



### JOHNE'S DISEASE MANAGEMENT

On 27<sup>th</sup> February, Cliffe Vets hosted a very well attended Johne's disease talk at Plumpton College. The presentation was introducing the National Johne's Management Plan. This is an initiative aimed at British farmers to highlight the costs associated with the disease, the difficulty in detection of Johne's especially in younger animals, and to encourage you to determine the level of Johne's in your herd. Unidentified Johne's left to spread through your herd will, over the medium to long term, cause significant production losses and threaten your bottom line. The aim of the plan is to reduce Johne's disease in the national herd to as low a level as possible.

There are specific management changes around calving which are very important in the control of Johne's. In order for these to be successful though, it is essential to have an idea of the level of disease within your herd- something which may not be immediately obvious. **THE MAJOR COST ASSOCIATED WITH JOHNE'S IS DUE TO SUBCLINICAL OR CONCURRENT DISEASE.** Lots of Johne's positive animals are culled for other reasons such as mastitis or lameness. Unless they are specifically tested for Johne's antibodies, poor productivity due to Johne's may not be attributed to this disease and it will remain unidentified- compounding the problem.

The two take-home messages from the talk were firstly; **MONITOR-** test a high risk proportion of your herd, to establish the prevalence in your herd. If this reveals a significant level of infection, then secondly; **MANAGE-** preventing calves from ingesting contaminated milk or faeces from infected cows is crucial. Screening older thin, cull cows is a very good way of detecting Johne's as these will be higher risk individuals. Preventing calves from being exposed to infected faeces or milk requires that you know which animals are infected. This can be done easily in dairy herds where the milk can be tested quarterly. We would encourage beef farmers who have previously identified Johne's via screening of cull/ sick cows, to test all cows before calving in order to identify infected and manage them separately at calving and service.

Johne's is a very complex disease, which, if it gets into your herd will be impossible to eradicate and therefore **CRUCIALLY** important to control at levels which will not affect productivity.

Please call the practice and speak to Nick, Bill, Nanja or Claire about how we can help you assess and reduce your risk, establish your Johne's prevalence, and manage this disease within your herd. The laboratory fees for testing are free of charge if all test results return negative.

Image courtesy of Action on Johne's Group



### INTERESTING FACT

*Did you know that.....*

Sheep can not only recognize up to 50 other sheep faces and remember them for 2 years, but they can also recognize human faces.

## GOVERNMENT TB TESTING (and other veterinary services) - WHAT THE NEW CHANGES MEAN FOR FARMERS

From 1st May 2015, TB testing and other Government veterinary services in the region are to be delivered through a new regional company; XL Farmcare South East Ltd. One of seven companies in England and Wales that will undertake testing services for the Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA), XL Farmcare South East covers a region of 17 counties from Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire to Norfolk, Suffolk and Surrey. For farmers, it is expected that changes to testing should be minimal, as XL Farmcare South East confirms wherever possible, TB testing will remain with the farmer's own vet.

XL Farmcare South East is owned by a group of local farm veterinary practices, who together have worked hard to gain the support of other veterinary practices in the region to ensure delivery of TB testing and other Government services remain firmly with local veterinary practices. We're now seeking to work with more local veterinary practices, to help ensure farmers can continue to access the services of their own vet for TB testing. However some mixed practices are no longer continuing to perform Government TB testing services (including some locally) and their clients are likely to be TB tested by the nearest XL Farmcare SE Supplier practice unless this is overridden by keeper choice.

## CLIFFE VETERINARY GROUP BULL AND RAM FERTILITY SERVICE

With the aim of providing our clients with a comprehensive fertility service, Nick has completed his training in semen collection and evaluation. He has already started to assess bull and ram semen as part of pre-breeding assessments, and trouble shooting. With ever tighter margins it is important not to underestimate the disastrous effect an infertile or sub-fertile bull or ram can have on barren rates, calving pattern and spread, calf management and efficiency of production. The cost of the service varies depending on the number of bulls/rams being tested and is competitively priced, so please call the practice and speak to Nick for further information or to arrange a visit.



## Worm Egg Count - OFFER

It's spring and the fields are filled with lambs, what a beautiful site!

Time for a little reminder of the importance of worming on the basis of Worm Egg Counts. SCOPS recommends to start taking samples from about 6 weeks of age and worm only those that necessary to be wormed. This will not only save you money on wormers but more importantly will save your wormers for future use!

**Cliffe Vets are now running an offer of 10% off if you buy 5 worm egg counts at one. These 5 can be used over the course of the year.**

Remember: coccidiosis can be seen in lambs as young as 3-4 weeks, so if symptoms of scouring are seen in this age, bringing in a faecal sample will be worth to confirm the diagnosis and justify the treatment.

Remember: best results will be acquired from bringing in 10 individual samples (per group) which we will then pool in our laboratory.



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