

NEWSLETTER

The latest from the South Moor Farm team



SUMMER SUCCESS WITH YOUNGSTOCK

The first summer grazing for spring born youngstock is an important time for maximising growth rates to reach key performance targets from weaning to sale or slaughter. Calves and lambs that fail to grow well over this period often result in extended finishing periods meaning you miss out on peak prices, animals are more susceptible to disease pressures the longer they remain on farm, and more resources are required to finish these animals. While good nutrition during this period is key to youngstock growth and performance but there is only so much we can do to control pasture quality and availability over the summer grazing season seeing as we are yet to be able to control the weather!

Other areas of focus during this period include:

- Regular monitoring of weights to identify problems early. Target growth rates post weaning on pasture systems aim for average daily liveweight gains of >1.0kg/day for calves, and 350g/ day for lambs.
- Appropriate use of wormers with the help of regular FECs
- Trace element (copper, selenium and cobalt) monitoring and supplementation
- Minimise stress – particularly heat stress by providing shaded areas and plenty of water over summer
- Additional feed supplementation if required

By monitoring these areas, we can understand if current management is effective, make changes and perform timely interventions. Speak to your vet about maximising your youngstock systems now!

BLUE TONGUE UPDATE

There have been several new cases of Blue tongue in the South West last month. The cases this year have all been BTV-3, which is the serotype covered by the vaccine we have available.

The country is now considered to be in a very high risk period for disease transmission with continued warm weather and the rate of infection is expected to increase as the summer continues.

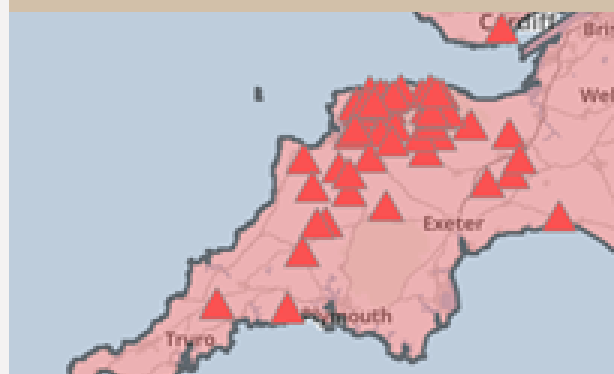
The government (and ourselves) are continuing to advise vaccination against the disease, as other control measures are limited. If your stock are not yet protected, but you would like more information, please do give us a call. It takes three weeks for full protection following completion of the vaccination schedule (a single injection for sheep, two injections three weeks apart for cattle, goats and camelids).

Please remain vigilant and contact us on **01803 900181** or APHA on **033000 200 301** should you be suspicious of a case in your animals.



SCAN ME

You can check the latest updates by **scanning the QR code** which will lead you to the government website which they keep up to date with new statistics and any new risks.



THE UPTICK PROJECT

The Uptick project is a novel, multi partner Defra funded project looking at the impact and prevalence of Tick Borne Disease in a new 'One Health' approach. This project is a collaboration between The Dartmoor Hill Farm Project, APHA, UKHSA, UKCEH and the Moredun Institute and is evaluating the impact of tick disease on animal and human populations as well as the impact of environmental change on tick populations and disease prevalence.

This project follows on from previous Dartmoor Hill Farm Project work that focused on Holne and Harford and Ugborough Commons which highlighted the impact of Tick Borne Disease on upland flocks.

So far the project has collected over 500 human blood samples from 4 drop in sessions across the moor, collected blood samples from over 500 cattle and sheep as well as from deer, and more recently from 25 working dogs. These samples are in the process of being tested for a variety of Tick Borne Diseases in order to improve understanding of disease prevalence in the various populations.

Over 5000 ticks have been collected and are being tested for a variety of human and animal diseases and tick numbers have been surveyed on different habitat types to help improve understanding of how habitat type and management impacts of tick levels.

The project has also provided £450,000 to the Moredun Institute to fund the start of the development process of a new Louping Ill Vaccine. This is currently in progress and production is currently being scaled up to produce commercial volumes.

This project could not have been run without the support of the farmers and commoners who provided their flocks, herds and dogs as well as those who participated in providing their own blood at the workshops.

The results are expected to be available in September, when an event will be held presenting the results of the project.



THE DANGER OF TICK BORN DISEASES

In our last newsletter we mentioned the growing risk of Redwater (babesiosis) for the upcoming summer season, and unfortunately as predicted, we have been seeing cases left, right and centre. Whilst Dartmoor-type territory is renowned for tickborne diseases, we are now seeing cases pop up across the South Hams, in areas previously naïve to redwater. The milder winters have played in the ticks' favour and allowed populations to survive throughout the year, peaking even harder in the summer.

Other tick-borne diseases increasing in prevalence include Tick-borne Fever (*Anaplasma phagocytophilum*) and Louping Ill. Most of the recent post mortems that I have sent to the Starcross Veterinary Investigation Centre have come back with *Anaplasma* involvement, which causes severe immune-suppression and allows for an opportunistic pathogen to then cause fatal disease.

The question we are now trying to answer is 'how do we prevent these tick-borne diseases?' Do we try to shield our stock from the ticks? Insecticides have their place, but we cannot solely rely on these chemicals. When we do health plans with farmers in areas with known tick issues, we try to work around the tick populations, building up the stocks' immunity and being very careful with bought-in stock. Our aim is to start with the healthiest possible stock, because disease free animals, receiving good nutrition, will have a better chance withstanding a tick burden and the associated diseases.

SHOW SUCCESS!

We had a great time at our first shows of the year; Totnes & Yealmpton. They had great turnouts and it was lovely to see lots of familiar faces that popped by our stand to say hello. A massive well done to all those that showed their animals too.

Our next show in the diary is Kingsbridge Show on Saturday 5th September. That also looks to be a fab day so we hope to see you there!



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