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# LARKMEAD NEWS

# Larkmead FARM VETS



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November 2025

## Vet's Viewpoint - Tom



Hi everyone! My name is Tom, and I am the newest member of the Larkmead team. I joined in September after graduating from the University of Nottingham and have really enjoyed meeting so many of you so far.

I have a particular interest in small ruminants, having grown up helping on my grandparent's sheep farm. However, I have loved the variety of animals and farms we see here at Larkmead and am very excited to get stuck in and start working closely with you all.

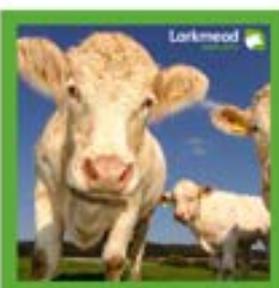
Outside of work you might find me playing rugby, rowing or just out and about exploring the countryside. I look forward to getting out on farm and meeting you all very soon.

## Sheep and Goats

- With the wetter weather and lower levels of light, and after people have bought in sheep, now is the beginning of the sheep scab season! However, lice also become more common over the winter. Don't treat blindly, it wastes time, money and harms the environment. Ask us to investigate itchy sheep.
- This is also the season for lameness, as scald, footrot and CODD spread better in the wetter conditions. A lameness prevalence of 2% is achievable, good for sheep welfare and good for your productivity, profit and peace of mind. Ask us about a tailored lameness control plan for your flock.
- Lamb deaths! Are you losing lambs? Find out why! We often see a spike in lamb losses with the changing weather and changing diet (move onto cover crops) in the autumn. However, it is important not to make assumptions about the cause. Don't waste a dead sheep- ask us to post-mortem it!
- GOATS: unfortunately Lambivac, which was our preferred clostridial vaccine for goats, is no longer being manufactured. Please discuss with a vet which vaccine you will now need to use in your goat herd.



## Beef Cattle



Although many cattle are still out grazing, November is a good time to prepare your herd for winter. As the colder months approach, a focus on herd health, housing, and nutrition will help to maintain productivity. Housing should provide dry and clean bedding along with good ventilation and it is important to check regularly for hazards that may cause accident or injury and ensure adequate space is provided to reduce stress. In terms of nutrition, high-quality forage is key for beef animals, this will help to ensure pregnant cows maintain body condition over the winter and also forms the basis for efficient finishing of animals destined for slaughter. The importance of provision of clean water should never be underestimated and goes a long way to drive appetite and intakes. Now is a good time to consider winter ration planning to balance energy and protein requirements alongside vitamins and trace elements. Our vets can help with this once you have forage analysis results so do get in touch to discuss with us further. Additionally post housing treatment for internal parasites (fluke and worms) may be required we can offer cost effective testing, so that treatment can be directed at animals that need them. Fluke treatments can require careful timing so do have a chat to your vet about what may work best for your herd

## Annual Christmas Quiz!

Our annual Christmas Quiz will be on **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> of December at The George Hotel in Wallingford from 7pm**. All welcome - bring your team or join a Larkmead one! Supper provided. RSVP: [farm@larkmead.co.uk](mailto:farm@larkmead.co.uk)





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## News from the Team

Vet Julian will be hanging up his stethoscope at the end of this year and embarking on retirement. Many of you will have known and worked with him for decades, in fact we were reliably informed Julian has worked alongside 4 generations on some farms. I'm sure you will all join us in congratulating Julian on a long and wonderful career, dedicating his working life to serving the veterinary needs of Berkshire and surrounding counties. With that in mind we would like to invite any clients who would like to join us in wishing Julian well to his retirement party on Friday 21st November at Chieveley Village Hall, 6.30pm - 9.00pm. Please RSVP for catering purposes: [farm@larkmead.co.uk](mailto:farm@larkmead.co.uk).



## Dairy Cattle



I recently went to a talk by Kate Ogden who is researching the effect TB tests have on the quarterly Johnes antibody milk results. There has been some suggestion in the past that the TB tests make the Johnes test more sensitive (i.e. more likely to pick up cows that should be treated as JS cows) but Kate's research shows that both infected cows & non-infected with Johnes both show a spike in Johnes antibody after a TB test. This means that for very high prevalence herds it could be used carefully at about 21d after a TB test, but for most farms where Johnes is controlled well the advice is to wait

42-60days after a skin TB test before milk tests for Johnes are taken. When farms are testing every 60 days this can be a challenge - and timing needs to be thought about. Herds are also using Average Test Value results for Johnes monitoring and these results shouldn't be affected by the TB test if the samples are taken 42-60days after the TB test.

## Pigs- Coccidiosis in Piglets: A Persistent Challenge in Pre-Weaning Health

Coccidiosis is a protozoal disease that damages the lining of the small intestine of piglets causing scour, usually around 10-15 days of age. Although mortality is generally very low, it will have an impact on growth rate with affected pigs being weaned around 0.3-1kg lower in weight than uninfected pigs. This reduced growth performance will also have a knock on negative affect on FCR and days to slaughter.



Pigs are infected by ingesting oocysts (coccidia 'eggs') from contaminated farrowing environments so good attention to hygiene is essential. Once infected, piglets can shed thousands of these into their environment leading to further disease challenge to other piglets.

Disease control is based on attention to hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, as well as the use of coccidiostats. These are drugs that impede the development and shedding of coccidia. Timing of this treatment is critical as it has to be given at around day 1- 3 of age, in order to disrupt the development cycle of the parasite and hence prevent clinical disease. Many farms use Forceris which combines Totrazuril with iron to prevent iron deficiency anaemia.

## Upcoming Workshops Mastering Medicines - 3<sup>rd</sup> December 10.00 - 13.00, Larkmead Vets Cholsey. £75pp

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. To register: [farm@larkmead.co.uk](mailto:farm@larkmead.co.uk)



## Medicine Updates

- Alamycin LA 300 - early November
- Betamox RTU - Still in quarantine
- Bovalto Respi I/N 10d - Due mid November
- Heptavac 100/250/500ml - OOS
- Lambivac 50ml - OOS
- Noromectin Equine Paste - Mid November
- Synulox LC - OOS
- Ultrapen - Late November

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