



# CHESHIRE FARM VETS

Tel: 01270 310010

## Newsletter

January/February 2024

### Upcoming Meetings

- Lambing Course – 7th Feb - Marthall
- Calf Meeting with Zoetis – May (date TBC)
- Sheep Flock club meeting – with Ceva on Regulin - May (date TBC)

Please call the office to book your place on either of these courses. If you are interested in joining our Flock club and want to know more about it please call and speak to one of the team.

### Free blood tests for barren ewes - FlockCheck

With sheep scanning in progress it's a great time to make the most of MSD's free blood tests for barren ewes available from 1st February to 30th June for use in flocks of 100 or more breeding ewes. Blood samples will be collected from 6-8 barren ewes and samples analysed for toxoplasma gondii and chlamydia abortus antibodies.

Please be aware that FlockCheck is not suitable for use in ewes that have already been vaccinated against toxoplasmosis or enzootic abortion.

Please contact our office on 01270 310010 to organise the blood test with one of our vets or vet techs.

### Calf Meeting Summary

Thank you to all those who attended our calf meeting on Tuesday 9th January, it was lovely to see you all and great to see some new faces too.

There were lots of useful takeaways from Jenny Marmion's presentation about signs of poor health in the first three weeks of a calf's life, in which we took a closer look at the methods used to minimise the risk of disease by improving calf housing, nutrition and hygiene.

Thank you also to Alexandra Ashworth and Emilie Beck for attending and representing MSD Animal Health. Alexandra gave an useful insight into how good neonatal care - namely a combination of good quality colostrum and the use of vaccines such as bovis intranasal – can protect against scour caused by PI3 and RSV.

Keep an eye for upcoming meetings, we hope to see you at our next meet.



### Johne's Research

Recent research looking into TB skin tests and Johne's antibody results have revealed some interesting findings.

A study of 800,000 cows published in October 2022 has shown that conducting a Johne's antibody test soon after a TB skin test (SICCT) can impact the Johne's result.

This result differs depending on whether the cow is infected with Johne's. For example, where a cow is infected with Johne's there is an immediate increase in the Johne's antibody result, indicating increased skin sensitivity. In a non-infected cow, the increase is significantly smaller and there is delayed peaking at 15-28 days after SICCT, indicating reduced test specificity.

While we now know that SICCT has an impact on Johne's milk antibody results, further research is needed to determine how we should best use this information in the management of Johne's disease.

In light of these findings there may be circumstances where it is beneficial to schedule your Johne's test shortly after SICCT, but the following must be considered:

- To get the best advantage out of the increased test sensitivity, you should conduct your Johne's test within 14 days of SICCT. If you test between 15–28 days after your SICCT, you may see an increase in false positives
- The impact in herds with <5% Johne's prevalence is unclear. If you have a low-prevalence herd, take care when interpreting results
- We do not fully understand what a positive Johne's result post-SICCT means compared with a standard positive. A positive result post-SICCT should be a prompt to manage the animal appropriately, not to cull her

The group's recommendation to leave a minimum interval of 42 days (milk) and 90 days (blood) between a SICCT and Johne's test remains and should be followed, unless directed otherwise by a BAJVA.



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## Vet Tech and ATT Services

We are pleased to announce that we have welcomed a second Vet Tech to our team this month.

Maia is currently training to be a TB tester and will be supporting Sarah-Jane as an ATT and Vet Tech moving forwards. With an extra pair of hands available we want to remind everyone of the services our Vet Techs offer to help you out heading into the busy spring period.

### Our services include:

- Youngstock management - growth checks, vaccination and colostral immunity
- Whole herd or individual animal vaccination
- Mobility and body condition scoring
- Assistance with milk and faecal sampling
- Disbudding
- Fly and parasite control
- TB testing

Please call our office on 01270 310010 if you have any questions about our services and to book your appointment.

Maia



Sarah-Jane



## Lungworm prevention

MSD have sent a reminder to protect against lungworm before turn out.

Lungworm can have a highly detrimental impact on a herd's productivity and can affect animals of all ages.

Vaccination prior to turn out is key in lungworm control (used in conjunction with grazing management and selective anthelmintic use) and is the most predictable method of building herd immunity against lungworm. Contact our office to order your Bovilis Huskvak vaccine now; the only vaccine that helps to prevent lungworm.

## Schmallenberg Virus

Unfortunately a high volume of Schmallenberg affected lambs have recently been reported. Schmallenberg is a viral disease affecting cattle, sheep and goats.

In adult cattle the disease has been associated with symptoms including milk drop, fever, loss of appetite, diarrhoea and late abortion or birth defects in calves, lambs and kids.

The APHA are offering testing free of charge so if you do have any affected cases please contact us and speak to a vet as samples would be appreciated for research purposes. The only charge will be to cover the postage to the lab. We can also take bloods from affected ewes for serology. APHA are keen for cases to be submitted in order to build a clearer picture of what is going on and improve our knowledge of the disease, although frustratingly there is nothing we can do in the face of the outbreak at present. There is also no vaccine being marketed currently that we can use in the UK for next year.

We know that this must be frustrating and upsetting for those affected and makes a busy time of year even more taxing. Please remember our vets are always happy to have a chat to anyone who has been affected by this. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

