fluke isn't affecting sheep until December. This is due to the weather patterns and rainfall through the summer.

Immature fluke can be difficult to diagnose because eggs are not produced by the fluke until sheep and cattle have been infected for 10-12 weeks, so faecal egg counts are unreliable.

The best tests we have for immature fluke is antibody bloods in lambs and a faecal coproantigen test.

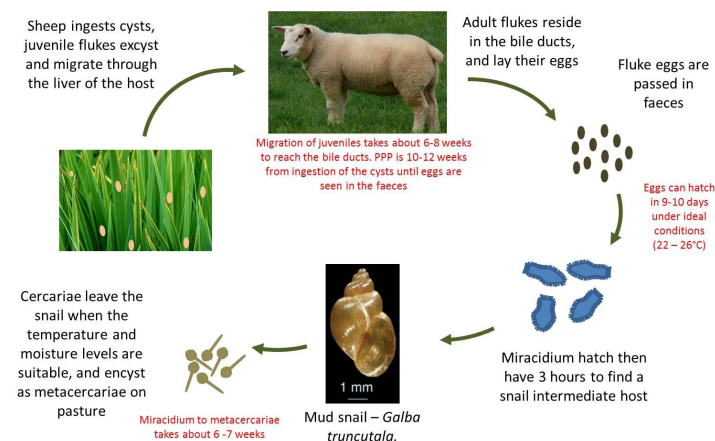
The faecal coproantigen test will diagnose fluke 6-9 weeks post infection, the antibody bloods will detect fluke 2-4 weeks post infection. The antibody bloods are only reliable in lambs as adult sheep may have antibodies from last years infection.

If you have had any animals die, it is definitely worth doing a post-mortem and looking at the liver for evidence of immature fluke tracks through the bile ducts of the liver.

If you have infection with immature fluke at the moment, you should be using a product containing triclabendazole. As the fluke's mature through January and February closantel is the preferred treatment.

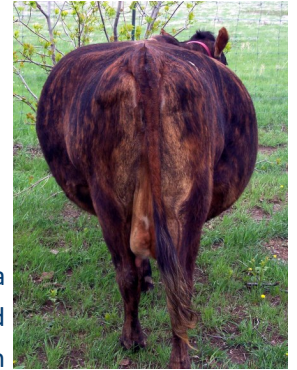
Please remember that worms can still be causing problems at this time of year as well, so it is still beneficial if you have lambs that aren't doing well to look for worms by submitting faeces for an egg count.

If you are worried about fluke or have had any sudden deaths in lambs or ewes, please give us a call to discuss diagnosis and treatment.



## Bloat in Cows

Ruminants produce a large amount of stomach gas and will normally eructate (burp) roughly every 90 seconds. Bloat is when the rumen becomes distended with gas.



It is important to decide if a "blown up" animal is truly bloated or if it has a distended abdomen

for some other reason. They require prompt intervention as the gas build-up can rapidly put pressure on the lungs leading to collapse and death. It can also cause inhalation of stomach contents which results in a severe pneumonia.

**Pre-weaned animals** should not have a functional rumen. In these animals bloat is usually caused by milk having got into the rumen and started to rot. They usually need aggressive fluid therapy to stand a chance of recovery.

**Post-weaned youngstock** often suffer damage to the nerve controlling the rumen and burping reflex as it passes through the chest by a pneumonia bug. Abomasal ulcers can cause issues if the feed is too "hot". Severe liver fluke can also damage the nerve supply if they are at grazing. Obstruction or "choke" is another potential cause.

**Adults ruminants** can sometimes bloat for no apparent reason, it may be historic lung or fluke damage or again, stomach ulcers from a hot diet. Penetrating foreign bodies in the rumen such as a wire can also cause it. They can suffer from "frothy bloat" at grazing where foamy bubbles form in natural soaps contained in some plants, particularly clover. Frothy bloats can be treated with a drench that causes the bubbles to burst.

**Bloat is an emergency.** A gassy bloat can be temporarily relieved by passing a stomach tube but we would recommend a vet checks them over to ensure it is an actual bloat, decide if it is a frothy or gassy one and to see if a cause can be determined. Severe bloats can be relieved by placing a "red devil" cannula in the animals side to let the gas out.