

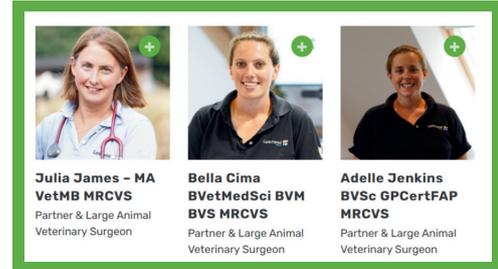
Vet's Viewpoint - Adelle



It has been a real joy to feel some sun on our backs as we go about our work over the last couple of weeks, it feels like spring has finally sprung and with it an increase in emergency calls to calvings, lambings and kiddings. We have a strong ethos of proactive and preventative medicine within the practice and herd/flock health management can be extremely valuable and rewarding. However, it is still hard to beat the feeling of satisfaction after assisting a difficult birth and seeing the dam and newborn mothering up afterwards. As a farm animal vet spring can be our most exciting and satisfying time of year.

Something else that brings me huge satisfaction personally is our independence as a practice. Our practice is owned by vets that work within it, rather than a large corporation. As a result we feel that we are able to make decisions that best meet the needs of our clients, based on the relationships we have built with you, over decades, in many

cases. Something that does come up in conversation is XLVets, so what is XLVets? Who are they and how are we involved? XLVets are a group of independently owned and run veterinary practices from all over the UK. XLVets are not a corporation but a group of independent practices working collaboratively to share ideas, knowledge and support in order to deliver a great service on farm. At Larkmead we are engaged and proactive members of XLVets and derive huge value from that, at the same time, we are always free to make our own decisions based on what is best for our clients. If you have any further questions or wish to discuss this further one of our partners would be more than happy to chew the fat.



BTV Update

APHA have just announced that as of 26/3/25 animals can now be moved out of the restriction zone without pre-movement testing if the animal is:

- Older than 60 days
- Not pregnant
- Not a male intended for breeding

The following animals are considered higher risk and will still require pre-movement testing:

- Entire males intended for breeding
- Pregnant females
- Youngstock born in the 60 days prior to the movement (as an alternative to testing youngstock, where youngstock are travelling at foot the licensee may test the maternal dam).

If you have any licences in progress that have already been applied for, you will need to wait for the results before moving the animals. This will be reviewed by 23rd April.

As always, please give us a call if you have any questions!

- There is a new product on the market for the prevention of watery mouth disease in lambs. Called ArkGuard, it contains high levels of antibodies against the causative bacteria. We have used a similar product (Locatim) in the past to good effect, but this new product is considerably cheaper. Speak to us if you have had problems with watery mouth disease in the past, or have issues this year.
- Losing lambs and don't know why? Bring them to us, or call us out for lamb post-mortems. These can be very informative, and at £11.09 per lamb, they are great value too.
- Do you have river meadow grazing? Have you checked your ewes for liver fluke this year? There has been a high-profile severe outbreak of liver fluke locally, so if you have wet grazing ground it is worth checking to see if your flock requires treatment. Bring 6-10 faecal samples to us and we can send them off for a pooled test to detect liver fluke. We can then advise on the best way to treat them, as there have been problems in the past with resistant liver fluke, so treating blind is unwise.
- Do you have lambs older than 6 weeks old? Are they on grazing that had young lambs on it last spring? They may be at risk of nematodiosis. This worm lies dormant in its eggs until the weather warms up and then hatches out. It can cause severe disease in young lambs. Lambs in the at risk age range (6-12 weeks old) on at risk pastures should be wormed with a benzimidazole wormer (white/group 1 drench). Younger lambs are not at risk as they aren't doing much grazing yet. Keep an eye on the risk map: bit.ly/scops-forecasts
- With the weather warming up, the period of low midge activity is drawing to an end, which means we are likely to see the return of Bluetongue-3 this summer. Vaccination of sheep prior to the period of greatest risk is the best way (currently) of reducing potential losses due to BTV-3 infection. There is information here: bit.ly/sheep-vet-BTV3 and a good way of assessing your BTV-3 risk here: bit.ly/BTV-risk

Sheep and Goats



Cattle - Bluetongue Update

With the weather warming up, the period of low midge activity will be drawing to a close shortly. Since the start of March there has been an increase in the number of PCR positives found as part of pre-movement testing, these positives have been found in counties within our catchment area, in particular, Hampshire. There have also been positives found in cows following abortions and newborn calves with neurological problems, this suggest that calves have been born infected, so the disease has survived in this country over the winter. Anecdotally, suckler farms in the eastern counties have begun to see the fertility effects of the virus; higher than average barren rates in the autumn, increases in abortions/premature calves mid winter and now an increase in calves born with neurological problems. The evidence is building that BTV will make a return this spring/summer. Cont . . .



The industry led Battle Bluetongue initiative is promoting vaccination, as it is currently our only method of control. More information is available online: bit.ly/battle-BTV. Cattle require 2 doses of the vaccine 3 weeks apart and can be vaccinated from 1 month of age. If you would like to discuss vaccination with a vet please give us a call and we can talk you through a decision making tool to weigh up the risks and benefits.

An up to date disease picture can be found at bit.ly/BTV-announce and on the live BTV map at bit.ly/bluetongue-map



Dairy Fluid Therapy in calves: it's a minefield!

We are seeing a lot of cases of scouring calves at the moment. Advice and products that are available change frequently and it can be difficult to know what to do for the best.

Calf scour can be caused by pathogens such as bacteria, viruses and protozoa but it can also be caused by dietary upsets and disturbances. Whilst it is important to reach a diagnosis for management and prevention, the treatment of calf scour doesn't change enormously whatever the underlying cause.

The absolute mainstay for calf scour treatment is rehydration. Calves with diarrhoea can lose litres of fluid every day when it is not absorbed or actively excreted by the gut. A 50kg calf with a cold nose and reduced skin elasticity

is typically about 5% dehydrated, meaning that it is in a fluid deficit of 2.5L. By the time a calf has sunken eyes, this is often closer to 5L. So how should we treat these calves? The first thing I always emphasise is that we need to add in more feeds for more fluids. The maximum feed size for a 50kg calf is 3L; they are going to need an extra feed to come anywhere close to correcting a dehydration. We shouldn't stop milk feeds twice daily- despite common feeling that this worsens the scour, these calves need energy and removing the milk has been shown to worsen their prognosis. So what can you add in for their extra feed in the middle of the day to boost your chances of a resolution? Plain water is better than nothing but adding glucose and sodium will improve absorption. Not all rehydration sachets are created equal and the best have adequate concentrations of glucose and sodium to actively increase water intake. Chat to your vet before stocking up on products to make sure you are getting good value for money. We stock a few products that we really believe work and improve your chances of rehydrating your calves.

Pigs



With the recent confirmation of Foot and Mouth disease on three farms in Slovakia near the Hungarian border, this is now the third European country to become infected. This, along with the continued spread of ASF on the continent is a stark reminder to remain vigilant and continue to implement strict biosecurity. This includes avoiding unnecessary visitors, providing PPE, cleaning and disinfecting vehicles and avoid them coming near pigs and disposing of leftovers securely to prevent pig or wildlife access. The viruses causing FMD and ASF can survive for long periods in meat/meat products. Signs of foot and mouth disease in pigs include:

- sudden lameness, which may spread quickly among the herd
- loud squealing from pain. Increased recumbency
- reluctance to feed
- blisters may be seen on the snout, tongue and coronary band

If you ever have concerns, please phone us/report to APHA 03000 200 301

DIY AI

23rd - 25th April
1000 - 1400, OX13

Our DEFRA approved, hands-on three-day course covers all aspects of artificial insemination and is ideal to equip your team to deliver AI on-farm.

Full details of what will be covered can be found on our website: bit.ly/Lark-events

Certificate of attendance provided (£550 + VAT per person). Limited spaces available. Please sign-up with the office:

farm@larkmead.co.uk.

Upcoming Workshops

Mastering Medicines

30th April

1000 - 1300, Larkmead Vets, Cholsey

Farm Assurance Guidelines recommend that at least one member of each farm team has undertaken training (within the last 5 years) and holds a certificate in administering medicines.

Full details of what will be covered can be found on our website: bit.ly/Lark-events

Certificate of attendance provided (£75 per person). Available to all dairy, beef and sheep farmers. Please sign-up with the office: farm@larkmead.co.uk.

Medicine Updates

- Betamox RTU 100ml- very limited stock
- Closamectin Pour On 500ml - OoS
- Gletvax 10d- OOS, 20d available
- Heptavac 50ml- No date (Let us know if you are waiting for this)
- Heptavac 100ml- Very limited stock
- Heptavac 250ml- OOS no date
- Heptavac 500ml- Limited stock
- Ovivac P Plus (100ml/500ml) – OOS no date
- Spotinor 250ml- Not due back this season
- Suvaxyn MH One – Limited stock available
- Synulox 100ml Inj- OOS until end of 2025
- Spirovac 25d/ Leptavoid - On allocation until May/June

Please note that all bit.ly links are case sensitive

