



Coombefield Veterinary Hospital Farm Newsletter March 2016

Bluetongue- the latest update

It is nearly 10 years since, in the summer of 2006, bluetongue virus appeared in northern Europe, resulting in more than 2000 cases of bluetongue in that year alone. Its arrival was unexpected, and no one knows where it came from. Bluetongue did not take off in the UK to anything like the extent that it did elsewhere in Europe, which was possibly attributed to the success of a vaccination programme. Nevertheless, it proved costly and disruptive. France reported an outbreak of bluetongue in September last year - the first known cases in the EU since 2011. There have now been more than 170 outbreaks in the country.

APHA is urging farmers to be vigilant for signs of bluetongue, after a new report found there is a risk of outbreaks this spring or summer. Outbreaks are most likely in late summer, as a result of infected midges being blown from France across to the south east of England. The risk of infected midges being blown across the channel is unpredictable and dependant on weather conditions but we should still be awake to the possibility of the disease returning to our shores.

Bluetongue is a viral disease affecting sheep, cattle, deer, goats and camelids. Although sheep are most severely affected, cattle are the main mammalian reservoir of the virus and are very important in the spread of the disease.

Key Signs

Cattle

- Nasal Discharge
- Swelling of the head and neck
- Conjunctivitis (runny eyes)
- Swelling in and ulceration of the mouth
- Saliva drooling out of mouth

Sheep

- High rectal Temperature
- Eye and Nasal Discharges
- Drooling as a result of ulcers in the mouth
- Swelling of mouth, head and neck
- Lameness with swelling of the coronary band



Diagnosis and treatment

Diagnosis is based upon clinical signs, virus isolation and antibody levels to the virus. Other diseases with similar presentations include infectious bovine rhinotracheitis IBR and malignant catarrhal fever. Treatment is limited to antibiotic therapy to control secondary bacterial infections.

There is a bluetongue vaccine, but it is not available at present.

BVD Vaccination

Given the significance of BVD to the industry and the need to be efficient in these tough financial times vaccinating young stock at the correct time is crucial. With the range of products on the market and their various benefits it can be difficult to choose the product right for you. Below are the vaccines available at Coombefield.

Product	Age can be used from	Primary Course Doses Required	Booster
Bovillis BVD	8 months	2 doses 4 weeks apart	Yearly
Bovela	3 months	1 dose	Yearly
Bovidec	4 months	2 doses 3 weeks apart	Yearly

Primary vaccination should be completed at least four weeks before they are served.

Downer Cow

When treating down cows pre and post calving, the more information we have available the better. Knowing whether the cow needs calcium, magnesium or phosphorus is vital in achieving speedy recovery. To help with the diagnosis Coombefield are now selling blood testing kit (£2.00 + VAT) that will allow you to take a blood sample pre treatment.

The blood sample can be delivered by you to our Axminster Hospital to be analysed. We will report the results as quickly as possible, allowing the best treatment to be administered.

Please speak to one of the farm vets for more information.

On the 1st February we started to use a new computer system. This means your invoices and statements will look different. On collection of any medication you will be given a log book with batch numbers on, please keep this safe as batch numbers no longer show on your monthly invoice. If you have any questions regarding your monthly invoice, please don't hesitate to contact us.



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FARM DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

If you would like to speak to a Farm vet or arrange a visit, please call 01297 630515
Medicines can be requested via email or by telephone

Email: farm@axvets.co.uk