



FarmVets

S O U T H W E S T



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Newsletter December 2016

Unpleasant surprises: dealing with abortion in beef cattle

Discovering aborted animals within your herd is always going to be frustrating. With calf production being essential for most beef operations, **could you be doing more to prevent unnecessary losses?**

Abortion is the production of a calf between 50 and 270 days gestation. These calves must either be born dead, or die within 24 hours to be termed an abortion. Every herd will have the odd abortion during the year but if your annual incidence is over 3% or several abortions occur in close succession further investigation should be carried out.



Not all late term abortions will be due to an infectious cause but this is certainly something we need to consider when investigating a problem. Clinical examination will often yield non-specific findings so further laboratory diagnostic testing will be required. **Blood samples can be submitted for a relatively wide range of infectious agents**, this can be discussed in more detail with a member of the FVSW team.

Should an infectious cause be discovered **there are vaccines available for several of the most common causes** such as BVD (Bovilis BVD), IBR (Rispoval IBR) and leptospirosis (Leptavoid H). It is often worth considering the use of these vaccines before a problem is discovered to prevent the significant losses that can result.

Orf: Scabivax Forte



If you have had Orf in the past and are considering using **Scabivax Forte** to protect your flock this coming lambing season don't forget you must **vaccinate your ewes at least 7 weeks before lambing**. Don't leave it too late!



CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR OFFICE OPENING HOURS



Our offices are open as normal over the Christmas period except for the following:



Christmas Eve & Christmas Day: Closed
Boxing Day & Bank Holiday 27th December: Closed
New Year's Day: Closed

Don't forget to order and collect medicines in good time

All at FarmVets SouthWest wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous 2017

The vital last third: nutrition of the pregnant ewe

Get nutrition of the pregnant ewes wrong and twin lamb disease, low lamb birthweights, swayback, white muscle disease, poor colostrum production, poor milk production and mastitis could all result!

Dividing ewes up by body condition and number of lambs scanned allows more targeted feeding. **More is not always better!** Feeding **too much concentrate** can cause **acidosis**. If more energy is required it is better to provide better quality forage than more cake.



Don't skimp on the protein! **Insufficient dietary protein** results in **reduced milk and colostrum production** and increased ewe susceptibility to parasites. A minimum of 18% CP cake should be chosen, but more may be required. **It doesn't matter how good the diet is if the ewes can't reach it!** Ensure that there is sufficient feed space for the ewes (e.g. 40 cm per ewe for discontinuous feeding, 60 cm per ewe for triplets).

Don't forget trace element deficiencies, especially if ewes are at grass or being fed only home produced feed. As well as boluses and drenches, injections to correct copper and selenium deficiency (Veticop and Vitesel, respectively) are available. Provide us with your **silage/hay analysis** 6 weeks pre-lambing and we can perform a **ration check**, to see whether your proposed diet is in the right ball-park. To get a true answer as to whether the diet is correct blood sampling ewes for a **metabolic profile 3-4 weeks before lambing** will identify energy, protein and trace elements deficiencies, allowing corrections to be performed in time.

Tired of injecting for pneumonia - we can fix this!

FVSW can help you reduce the costs of pneumonia on your farm.

Pneumonia is one of the biggest costs to youngstock rearing in UK cattle farming. Relying on repeated antibiotic injections is not a cost effective way of managing this disease. If you find you are repeatedly injecting calves then something else needs to be done - call us.



As we approach housing season, measures to **prevent** pneumonia are much more important. We can create **pneumonia treatment protocols**, tailored specifically to your farm – these provide an easy, go-to guide for individual and group pneumonia treatment based on best medicine and experience. These standard operating protocols (SOPs) can be utilised by farm staff as well as yourself, as they are designed to be easy to follow.

We also provide **pneumonia investigations** to assess **ventilation (smoke bombing), stocking, and calf health management**. Our tailored reports will provide you with **vaccination protocols, buildings advice, and management suggestions**. Implementing these changes will see your cases of pneumonia drop, and so too the number of times you have to inject with antibiotic!

Goodbye from Pete

I am sorry to say that I will be leaving FVSW this January to work for Langford Veterinary Services. My new job includes working with Bristol vet students which is an exciting opportunity for me which I felt I couldn't pass up. Thank you all for welcoming me onto your farms over the last 4 years! I hope to say goodbye in person to as many of you as possible, but if not, best wishes to you all for the future.

