



Open Day

We will be holding an open day on Wed 21st June from 12pm until 6.30pm. We will have some interesting displays, to include Neil Barrett a licensed foot trimmer, we'll be introducing our Calf Tracker programme, there will be prizes to be won and some free food and drinks. Everyone is welcome, so please call in on your way back from market.

Ram Vasectomies

A vasectomised (teaser) ram can be used to bring your ewes into season before your tups go out. Not only does this enhance fertility it can also be a great way of tightening your lambing period. The ewe flock is isolated for at least one month from sight, smell and hearing of rams or wethers, after which a vasectomised ram is put with the flock for a period of 12 days. The ram is then removed and replaced by normal rams. Provided the ewes were on the point of cycling, this results in a close compacted lambing, usually in two peak periods some six to eight days apart. Once a ram is vasectomised he should not be used for at least 8 weeks as he may still be fertile, so if you want a ram to be vasectomised for use this year, we should be operating on him in the very near future. Vasectomies can be performed on farm or at the practice and cost £77.25 + VAT for the first one and £65.92 for additional ones.

Flystrike

Increasingly unpredictable weather conditions mean that farmers are still being caught out by blowfly strike, with up to 80% of farms affected and up to half a million sheep struck annually in the UK. The predictable summer fly season is a thing of the past and in recent years we've seen fly strike from March to November! Now preventative action must be strategic according to the risk and weather conditions, rather than depending on specific timings e.g. post shearing.

The life cycle of the female green bottle fly (*Lucilia sericata*) begins when they hatch from their pupae in the soil, usually in mid-April. One adult female will deposit batches of approximately 200 eggs in the fleece, up to 3000 eggs in her 28day life! Fleeces contaminated with faeces and urine, or which are damp and humid make the perfect conditions for egg laying. These eggs quickly hatch into maggots which produce enzymes which digest the host tissue, leading to skin damage and the painful wounds associated with blowfly strike. The maggots produce powerful odours which attract other egg-laying females and this quickly increases the numbers of eggs/larvae present.

If left untreated, the wounds will increase in size, become infected and ooze. The sheep will become shocked and die. If preventative treatment is delayed until animals become struck farmers will suffer losses from death or reduced productivity and there is a significant welfare impact.

Risk Factors for Fly Strike: the presence of organic matter can reduce the efficacy of preventative products leaving the animals at high risk. Open wounds - even if treated, animals with open wounds are still susceptible to strike and need to be monitored closely.

Humidity is a key risk factor for strike and thick fleeces can create the perfect, humid conditions and prolonged periods of hot weather can lead to an explosion in the fly population

Prevention:

- Annual shearing and regular dagging of soiled fleeces. Shearing results in a 95% reduction in the incidence of strike.
- Docking- where appropriate, and when done in conjunction with the law. Docked lambs are 5 times less likely to suffer from fly strike.
- Check animals frequently.
- Use preventative products to reduce the risk.
- Remove any carcasses promptly.
- Reduce scouring (gastrointestinal parasite control, good nutrition).
- Any wounds should be monitored closely until resolved.
- Reduce the incidence of footrot.

Which Preventative Product is right for my flock? For lambs the withdrawal period and duration of action is very important as they may be going for sale in weeks. For adult sheep consider which other parasites are covered to decide which is most appropriate for you.

	Blowfly Prevention	Blowfly Treatment	Ticks	Lice	Keds	Sheep Scab	Headflies
Cypermethrin	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓
Alphacypermethrin	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	X	✓
Dicyclanil	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x
Diazinon (dip)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Deltamethrin	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x

POM-VPS Products We have an increasing range of these products available in the office, all at very competitive prices. Of particular relevance this month there is Ectofly (an alternative to Crovect) for flystrike; Spotinor – a pour- on fly repellent and Endospec -a white drench, perfect for treating lambs for Nematodirus. We also have a pour- on ivermectin, called Enovex. If you are interested in any of these products please contact the office for a price or speak to one of the vets for advice on their use.



Assure Ewe Competition Ceva are running the Assure Ewe programme to test flocks of over 50 ewes for Enzootic Abortion. They will cover the lab fees for blood testing 6 ewes within 3 months of lambing and enter you into a competition to win and Shearwell EID stick reader. If you are interested contact us, or text "Assure", your post code and "Farm First" to 07716 566763, or email assure-group@ceva.com.

Smartshot B12 - long Acting Vit B12 Injection for Lambs Cobalt deficiency in sheep is a common cause of ill- thrift and poor growth rates in certain areas of our practice. If you want to know whether your lambs are failing to thrive due to a lack of cobalt, a simple blood test can be performed. Injections of vitamin B12 have been used as one method of treating the problem, but up until now these injections have just given a short boost in levels, as they have been short-acting products. We are now able to source a long-acting injection called Smartshot B12 Prime Lamb, which will maintain levels for 3-4 months. If you are interested in this product please contact us at the office.

Calf Tracker Meeting We will be holding a meeting at Raglan Park Golf Club on Tuesday 27th June at Midday. We will be introducing our Calf Tracker Programme. A hot lunch is provided and the meeting is sponsored by Zoetis.

Invoice Changes Our dairy clients will notice a change on their invoices this month. Any LA vet time has been split into fertility time, clinical time or advisory time, all charged at the same rate. This has been done in response to requests from some of the milk buyers, who want to be able to analyse the vet time spent on farm.

LEAKED TOP SECRET DOCUMENT.!

Why the Brynglas Tunnels have been closed and why the speed limit has been reduced:

The Highways Agency found over 200 dead crows on the M4 motorway recently, and there was concern that they may have died from Avian Flu. A Pathologist examined the remains of all the crows, and, to everyone's relief, confirmed the problem was NOT Avian Flu. The cause of death appeared to be from vehicular impacts. However, during analysis it was noted that varying colours of paints appeared on the ...bird's beaks and claws. By analysing these paint residues it was found that 98% of the crows had been killed by impact with lorries, while only 2% were killed by cars.

The Agency then hired an Ornithological Behaviourist to determine if there was a cause for the disproportionate percentages of truck kills versus car kills. The Ornithological Behaviourist quickly concluded that when crows eat road kill, they always have a look-out crow to warn of danger. They discovered that while all the lookout crows could shout "Cah", not a single one could shout "Lorry"