



## Newsletter April 2020

### Coronavirus update

These are difficult times we are working through. Thank you to all our clients who have accommodated changes to our service over the last few weeks. Our team has been affected by self-isolation, but we are pulling together to overcome any challenges. With your co-operation we will strive to keep providing as much of a “normal service” as possible. We are aware a lot of our clients are older or have underlying health conditions and so the following new measures will protect us, you and all our families. Please note the following changes:

- The Bridgwater office will be closed on Saturdays only until further notice
- Please order all medicines in advance. There will be no access to the building for anyone other than essential staff. All meds can be picked up from outside our buildings.
- Our own deliveries from our suppliers has been affected. Please give us more time than usual for big or unusual orders (e.g. vaccines).
- On farm we must work a minimum of 2m away from any other person. This is possible with willing and if care is taken on both sides.
- Red tractor has postponed all inspections so we will not be doing any formal health planning until inspections recommence.

These measures will help us keep a team on the ground ready to provide our clients with emergency visits and work vital for the food chain. Do take of yourselves care during these times. The farming community is robust, but we are not immune to this disease.



## Abortion investigations– Eliot Hedley

An abortion can be defined as the loss of a foetus from approximately 60 – 270 days gestation.

When should we investigate? ... some abortions can be put down to factors such as stress, concurrent illness or other things, such as having twins. It is widely suggested to investigate abortions when the number exceeds 5% of your herd, or there are multiple abortions in close succession. **ALL BEEF HERDS THAT AREN'T SCREENED FOR BRUCELLOSIS NEED TO NOTIFY APHA.**

Depending on the situation there are different strategies we can take...

Cattle:

1: We take a basic blood test to screen for common agents such as IBR, BVD and Neospora. Neospora is passed down through bloodlines and detecting it can prevent future abortions in your herd, it is inexpensive and the presence of Neospora gives us an immediate diagnosis and strategy for the animal – eventual culling and removal of progeny from breeding stock.

2: Send the foetus and placenta off for investigation – we can come and take these samples ourselves or alternatively the placenta and foetus can be sent off to Langford post-mortem service. It is important to take samples/investigate within 24 hours. Here we can check for other abortive agents such as listeria, salmonella and campylobacter.

Sheep:

Again, the option to send off a foetus and placenta is there and would be considered the “gold standard”, the only difference is the blood screen.

Due to the nature of Enzootic abortion we would want to blood test 3 weeks post abortion in order to give the ewe time to develop antibodies. We would typically blood test for Enzootic and Toxoplasma abortion as they can easily be vaccinated for, come and speak to us for more information about vaccinating for these.



### Your local farm veterinary service

#### North Petherton

Unit 8 Sedgemoor Auction Centre  
Market Way North Petherton  
Somerset, TA6 6DF  
t: 01278 663399

#### Yarcombe

Stopgate Cross  
Yarcombe, Honiton  
Devon, EX14 9NB  
t: 01404 861214

#### Ilminster

5 Larchfield Industrial Estate  
Dowlish Ford, Ilminster  
Somerset, TA19 0PF  
t:01460 55004