



Christmas 2021

Merry Christmas

In the lead up to Christmas we felt it was about time to write with various bits of practice news, some of which is old news now to most, but mainly to say a big thank you for all your support this last year. We love what we do but having a great base of clients makes it even more enjoyable. We hope you have a lovely Christmas and New Year and we are looking forward to working with you in the coming year.

Best wishes,

The team at the Livestock Clinic

AI Service

At the request of some of our beef farms, who have recently lost their AI service provider, the practice has started to offer AI.



For the majority of farms this is done via timed AI following a synchronization protocol.

For farms that are within a 15-20 minute radius of the practice, and are able to store their own semen, we are able to offer a same day service for observed heats. For more information please do get in touch.

New Additions to the Team:

We have had 2 vet additions to the team, both of which most of you will met by now. Ed and Charlie split their time between the Livestock Clinic and Green Counties, who we partner with. If you haven't had the chance to meet them yet then find out a little bit more about them via our website.



Ed



Charlie

TB Testing

We can now carry out your TB testing (through Green Counties) if you would like the pleasure of one of our lovely faces at your test.

You will need to sign a form to transfer your testing to Green Counties. The form comes from a company that organizes the TB admin called farmcare. Ring Emma on 0800 6125289 to ask for a form to be sent to you. They'll post a form to you which can be posted back or scanned and emailed to admin@ukfarmcare.com. Any problems let us know!

Metabolic Profiling for the Breeding Flock:

Incorporating metabolic monitoring into the flock health plan can be a useful tool when it comes to getting ewe nutrition right in the last stage of pregnancy.

Metabolic monitoring in sheep flocks is most often used as diagnostic tool for monitoring ewe nutrition in late pregnancy to assess risk of twin lamb disease. But it can also be used to evaluate how other management decisions have worked through the year.

Twin lamb disease occurs when the energy demands of the pregnant ewe exceed energy intake from the diet. As twin lamb disease is intrinsically linked to nutrition, metabolic monitoring is a useful tool to catch any problems before they become clinical cases.

Incidences are typically around 1 to 2 per cent in well managed flocks but can be up to 10 per cent in undernourished flocks. The main risk factors are over and under conditioned ewes, sudden diet changes and concurrent diseases during late pregnancy such as a fluke infestation.

Mortality of clinically affected ewes is estimated to be as high as 80 per cent, but subclinical disease may also have significant effects on health and productivity. In clinically affected ewes, only 12 per cent of lambs are born alive and metritis and retained foetal membranes are common.”

Combining metabolic monitoring with regular body condition scoring (BCS) as well as using results to evaluate how other management decisions have worked throughout the year allows best use of the results.

BCS should ideally be carried out at weaning, pre-tupping, scanning and lambing. A sample of each

ewe group should be scored weekly in the run up to lambing to identify problems and monitor progress.

Metabolic monitoring looks at the current nutritional status of your ewes via blood sample. Sampling six weeks before lambing is the ideal time to measure performance as if deficits are detected there is still time to implement a correction, and, importantly, allow us to evaluate why the deficits occurred and amend the flock plan for next year. For example, whether the culling policy robust enough or should the thinner ewes be weaned off earlier. Longer term this monitoring can be used to inform whether changes in management in the last year were effective or if additional action is required.

How does metabolic monitoring work?

Metabolic monitoring looks at the current nutritional status of your ewes via blood sample, Looking at BHBs (Beta-hydroxybutyrate), NEFAs (non-esterified fatty acids), Total Protein and Urea. This provides a simple and effective measure of current and historic feeding practices.

- BHBs indicate whether the ewe is in a negative energy balance in the short term, values of more than 1.1mmol/L indicate a significant negative energy balance even if there are currently no clinical signs.
- NEFA's are also linked to negative energy balance but over a longer period of time as it is a measure of the ewe using her own body fat reserves to keep up with energy requirements. Values of less than 0.45mmol/L are considered normal.
- Serum Total Protein is a very good indicator of current protein intake but also a predictor for colostrum quality and therefore lamb survival and growth. The normal range for total protein is between 6-7.9g/dL.

Charlie Hockings BVetMed MRCVS