

**Newsletter June 2017.** We hope you enjoyed the fine weather of recent weeks. The extended hours of sunshine will have helped many farmers with the production of good quality silage, a welcome sight during the winter months. As summer only officially starts on June 1<sup>st</sup>, hopefully it will not be too long before the sun cream lotion reappears!

### **Fly Strike in Sheep**

Affects approx. 80% of the national flock each year, and is caused by the larval stages of the blowfly. The severity of cases varies depending on several factors including weather. Most cases are observed within the Blowfly season, which can range from May to September.

Female flies, that lay eggs which develop into larval stages (maggots), are attracted by foul smelling odours. Soiled fleeces, infected wounds and urine scalding are especially appealing. Even small lesions can cause disrupted grazing and rapid weight loss. Failure to treat promptly can lead to secondary infections or even death.

Taking preventative measures such as ensuring parasite management plans are up to date and provide blowfly protection. Whilst shearing any contaminated fleeces and maintaining regular health checks of ewes, will help reduce the risk of fly strike, as well as ensuring any potential cases are identified as early as possible.

### **Coccidiosis in Lambs**

Later born lambs, particular twins grazing contaminated pastures, may be affected by coccidiosis around 4-8 weeks of age. Adverse weather conditions, poor colostrum supply, overcrowding, wet muddy fields previously grazed by sheep, and/or extended housing periods all predispose.

Avoid heavily contaminated pastures, particularly those grazed by last years lamb crops. Batch rear lambs of similar ages and consider creep feed especially during periods of changeable weather.

Disease prevention can also include strategically dosing lambs on contaminated pastures, via drenching products or medicated feedstuff. Contact us today for more information.

#### **VETERINARY CORNER**

- When storing vaccines, refrigerators must remain between **2-8°**
- Once opened, live vaccines may only survive up to **8hours**.  
Always read product data sheets carefully.
- If you require large amounts of vaccinations (i.e. over 50 doses) **please contact us** at least 3 working days prior.

### **Parasitic Gastroenteritis (PGE) in Cattle**

When pastures are contaminated with gutworm eggs, the eggs hatch and are ingested. Larvae mature in the stomach causing damage, typically affecting autumn/winter-born weaned calves during the first season at grass. Cattle receiving strategic treatments in the early part of the grazing season, must remain on the same pasture throughout the entire season, or be moved onto safe pastures when these become available.

Even with low levels of worm challenge, infections can reduce growth rate by around 30% in beef calves and replacement heifers. Therefore executing parasite control will not only improve herd health, but will also promote efficiency, helping to ensure production targets are met.

**Remember** wormers should always be administered following the COWS 5 '**R**' Principals:

- Right Product
- Right Animal
- Right time
- Right dose
- Given the **Right way**

### **Summer Mastitis**

This condition usually occurs during the warmer summer months, affecting non-lactating animals (i.e. heifers or dry cows). Animals affected can have udders/ quarters that become swollen or hard. They might appear dull with a high temperature. In some cases they may appear lame/ stiff/ unwilling to move swiftly due to painful inflammation.

Caused by environmental bacteria, commonly introduced and transmitted by flies, there are several preventative measures that can be implemented.

- Maintaining good teat condition. Including regular health checks and good nutrition.
- Effective Dry Cow Therapy.
- Reducing exposure to flies.
  - Avoiding areas where flies are commonly found, i.e. near stagnant water/ damp ground.
  - Application of fly repellents.

As with so many ailments, early diagnosis greatly increases the chances for overall success of any course of treatment. If you suspect a case of summer mastitis contact us today.