

Things to do in September...

It has been a difficult summer; unusually low rainfall has resulted in poor grass growth and a resulting lack of winter forage. Whilst summer is often a quieter time from a sick animal point-of-view, as we move into autumn, good preparation for housing stock through the winter is important. Autumn is particularly important with parasite (worm) control, as worms build up on pasture over the summer. Here is a reminder of some things to consider in September. Please call if you have any questions or require any help from us.

Cattle

- Check for **worms**—Worm burdens build up in the pasture over the summer, now is a good time to collect faecal samples to check the levels of worms in your cattle, particularly in youngstock.
- Check for **fluke**—The NADIS Fluke forecast predicts moderate levels of Fluke in the southwest this autumn, particularly if we have a wet August. Taking dung samples from stock to assess infection levels may be useful, particularly on cattle kept on wet ground.
- Watch out for **lungworm**—Lungworm can happen all year but is most common in September. Lungworm in cattle can be fatal. It is most common in youngstock but can affect any age of cattle.

Sheep

- Check for **worms**—As with cattle now is the time to check worms in faecal samples. To avoid resistance (and save wasting money on unnecessary wormer) check for worms in

ewes and rams before tugging and only treat if necessary.

- Watch out for **fluke**—The NADIS Fluke forecast predicts moderate levels of Fluke in the SouthWest this autumn, particularly if we have a wet August. Sheep are much more susceptible to fluke than cattle, acute fluke can cause sudden death in sheep in autumn and winter. Arrange to have any suspicious cases post-mortemed, or even better take some dung samples now to assess the situation before any problems
- Check the **Rams**—Rams can be forgotten over the summer, check they are fit and well and ready to work before the tugging season.
- Prevent **abortion**—Vaccination for Enzootic Abortion of Ewes (Chlamydia) and Toxo needs to be carried out 4 weeks before tugging to reduce the impact of abortion.
- Check the **Ewes** are healthy and in good condition—Now is the time to check all ewes are ready for tugging, check their feet, mouths and udder.

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Meet the new vet

Having recently graduated from Bristol Vet School, Sarah has joined the FAP as an intern. Her main interests are in monitoring herd performance through data analysis and continuing education with farmers meetings. Outside of work she enjoys baking and hill walking.



Johne's Disease ...

Johne's disease is caused by a bacterium in the same family as TB, *Mycobacterium avium* subsp. *Paratuberculosis*. Like TB it can be difficult to control, although it is not impossible.

Johne's disease causes wasting and a scour, animals are typically affected at between 18 months and 3 years old, although they can be much older.

The disease is not treatable.

Once cattle appear ill with Johne's they will have been shedding the bacteria in their dung for some time. Most cases have caught the disease as a calf,



it is **new born calves that are most at risk**. **Infected dung** is the most significant source of infection although **milk**, especially **colostrum**, also plays a

big role.

Johne's is difficult to eradicate because until animals become ill (as an adult) they will often test negative even if they have the disease, by this stage it can be too late as they could have already infected their own or other calves which in turn won't be detected until they are older.

It is easy to see how the infection can cycle up and increase its hold on the herd unseen as more and more calves are exposed without any symptoms or positive laboratory tests. As with many diseases it is these unseen cases that are part of the problem,

Effect of Johne's

- Wasting
- Increased susceptibility to disease including TB
- Scour
- Poor fertility
- High cell counts

SEE TESTING OFFER
ON PAGE 3

not only can they infect

"Controlling Johne's disease involves minimising the risk of calves being exposed to infected dung or milk"

Controlling Johne's

- Know your disease status and monitor it regularly (see screening packages below)
- Test animals showing signs
- Cull clinical cases
- Hygiene—especially around calving and in calf pens
- Avoid feeding colostrum from affected cows and pooled colostrum

more calves but they will often contribute towards other diseases – becoming less fertile, having high cell counts, being more susceptible to TB. This means many may even be culled without ever knowing they were Johne's Disease cases, leaving their infected calves to continue spreading the infection to future generations.

To achieve control depends on the farm and the levels of infection within the herd. In dairy herds, snatch weaning and not pooling colostrum can help. In beef herds improving calving hygiene may improve the number of calves becoming affected.



If Johne's is not present on your farm then keeping it out should be a priority.

We are able to perform a **Johne's disease risk assessment** to assess the likely risk of Johne's disease spreading within your herd.

As with many things in life the first step is admitting you have a problem... The easiest way to do this is to sample 30 animals for Johne's disease. This has shown to be enough to give a good chance of finding out whether the disease is present. Once you know whether you have Johne's on the farm you can start doing something about it.

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JOHNE'S INVESTIGATION—SPECIAL OFFER

For a limited time, we are able to offer you special rates on Johne's investigations...

Johne's risk assessment for only £25 + VAT

Your herd will be scored Green, Amber or Red using *My Healthy Herd* software. You will receive a report detailing the risk factors for Johne's spread on your farm and our recommendations as a next step.

Johne's 30 cow screen only £250 + VAT (including sampling, laboratory fees and report) or £150 + VAT if you collect 30 milk samples

We will help you select 30 cows and blood test them for Johne's disease and then report the results with a recommended next step (To identify if Johne's is present in your herd).

BNP in the Farm Animal Practice ...

Bovine Neonatal Pancytopenia or "Bleeding Calf Syndrome" affects calves up to 3 weeks old.

BNP has been occurring across the country over recent months and here at the FAP we have had our first confirmed case.

They **can present** with unexplained bleeding from the skin, nose, mouth, anus and eartag sites. Cases almost always die within a few days or can die before symptoms develop. On **post mortem examination** the calves have numerous bleeding sites internally and their bone marrow appears to have been destroyed. The bone marrow makes the blood cells that allow the blood to clot and fight off infection.

The disease has only **recently been reported** and seems to have been occurring in Europe only for the last few years. Normally BNP only occurs in low numbers or single cases, it rarely occurs as an outbreak. Whilst any new disease is a concern, the impact on the cattle industry seems limited at the moment, cases have not had a significant effect on overall calf mortality in the UK.



At present the cause is not known. There have been some suggestions that it may be a reaction to *Preg-sure* BVD vaccine, although this has not been proven and now seems less likely. As

a precaution *Preg-sure* has been taken off the market and we will not be stocking it until we have more information. Other theories have been proposed but as yet nothing has been confirmed. Investigations are ongoing.

Please report any suspicious cases. Post mortems were being carried out free of charge by the VLA on suspicious cases, but this has now been stopped because they have enough cases to conduct their investigations. We will keep you informed when there are any developments. In the meantime please call if you have any concerns.

Dates for your diary

- **Foot Trimming Course** On 29/30 September we will be running a two-day course on foot-trimming and lameness in cattle. Taking you through the procedure of foot trimming, treatment of lesions and a chance to practice techniques. As the course involves practical training, numbers are limited so call the practice to book your place now, discount for farm clients.
- **DairyCo discussion group "Grass utilisation in any dairy system"**: An on farm meeting looking at maximising production from your grazing, run in association with DairyCo. 13 October.

Small ruminant essentials courses

- **Lameness control and prevention:** On **22nd September** we have the second in our small ruminant essentials course, covering foot health and lameness prevention in sheep and goats.
- **Lambing essentials:** Covering the principals and practicalities of lambing, this course was extremely popular last year. Useful for first time lambing or as refresher course, to get you ready for the 2011 lambing season. **Wednesday 1st December or Thursday 2nd December.**



Summer Pasturella ...

Pasturella pneumonia is a serious consideration for owners of small ruminants in the summer. Although pneumonia is mostly thought to be a housing related disease, animals at pasture are at risk of a specific type of pneumonia known as summer pasturella.

Pasturella is a bacteria naturally found in the upper respiratory tract of sheep and goats, however certain conditions can cause an overgrowth of pasturella. The stress of moving animals or mixing groups can often be the trigger, older animals are at greater risk and it may occur following other diseases such as lameness. Some outbreaks may be caused by periods of bad weather.

The overgrowth of bacteria causes inflammation of the lung tissue, meaning oxygen is taken up

less efficiently, hence animals may appear to pant for air and struggle to keep up or even collapse when moved. The inflammation also causes increased secretions which cause the animal to cough.

Early identification of signs of the disease is necessary if treatment is to be effective. Some cases

Signs to look out for

- Hanging back from the group
- Off food
- Temperature increase
- Coughing
- Increased respiratory effort
- Nasal discharge



may be peracute, with animals being found dead. If the disease is allowed to progress the lungs may be terminally damaged, and even if the bacteria are controlled the animal will not thrive.

Vaccinations are available to help control Pasturella pneumonia, as the bacteria are naturally occurring they won't always prevent infection but will lessen the severity.