

SOUTH MOOR FARM

Newsletter



By the time you read this, you'll already have a few doors open on the advent calendar. It's actually snowing as I write this! We'd like to take the opportunity to wish all our farm clients a very

Merry Christmas

and a

Happy New Year

from the whole South Moor Vets farm team!

FOLLOW US!

Let us know if there is anything you'd like to see!



southmoorfarmvets

Our **DARTINGTON**
Branch IS NOW OPEN!

01803 900181

SHEEP SCAB

We've had a few calls recently which have made us worry about sheep scab, so keep your eyes peeled and give us a call if you have any concerns in your flock. Scab is highly contagious and can spread rapidly within a flock, causing severe discomfort and economic losses.

What causes sheep scab?

The psoroptes ovis mite. It's usually spread by direct contact but can live up to 17 days in the environment, so equipment/fencing/kit/clothing can also be a route of infestation.

What are the signs?

Itchiness, which can slowly get worse and worse until sheep rub and bite off large parts of their fleece, lose condition and can even fit and die. It can take a while to get bad, which means the problem may be widespread by the time it's spotted. Other conditions which can cause itching include lice, bacterial and fly-bite dermatitis, ked and forage mite infestations, rain scald, lumpy wool and scrapie. It's therefore important to get the condition diagnosed properly so the right problem is treated.



How do we diagnose it?

We can take skin scrapes (and, sometimes, blood samples) to confirm scab. (Or, hopefully, to rule it out and diagnose a different issue so it can be treated!)

Treatment

Either certain injectable avermectins (not all – check the datasheet!), or some sheeppip products. Nothing else!

How do I avoid getting it?

Biosecurity! Avoid contact with other sheep across fences etc. And avoid buying scab in; assume that bought-in sheep (and sheep returning to the farm) have been at risk of scab. Quarantine and treat with an effective injectable ivermectin or moxidectin product 2 weeks before mixing with your flock.



CATTLE ABORTIONS

Cattle abortions can be caused by a variety of factors such as infectious diseases, nutritional deficiencies or environmental stress.

Some farms see the odd abortion case every year while others unfortunately can be hit hard by abortion storms. Often the single cases are ignored but there can sometimes be a trend in these cases so it's worth having a chat about them. The most common cause of abortions in cattle in the UK is Neospora. However, BVD and Salmonella are also major contributors.

Diagnosis

It can be challenging to find out the cause of an abortion. The best way of reaching a diagnosis is to have the carcass and the placenta collected quickly (less than 6 hours) and sent off to a veterinary investigation centre. Samples can also be taken from the cow, which can be very useful, eg for Neospora. If you've had more than one abortion in a row, phone DEFRA: they may authorise a brucellosis visit, which means they will pay for your vet to come out to take samples.

Prevention

The best way of limiting abortions is to have good biosecurity (closed herd, good boundaries, good hygiene, minimal visitors)- the majority of the most common causes are infectious it's important to limit contact with "at risk"

animals of unknown disease status and contaminated materials.

Vaccination is a great way to protect your animals. This works by helping to boost the antibody levels in the cows so that when they come in contact with an infected animal they have added protection to help deal with it.

If you have any questions on abortions in cattle please give us a call and we can discuss what we can do to help.

Don't forget you need to renew your Action Johnes declaration each year, and for a lot of people that falls about this time of year. As before, you need 3 things: a written Johnes plan, the results of Johnes testing from within the last 12 months, and an accredited vet's signature on your declaration certificate. We have lots of BAIJA-accredited vets and can help you out with all of the above.

BLUETONGUE UPDATE

Bluetongue virus has been confirmed on a few more premises since our article about it in last month's SMV Farm Newsletter. Hopefully the cold weather will halt its spread but we all need to keep on the lookout for it. For a reminder of the signs, and how to report the disease, go to <https://www.gov.uk/bluetongue>

You've probably heard that because of recent changes in the rules for both **Veterinary Attestation** and **Under Care** regulations, farms will need a vet to have seen their stock at least every 12 months.

We're here to help! If you need a visit for Vet Attestation (to send stock to slaughter) or to be able to have medications prescribed, give us a call!

THANKS!



Thanks to all the team at Pulsford's farm for helping to host our recent full-day practical training course on cattle lameness and foottrimming. We had a great day; thanks to everyone who came along.

SMALLHOLDERS CLUB

Keep your eyes peeled for our new Small Holder's Club – more details to follow!

