FarmVets SOUTHWEST

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Good fly control starts early

Anthelmintic resistant worms – Animals should be yarded for 24-48 hours upon arrival. Worm eggs already within the faeces will not be exposed to worming treatments, so yarding will prevent these eggs from contaminating pasture. Animals should be treated sequentially with two anthelmintic products and one of them should be a group 4 (Zolvix™) or group 5 (Startect™). Animals should be turned out on 'dirty' pasture away from the rest of the flock for a minimum of 3 weeks.

Liver fluke – There is a risk the fluke introduced may be resistant to triclabendazole, sheep should be kept away from snail habitats (wet ground/water courses) for 7 weeks and treated with closantel or nitroxynil.

Sheep scab – Animals should be treated with a ML injection (e.g. doramectin or moxidectin) or dipped in organophosphate upon arrival to treat for sheep scab. Some tups may have been treated prior to sale and are sold with a certificate confirming this. It is important that moxidectin 1% is not used if the foot-rot vaccine has been used.

Lameness – Animals should have their feet inspected on arrival and any lame sheep should be treated appropriately. Seek advice from your veterinary surgeon on the most appropriate treatment for each particular disease.

Monitor animals for any signs of disease in the quarantine and treat appropriately. Seek advice from your veterinary surgeon where appropriate. Ensure that if any vaccinations are used in the flock, you consider how incoming animals will fit into your vaccination programme, to ensure they are fully protected.

Summer mastitis

Summer mastitis is the perfect example of a disease transmitted by flies. The spread of *Strep. dysgalactae* and *A. pyogenes* to the teat of a cow can result in a swollen and very painful infection that will result in permanent damage if it's not treated rapidly.

Injectable antibiotics will be needed to combat the infection, but affected individuals should also receive an anti-inflammatory, such as Metacam®, to help combat the swelling and relieve as much discomfort as possible. Whilst we need to keep prompt treatment in mind, the incidence of summer mastitis will be significantly reduced with a good fly control protocol.

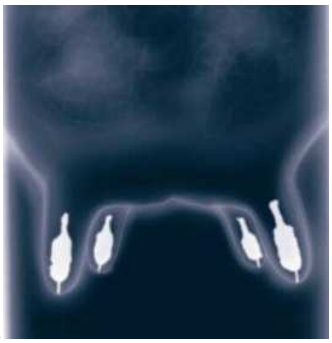
Teat Sealants - why to use them, how to use them and their role in selective dry cow therapy

All cows should receive teat sealant at dry off - up to 50% of cows do not form a functional keratin plug, and of those that do, the teat canal will remain 50% open for the first 10 days of the dry period.

High yielding cows are less likely to form a plug. The function of this plug is to act as a physical barrier to bacteria which would otherwise travel up to the teat canal and infect the udder.

Teat sealants act as the keratin plug should by blocking the teat canal. There is a lot of evidence available proving that using teat sealants will reduce the incidence of new infection during the dry period both in cows treated with antibiotics (combination dry cow therapy) and those who are not (targeted dry cow therapy).

Administration



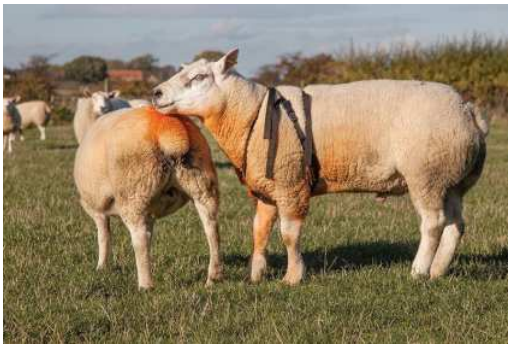
Teats should be thoroughly sterilised in a clean environment and the teat sealants administered in a sterile fashion using clean gloves. Hygiene technique is of utmost importance to reduce the risk of toxic mastitis and potential fatalities.

Where cows are receiving combination therapy, the teat sealant is to be administered after the antibiotic.

For more information speak to one of the FVSW vets for one of our free drying off guides.

Is your ram due an MOT? - the 5 T checklist

Rams are all to often overlooked when planning your flock for the breeding season.



Fit, fertile rams are an integral part to achieving your target scan percentages. Identifying and correcting problems will need to be done well in advance of tupping season, especially if you're expecting each ram to serve 60+ ewes.

In a similar approach to a bull breeding soundness examination or BSE, a ram BSE will consist of basic physical checks and semen evaluation. **The 5 T checklist can be a useful way of ensuring all important aspects are considered;**

1. Tone - Aim for a body condition score of 3.5 to 4.
2. Teeth - Ensure your rams teeth are in good enough condition for the season.
3. Toes - All four feet will need to be inspected, sore feet will affect his willingness to work
4. Treat - Ensure your ram/rams are up to date with all their vaccinations and there is no sign of disease.
5. Testicles - Testes need to be palpated for any changes (such as asymmetry) that may suggest a change in his fertility.

Full semen evaluation will require semen collection using an electro-ejaculator. Specimens will be examined on farm for density and progressive motility, smears of these samples will also be stained to evaluate any morphological defects. The optimum time to examine semen is 6-8 weeks before the ram is needed

For more information, or to book your ram BSE visit, contact your nearest FVSW office.