

Practice News

Our annual Farmer's Social was a success yet again with around 100 people in attendance!

Thank you to all our lovely clients, friends and families for coming along and catching up with the Calweton Farm team!

Thank you to the Penhorwoods - Cornish Maids for providing the burger van and Callington Lions for doing the bar on the night!

A massive thank you must also go to Miranda's band the Quartertones for their fantastic music.

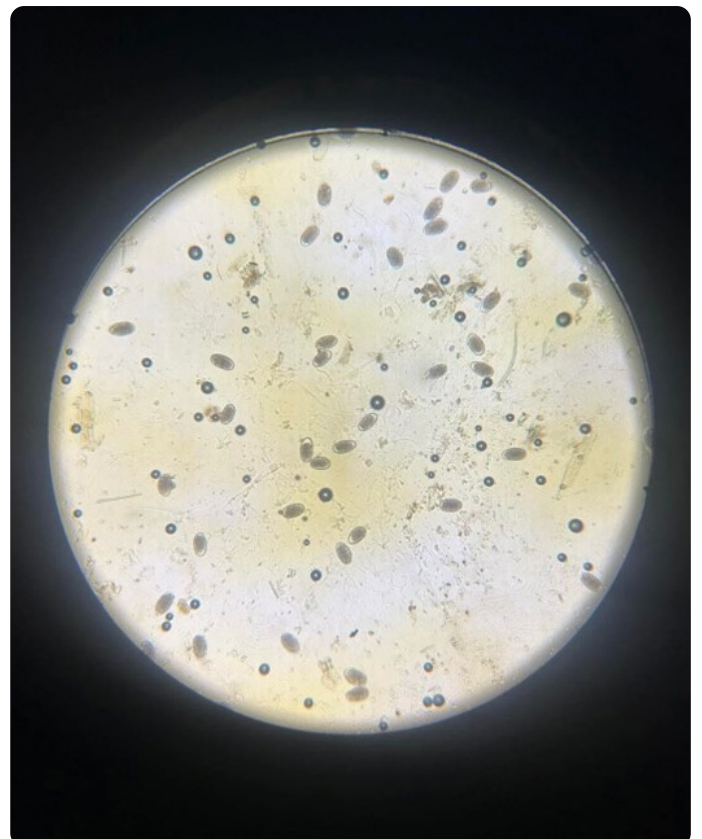
We look forward to doing it again next year!



Summer Parasite Watch

Cattle:

- **PGE;** Most larval pasture burdens peak mid-July but Ostertagia can remain high throughout the grazing season. Autumn born calves in their first grazing season and spring born cattle in their second grazing season are at particular risk. Regular faecal egg counts (FECs) every 2-3 weeks during the summer help monitor worm burden and determine whether treatment is necessary. We can run samples in house, advise on the best treatment and provide wormers at competitive prices!
- **Lungworm;** Outbreaks often follow bouts of wet weather. Coughing in youngstock, especially after exercise, may be the first sign. Animals bought onto a unit with known lungworm are also considered high risk. To maintain immunity, natural exposure is needed. It wanes if animals are moved off infected pasture for a few months or wormed too often. Lungworm isn't picked up on FECs - diagnosis relies on clinical signs and grazing history.
- **Ticks;** Ticks may be seen on cattle in affected areas at this time of year and can typically be found in skin folds under the chest and groin area.



In this edition...

Page 1: Parasite Forecast

Watch for signs of redwater (red urine, diarrhoea, dullness) particularly in youngstock and bought in animals. Tick-borne fever is less severe and can cause a range of signs including abortion.

Sheep

- **Blowfly;** Blowfly risk is considered Very High. All at-risk animals should have preventative treatment applied. Depending on the product, those applied at the beginning of the season may no longer be effective. Sheep should be checked twice daily.
- **PGE;** Risk is highest in summer, dropping off in late summer and autumn. Warm, wet weather increases risk, while dry conditions reduce it. Lambs grazing "dirty" pastures (previously used by ewes or last year's lambs) are most vulnerable. Monitor FECs or lamb weights every 3-4 weeks.
- **Haemonchosis;** Haemonchus contortus or the barber's pole worm is another type of roundworm and causes severe anaemia. Haemonchosis can

affect both lambs and ewes and can appear similar to acute fluke burdens. Diarrhoea is not usually a feature. Diagnosis is via post-mortem examination in cases of sudden death, or faecal egg counts. FAMACHA scoring can be used by farmers to assess the level of anaemia by looking at the colour of the lower eyelid. Pale pink/ white membranes inside the lower lid would make us highly suspicious of haemonchus. If you spot this in your stock, sample immediately and bring to the practice for a WEC.

- **Ticks;** Ticks are found on rough grazing and in humid areas of dense vegetation such as moorlands. Hill flocks are generally most at risk. Peak tick activity is in spring and late summer/ autumn. Three diseases of sheep are spread by ticks: louping ill, tick borne fever and tick pyaemia. Louping ill is the most common of these and causes fever, seizures and paralysis. Various products are available to prevent tick infestation. Please phone the practice for advice!

SUCKLER HERD PREGNANCY DIAGNOSIS AUTUMN OFFER

NO visit charge for
suckler PD's
FROM SEPTEMBER -
NOVEMBER 2025

Can be charged as time
or at a
set rate of £2.50 per
COW.

Book with us today!

Avian Influenza

On 8 August 2025, cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 were confirmed at premises near Seaton, East Devon, and Lifton, West Devon.

When a case of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) is confirmed on a premises, the government imposes disease control zones around the outbreak site to stop the spread. If your holding falls within one of these zones, specific restrictions apply, and it's vital to comply to protect your flock and the wider industry.

3 km Protection Zone (PZ)

This is the immediate area around the infected premises.

If you're in a PZ:

- No bird movements are allowed on or off your premises without a DEFRA/APHA licence.
- You must house or isolate poultry and captive birds unless advised otherwise.
- You must keep detailed records of visitors, bird movements, feed deliveries, and disposal of dead birds.
- Foot dips and disinfection must be in place at entry/exit points.
- Enhanced biosecurity measures are mandatory for all staff and visitors.

These rules apply to all keepers—from backyard poultry owners to commercial farms.

10 km Surveillance Zone (SZ)

This zone surrounds the PZ and covers a wider area.

If you're in a SZ:

- Bird movements are restricted and often require

a licence.

- You must keep records of bird numbers, movements, and visitors.
- Surveillance may include testing or inspections by APHA staff.
- Your birds do not need to be housed unless further restrictions are applied—but good biosecurity is still essential.
- You must monitor for signs of disease and report any suspicions immediately.

What this means for you:

- Check your location: If you're near East or West Devon, especially Seaton or Lifton, your area may now be under protection or surveillance restrictions.
- Maintain strict biosecurity: Remain vigilant—not just in control zones. Clean, disinfect, restrict access, and monitor bird movements closely.
- Act quickly if signs appear: Any sudden bird deaths, respiratory distress, or unusual behaviour should be reported immediately to your vet or APHA.
- Stay informed: Keep an eye on DEFRA and APHA updates, and use their interactive map to track protection and surveillance zones.
- Housing readiness: While general housing restrictions have been lifted, be prepared to reinstate housing protocols if your farm falls under a new zone.



In this edition...

Page 4: Pre-tupping ram MOT

Pre-Tupping Ram MOT - Getting Rams Ready for Breeding

With the breeding season fast approaching, ensuring your rams are fit, fertile, and firing on all cylinders now can make the difference between a profitable lambing season and a disappointing one.

Carrying out a Ram MOT well in advance of tupping -ideally 6-8 weeks before-allows time to correct any issues or source replacements.

What's In a Ram MOT?

A proper Ram MOT involves a full health and fertility assessment, covering:

Body Condition

- Rams should have a Body Condition Score (BCS) of 3.5-4/5 at tupping.
- Allow 6-8 weeks before tupping to adjust condition-rams that are too thin or too fat may underperform.

Testicle Size & Health

- Examine testicles for size, symmetry, firmness, and freedom of movement.
- Measure scrotal circumference
- Check the epididymis for lumps (sign of infection), and the prepuce and penis for swelling, injury, or discharge.

Semen Testing

- A semen sample can be collected where needed. Around 30% of rams are subfertile, often with no visible signs.
- Subfertile rams reduce conception rates and extend the lambing period, making management harder and reducing profitability.

Age & Teeth

- Rams perform best between 2 and 5 years old. After 6 years, fertility often declines.
- Check for a broken mouth, abscesses, or jaw defects, which can limit feeding and cause weight loss.

Feet & Legs

- Sound feet are critical. Lameness can reduce mating activity.
- Check for signs of footrot, joint swelling, and CODD.
- Watch for granulomas or misshapen feet, and act early to prevent breeding issues.

Health & Nutrition

- Ensure rams are up to date on vaccinations-especially for clostridial diseases.
- Treat for worms and fluke as needed.
- Supplement with key minerals and vitamins may be necessary - zinc, selenium, cobalt, and vitamin E are essential for sperm quality and fertility.

Why It Matters

A fully fit and fertile ram team means:

- Lower barren rates
- Tighter lambing periods
- More lambs born on-farm
- Improved profitability



If you would like more information on what we've discussed in this month's newsletter, please speak to any of our farm veterinary team.

Callington practice

79 Tavistock Road,
Callington, Cornwall,
PL17 7RD

01579 386132

farm@calwetonvets.co.uk

St Columb practice

Trevornick Business Park,
Winnard's Perch, Saint
Columb, TR9 6DH

01637 889231

www.calwetonvets.co.uk