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## First On Farm Meeting for Towcester Farm Vets

Towcester Farm Vets were very excited to hold their first on farm meeting in September this year. Hosted by kind permission of George Mayo at Handley Barn, the topic for discussion was 'Lameness in Sheep'.

The afternoon was supported by MSD Animal Health and we started with a presentation by Kat, a vet from MSD, on the importance of lesion recognition with appropriate treatment, the Five Point Plan for lameness reduction on farm and the importance of putting down your foot trimmers! Studies show trimming sheep with

footrot delays healing when compared to injecting with antibiotics alone. Kat, Gareth, Nikki and Katie then proceeded to lead small group discussions on Footvax, biosecurity and quarantine protocols, lesion recognition in a group of lame ewes and the use of the Five Point Planner to assess lameness control on farm.

The afternoon was rounded off nicely with tea and cake. Thanks to everyone who attended and contributed to a great afternoon of discussion. We look forward to hosting more on farm meetings in the future. If you would like to discuss lameness control on your farm then please contact the surgery.



## A Wonderful Day at Blakesley Show

Thank you very much to all those that came to see us at Blakesley Show. We hope you enjoyed the day as much as we did, even if our tent did get blown away! Congratulations to Tom Butcher for winning the quiz, 'Match the Fact to the Vet'; we had great fun looking at your answers and were surprised at

how well you all know our alcoholic tipples (donations always welcome!) The correct answer to the tie break question: 'What is the combined age of the vets?' was 166 years.

We're not going to tell you how old we all are but the answers ranged from 100 (thank you very much) up to 182 years! Tom has won a voucher for the Saracen's Head which we hope he enjoys. For anyone still pondering who was born in New Jersey, USA, the results can be found on our Facebook page.

Congratulations also go to Erin Burbage for the closest guess for the number of items in the jar. The exact number was 234, mostly made up of elastrator rings. Erin won a hamper of goodies with a farm animal theme which she was very excited about!



### WINTER MEETING DATES

Dates have been confirmed for our  
2017 winter meetings!

**November 21<sup>st</sup>** (Please note  
amended date) - Take Control of  
Bovine TB

**December 12<sup>th</sup>** - Dealing with Scour  
in Calves

**January 23<sup>rd</sup>** - Diseases of Growing  
Lambs (Coccidiosis and Orf)

**May 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Control of Parasites in  
Camelids



# Antimicrobial Resistance Data

The use of antimicrobials or antibiotics in farming has been gaining increasing media attention in the last few years. This attention has been mainly focused on three classes of antimicrobials, used in farm animal production, that are critical to human medicine where there is increasing evidence to show resistance is developing.

Macrolides (Draxxin, Zactran), 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> generation cephalosporins (Naxcel, Cevaxel-RTU) and fluoroquinolones (Marbox) are considered critical and are therefore only indicated in specific circumstances. Towcester Farm Vets are keen to promote the responsible use of these drugs, so although you will still be able to request them, we may ask a few additional questions to ensure they are being used in the right circumstances, on the right cases and for the right reasons.

We are also looking on a farm-by-farm basis at the number of drugs sold in the last 24 months, with particular attention being paid to drug use in these classes. This handout will be available at your whole herd TB test or annual Flock Health Check when we can chat about it and discuss antibiotic use on a case by case basis. We hope you will work with us to discuss your usage in these classes, and if you wish for your data earlier than your annual visit or have any questions, speak to EIs in the office.

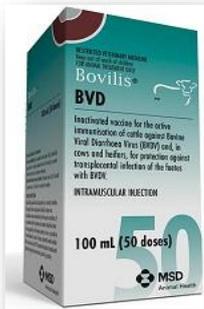


## Planning Ahead to get a Smooth Lambing Period

Metabolic profiles have long been used to help adjust the nutrient content of sheep rations to ensure each group of ewes enters lambing in the best possible shape. Bloods should be collected 2-3 weeks pre lambing; earlier than this and we may miss developing energy problems and later than this gives us no time to correct any issues. If you scan your ewes, we recommend taking blood from five ewes in the single, twin and triplet groups. However metabolic profiles are still of use if you do not scan. In addition to blood sampling we need some readily available information about diet, body condition score, weights, etc. The tests measure energy, protein, minerals and trace elements – assisting in preventing twin lamb disease, poor colostrum (don't even get me started on how important good quality colostrum is...), staggers (low magnesium), hypo-calcaemia and swayback. It would certainly take quite a bit of the worry out of lambing time if we could pre-empt all these problems! As ever please get in touch if you are interested or have a chat next time you see one of us out and about.

We are also always very keen to look at and discuss scanning results, even if it's just to celebrate great news! Poor results can indicate possible Toxoplasma abortion, poor ewe condition, dodgy rams, nutritional concerns or parasite burdens. Investigating concerns at this point means we can get a grip on some of these issues before lambing starts. Drop your figures into reception or send them by email, text, Whatsapp or carrier pigeon – however you wish, but let's start the conversation!

## Changes in BVD Vaccine Availability



Due to a large rise in the cost of production, the BVD vaccine, Bovidec is being taken off the market. As we have lots of herds who use this product we are urging everyone to

get in touch well before their vaccination is due to discuss the options available to protect their herd.

There are currently two other BVD vaccines available:

- Bovela is a one dose annual vaccination costing around £6 a dose.
- Bovilis BVD requires two injections 4 – 6 weeks apart as a primary course, a six month booster and then annual revaccination. The cost is around £3 a dose.

Both companies offer subsidised support for check tests in herds using their vaccine. To discuss vaccination in your herd please get in touch with the farm team.



## Making the Most of your Annual TB Visit

One of the silver linings of the TB testing cloud is that your annual test provides you with the perfect opportunity to get other jobs done. If the whole herd are coming through the crush anyway why not consider...

- Whole herd or targeted Johne's blood sampling (all over 2yo or selected skinny/cull cattle)
- BVD check test (9-18 months of age, homebred)
- IBR and/or Leptospirosis screens (9-18 months old)
- Fluke screening (blood or faecal tests)
- Herd accreditation annual screening
- PD's, dehorning, castrations, eartag replacement, a chat and hopefully a bit of informal herd health planning as we go.

If you are interested in taking up this opportunity at your next test please let reception know so we can book a bit more time and come prepared with all the right kit.

