

# NEWSLETTER

**The latest from the South Moor Farm team**

## HOW DID YOUR LAMBING GO THIS YEAR?



Lamb losses are a huge cost; about £25 per lamb and probably even more with the price of lambs this year.

**Everyone gets some losses but do you know what yours are so far?**

It's well worth working it out. Knowing where your losses occur helps work out why they happened (Ram failure? Abortion? Poor colostrum? Lamb diseases?), allowing you to prevent the same issues next year.

Put some numbers in the following table and see how you compare to industry targets. (And if you don't have those numbers available, that's something to record next year.)

| Key Performance Indicator            | Definition                                                                 | Your result? | Industry target | Poor result might mean...                                    |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Barren ewes                          | Number of empty ewes divided by total number served                        |              | <2%             | Ram failure?<br>Nutrition?<br>Abortion?                      |
| Scanning percentage                  | (Number of lambs scanned divided by number of ewes served) x100            |              | >190%           | Ram failure?<br>Nutrition?<br>Abortion?                      |
| Lamb losses from scanning to birth   | (Lambs born minus lambs scanned, divided by number of ewes served) x100    |              | <5%             | Abortion?<br>Nutrition?                                      |
| Lamb losses from birth to turn-out   | (Lambs turned out minus lambs born, divided by number of ewes served) x100 |              | <5%             | Ewe body condition? Poor mothering? Poor colostrum? Hygiene? |
| Lamb losses from turn-out to weaning | (Lambs weaned minus lambs turned out, divided by ewes served) x100         |              | <3%             | Lamb diseases?<br>Predators?<br>Parasites?                   |

## DEVON COUNTY SHOW



On Wednesday 20th May, the day before Devon County Show officially opened, one of our farm vets Sylvaine joined the veterinary inspection team at the showground.

Her role was to carry out quick health checks of the animals. The inspections focused on identifying signs of infectious conditions such as Orf, Ringworm and Warts, as well as checking for any signs of lameness or other welfare concerns. These measures are essential in preventing the spread of diseases, including those that can be transmitted from animals to humans.

Sylvaine and the rest of the team from all over Devon ensured all animals entering the showground were healthy, happy and fit enough to take part in the event.

We would also like to congratulate everyone who showed their livestock or took part in the show in any way. Events like these play a vital role in supporting the farming community and celebrating rural life. It is incredibly important that we continue to support and preserve traditional country shows, both large events like this and the many smaller local shows that are at the heart of our communities.

## CLOSTRIDIAL DISEASES: RAPID, FATAL BUT PREVENTABLE



Few livestock diseases kill as quickly – or as preventatively – as clostridial disease. Clostridial diseases remain a significant cause of sudden death in our sheep and cattle farming operations. Responsible for a group of diseases including pulpy kidney, black leg, black disease, malignant oedema and tetanus, this family of bacteria are commonly found in the soil and often survive for years in the environment. In the right conditions these bacteria can rapidly multiply and produce toxins that can kill a healthy cow or sheep within hours. Issues often develop following changes in grazing (turnout), high energy feeds (lush grass),

crops (soil ingestion), tissue damage including wounds and bruises and following husbandry procedures, with youngstock and fast growing animals being particularly at risk. The widespread and durable nature of these bacteria mean preventing exposure on farm is impossible, and with most clostridial diseases progressing in hours rather than days, prevention is key and vaccination is the cornerstone to treatment. Protect your sheep and cattle with effective and affordable Clostridial vaccines – saving just one animal is likely to pay for vaccinating them all! For the best protection it is essential to give a complete primary course of two injections 4–6 weeks apart and then annual boosters. It is also important to remember that while vaccinating pregnant animals will provide immunity to their offspring through colostrum, this passive immunity wears off around 8–12 weeks of age and this is often when we see deaths despite these animals being considered “protected”. Consider ongoing protection for your youngstock, and protect this age group by starting their primary course early. Feel free to discuss the best vaccination protocol for your farming system with us.

## BULK MILK TESTING

**Bulk milk testing is an efficient and cost effective way of disease monitoring in dairy herds.**

Rather than sampling individual cows ... from one bulk milk sample we can test all the cows that are contributing to the tank that day saving time and money.

### What can we test for ?

Several infectious diseases can be tested for including, leptospirosis, BVD, IBR, Salmonella, Mycoplasma as well as lots of others . We can also test for parasites such as Fluke and Ostertagia ( stomach worms ).

Monitoring these levels throughout the year can give us an early warning if something is creeping up so we.



can plan how to control it. For parasites it's useful to tell us when the best time to treat is or if we even need to at all.

We advise that everyone does yearly bulk milk testing so you know what diseases your disease status is. For those that have flying herds or buy in odd groups of cattle – we can use bulk milk testing as a screen to check these groups before introducing them into the herd.

If you have any questions about bulk milk testing give us a call and our vets can discuss the options available and what would be most suitable for your farm.

## REMINDER - MEDS REQUESTS

Just a reminder from all the team here – please try to order any medications in advance before coming in. This will avoid having to wait for them to be signed off by a vet. As you know, everything we dispense must be approved by a vet, and there may not always be one available immediately. Ordering ahead helps us ensure your medication is ready for collection when you come in.

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**South Moor  
Farm Vets**

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