



Newsletter September 2008

Changes for the FAP

Langford Veterinary Services, a subsidiary company of the University of Bristol, will soon take responsibility for the clinical activities within the Farm Animal Practice. The Chief Executive (Lynne Hill) and the Director of Clinical Services (Kobus Engelbrecht) are both veterinary surgeons and their dynamic approach to the changing veterinary environment will be a positive step to ensure that staff remain in the Practice longer-term to provide continuity to the clients.

The long term objective of this decision is to ensure that the Farm Animal Practice secures its sustainability within a very volatile environment by meeting the very specific needs of farmers. It will also aim to increase the number of cases seen by the Practice to ensure that the veterinary undergraduate students are constantly exposed to a wide range of conditions in order to gain sufficient experience during their clinical training. Chris Hudson will continue in the role of senior clinician with the help of a very dedicated team.

Staff News

This month we have said goodbye to Ben Hutley, who has left to go travelling in New Zealand. He's also planning to get a taste of cattle work down under. Ben had been with us for nearly three years, and we're sure you'll join us in thanking him for all his hard work and enthusiasm.

As many of you will have heard, Richard Cooper will also be leaving shortly to return to Devon. We are interviewing for two new residents to join the existing team at the Farm Animal Practice and will introduce them in the next newsletter.



Client Satisfaction Survey

Thanks to all of you who took the time to complete the client satisfaction survey included with the last newsletter. We've had some extremely positive feedback, and will share the results in more detail in future. In the meantime, if anyone has not received a questionnaire and would like to contribute, please get in touch with the office. We'd love to hear from you!

Flea control products



By popular demand following our reminder about worming farm dogs and cats, the practice now also stocks flea control products at competitive prices. Speak to Shirley or Bridget in reception for further details.



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Langford House, Langford, North Somerset BS40 5DU
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Senior Farm Animal Clinician: Chris Hudson

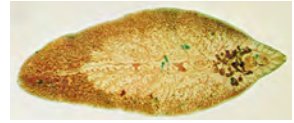
Clinical Fellows: Mike Steele, Lynne Steele
Clinical Scholars: Richard Cooper, David Tisdall,
Alun Evans



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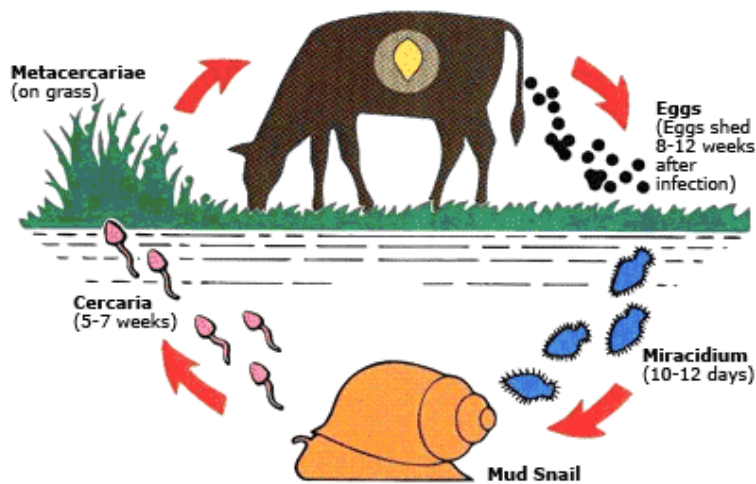
Beware liver fluke!

Liver fluke is a parasitic disease of both cattle and sheep. It is caused by tiny parasites (“flukes”, *right*), which live inside the liver of the animal. They produce eggs, which are shed into the gut and out in faeces. Fluke are unlike other parasites (such as gut and lungworms) in that infection



is not passed directly from one animal to another, but requires the involvement of another “intermediate” host (in the case of fluke a particular type of snail). Disease can either be due to:

- immature fluke migrating through the liver, which can rapidly lead to signs of weight loss and anaemia (“acute” fluke, seen mainly in sheep)
- presence of adult fluke preventing the liver from functioning properly, causing poor performance, diarrhoea and failure to thrive over a longer course of time (“chronic” fluke, seen in both cattle and sheep).



Liver fluke lifecycle (diagram courtesy of Merial Animal Health)

Liver fluke has traditionally been associated with grazing livestock on wet, low-lying land, as this is the preferred habitat of the snail host. In the past, the most common time for cattle and sheep to become infected has been the autumn, when there is high rainfall. The disease has then traditionally manifested itself in the late winter and early spring when the young flukes that were eaten in the autumn have matured and migrated to the liver, causing weight loss, poor growth and scour.

This year, the heavy rainfall has resulted in the spread of snails, and therefore liver fluke, into areas that would normally be too dry for them to survive, putting more animals at risk than usual. The exceptionally wet summer has also meant that fluke problems are likely to be seen earlier than usual this year. Additionally, the fact that fluke was common last year means there is likely to be more pasture contamination this year. Options for management include submitting pooled faecal samples from a number of animals to check for fluke eggs (this requires adult flukes to be present, and egg shedding can be intermittent) or tactical preventative treatment with a flukicide drug. If you would like any further information relevant to your particular management system, please do not hesitate to contact the practice for advice.



Wet pasture is a typical snail habitat.

