

## Vet's Viewpoint - Julia



Celebrating the safe arrival of new life still remains one of the best things about my job and probably the reason I became a vet in the first place. Whether it's seeing a sow suckling rows of little piglets, assisting a calving or watching a gangly cria trying to stand for the first time soon after birth, these moments certainly make our job satisfying. At the practice, we have joyful news of new birth where no calving jacks or ropes were needed, (thank goodness!) Slightly earlier than anticipated and only just having unpacked her van to go on maternity leave the day before, Bella gave birth to a beautiful baby girl called Rosie. Both are doing really well and we wish Bella, Jon and baby Rosie all the very best as they start family life together.



## Sheep and Goats



- It is time to start regular monitoring of worm burden. Monthly pooled worm egg counts are a great way to do this. Please hand us 10 fresh faecal samples from each group of lambs (15 if the group is >150 lambs), and request a FWEC pooled by group. You might be surprised at who needs treating and who does not!
  - This is the time to start thinking about vaccinating against the common causes of abortion, as once in a lifetime vaccination is possible. As the vaccines are live, it is important to time the arrival of the vaccine with when you want to vaccinate your female replacements. Let the office know how many doses of Toxovax and Cevac Chlamydia you will want and when!
- 10 weeks prior to tugging is the time to perform a "ram MOT" - there is a great guide on how to do this here: [bit.ly/RamMOT](https://bit.ly/RamMOT) and a video here: [bit.ly/RamMOT-YouTube](https://bit.ly/RamMOT-YouTube). If you have rams that will be used as single sires, or you found a problem, please ask us for a full veterinary pre-breeding examination.
  - With the dry weather and grass getting short, closely monitor your ewe condition, and wean early if they are getting thin.
  - Have you run out of grass? Speak to us about rationing your lambs!

## Cattle - Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs

NSAIDs are non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (e.g. Metacam). They target the biochemical reactions that go on within an animal when inflammation, pyrexia (high temperature) or toxic shock occur thus reducing pain, swelling and fever. NSAIDs have a potential use in any condition or disease where inflammation is present, for example, injury, lameness, difficult calvings, or infections such as pneumonia, scour. NSAIDs are also beneficial in cases where toxemia is present or suspected, e.g. toxic mastitis, toxic metritis.

We have recently had a final year vet student performing a research project on anonymised medicines purchase data from our client database. 54 of our beef (only) farms were studied between 2022-2024 and various trends were noted.

- NSAID purchased increased when antibiotic purchases increased
- The number of NSAID treatment courses purchased did not match the number of antibiotic courses purchased. The number of NSAID courses purchased was 73% of the total antibiotic courses purchased as a group.
- Some farms (8/54) purchased more NSAID courses than antibiotic courses



Whilst there were some limitations to the project this does highlight an interesting talking point. Are some farms underutilising NSAIDs? In theory NSAID courses should at least match antibiotic courses as a degree of pain or inflammation is likely with the vast majority of infections that require antibiotics.

NSAIDs are not only valuable from a health and welfare perspective but they are also thought to have production benefits: Studies show that cattle treated with NSAIDs at the onset of illness (e.g. calf scour) often have higher weight gains (0.1-0.15kg/day) and better feed conversion.

Beef cattle treated with NSAIDs for pneumonia can show fewer chronic lung changes in recovery, which could be extrapolated to fewer days to finishing/reaching store weight etc.

The use of pre-emptive Metacam prior to disbudding can preserve DLWG in calves when compared with no NSAID use. If you would like to know more about how NSAIDs can be used to improve animal health, welfare and production (as well as profitability!) get in touch with Adelle. There is also a role for NSAID use in the absence of antibiotics/infection - speak to Adelle to learn more.

## Dairy - BTV Update

The whole of England is now in the Bluetongue Restricted Zone as I am sure you have heard - meaning you can now move animals within England WITHOUT a licence or pre-movement testing.

Moving animals to Scotland or Wales does still require a licence, pre-movement testing, a full vaccination record (with the last dose 21 days prior to movement) and not be showing any clinical signs.

You still need a specific licence (and testing of the donor animal) to freeze germinal products. However, germinal products can be moved without a licence or testing.

Give us a call if you need any advice.



## Pigs - heat stress

Pigs are particularly vulnerable to heat stress and with the next heat wave forecast it is important to try and prevent issues on your unit where possible for both welfare and performance reasons. In the breeding herd this can lead to reduced fertility, increased risk of still births, lower milk production / MMA. Heat stress will also lead to reduced feed intakes and a reduction in growth.

Pigs are more susceptible than other species due to their inability to sweat, they will pant but this is a relatively inefficient way of cooling down. Pigs also have a relatively thick layer of subcutaneous fat that acts to conserve heat. The fact that pigs grow very quickly and efficiently also means they produce a lot of metabolic heat.

Pigs showing signs of heat stress will be panting / open-mouth breathing, lying still and may have reddened blotchy skin. In severe cases this can progress to heat stroke which can lead to death.

Preventative measures depend on your type of production system. Outdoors, maintaining good, wet, muddy wallows is essential at this time of year plus providing shades if possible. Pigs should always have good access to water and flow rates should be checked daily. Indoors it is important to make sure the ventilation system is functioning well. Misters can be used or hosepipes to wet the fronts of yards if necessary. Overcrowding should be avoided to allow the pigs to lie without touching where possible.

Please give us a call to discuss any concerns.

## Medicine Updates

- Alamylin LA 300 - limited stock
- Betamox RTU - limited stock
- Closamectin (all sizes) - OOS
- Dectomax 200ml - expected December
- Gletvax 10d/50ml - OOS, 20d/100ml available
- Heptavac 50/100/250 - awaiting stock
- Heptavac 500ml - limited stock
- Lambivac 50ml - OOS (100ml available)
- Noromectin Equine Paste - OOS
- Penstrep - OOS (consider Pentomycin)
- Opticlox - OOS (consider Orbenin)
- Ovipast 100ml-500ml - OOS
- Ovivac (100ml/500ml) - OOS expected September
- Solantel Cattle Pour On - expected September
- Spotinor 250ml - Not due back this season
- Synulox LC - OOS (consider Intramar LC)
- Vitamin B1 - OOS (consider Dodicile)
- Zactran 100ml - 50ml available

## Upcoming Workshops

### Foot Trimming Workshop - First Aid for Feet

With BCVA Accredited Foot Health Trainer Adelle Jenkins and CHCSB Approved Instructor Paul Clayton. Join us for this one-day workshop:

- Practical introduction to the 5-step method
- Identifying and treatment protocols for commonly seen lesions
- Tool selection and routine maintenance
- Administration of effective pain relief
- Understand when to refer to a vet or foot trimmer

This workshop incorporates BCVA & CHCSB criteria, delivered by our qualified vet and experienced foot trimmers together

**Thursday 31st July, 0900 - 1700, Larkmead Vets, Cholsey**  
£280 +VAT per person (limited spaces), lunch included.  
To reserve your space, please contact the office.



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