

Sheep Farmer

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2013



A NATIONAL SHEEP ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION

**LATEST ON NSA YOUNG
PEOPLE AND SHEEP
PROJECT**

**OUTLOOK OF AUTUMN
BREEDING SALE**

**NEW EVENT FOR SHEEP
CONTRACTORS**

**DIALOGUE WITH NEW
ZEALAND ON IMPORTS**

**SCHMALLENBERG
VACCINATION TIPS**

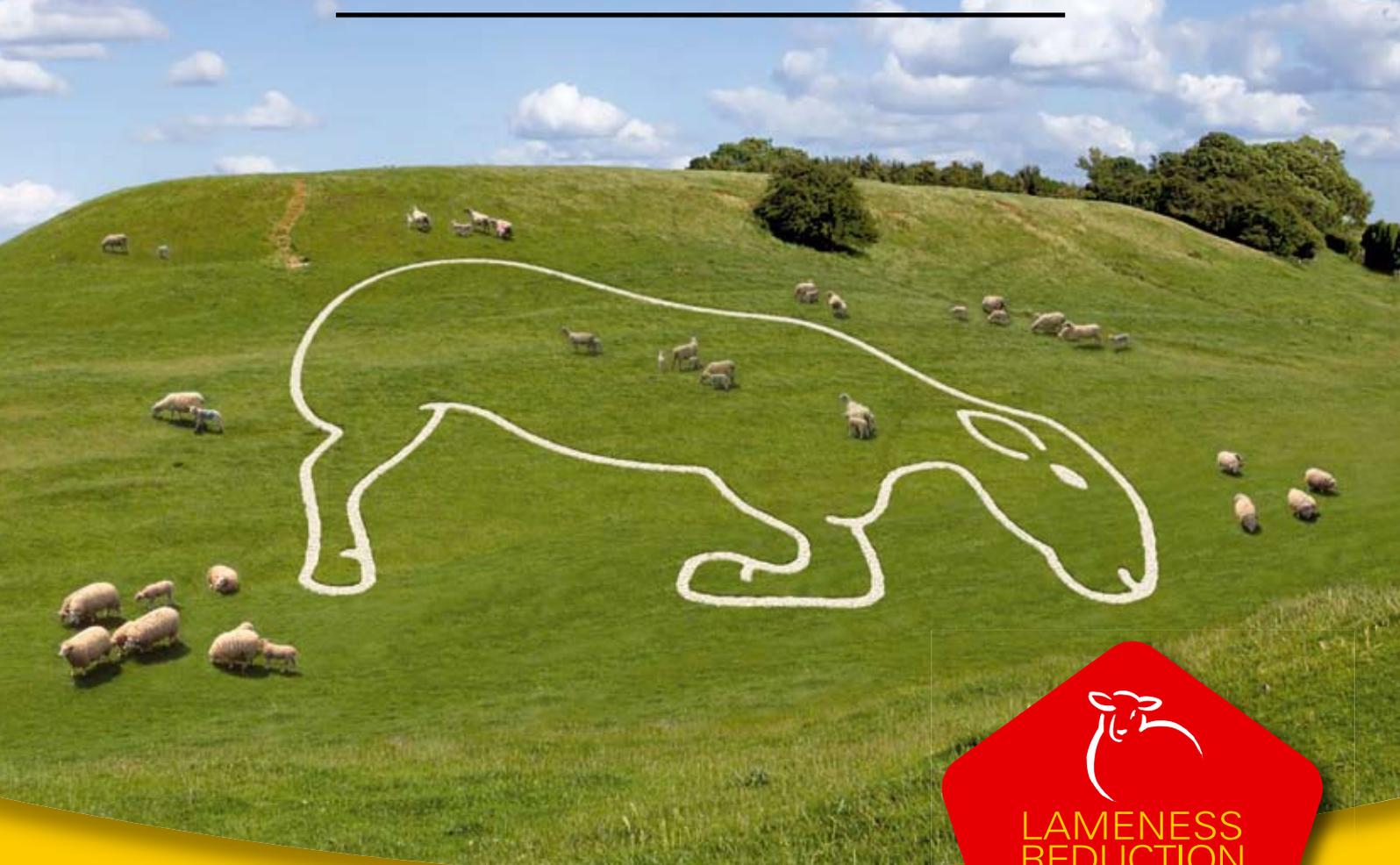
**FOUR-PAGE LIVER
FLUKE SPECIAL**



your business your future

STAMP OUT LAMENESS

FOLLOW THE 5 POINT PLAN



Reduce lameness down to 2% in 3 years¹

Lameness, particularly footrot, is one of the most important health and welfare issues facing UK sheep farmers. Poorly controlled, lameness causes visible pain and reduces performance – resulting in increased labour and treatment costs as well as premature culling. By following this well researched and proven lameness reduction plan, you can reduce lameness down to 2% in just three years.¹

Help stamp out lameness from your business and make the commitment today. To find out more about the Lameness Reduction 5 Point Plan, contact your animal health advisor, scan the QR code or visit www.fwi.co.uk/livestock/lameness




Footvax™
For Footrot

Reference 1: FAI trial data 2009-2012.

Use medicines responsibly. For more information visit www.noah.co.uk/responsible

Footvax is only available via your animal prescriber or veterinary surgeon from whom advice should be sought. Footvax contains ten strains of inactivated *Dichelobacter nodosus* with an oil adjuvant. Legal category: [POM-VPS]. Footvax is the property of Intervet International B.V. or affiliated companies or licensors and is protected by copyrights, trademark and other intellectual property laws. Copyright © 2013 Intervet International B.V. All rights reserved.

Further information is available from: MSD Animal Health, Walton Manor, Walton, Milton Keynes MK7 7AJ
Tel: 01908 685 685 • vet-support.uk@merck.com • www.msd-animal-health.co.uk



MSD
Animal Health

Sheep Farmer

September/October 2013

Vol. 32, No 5

ISSN 0141-2434

A National Sheep Association Publication

Editor:

Joanne Pugh

07807 237982

joanne@nationalsheep.org.uk

Advertising Sales:

Helen Davies

07976 803066

helen@nationalsheep.org.uk



The Sheep Centre • Malvern •
Worcestershire • WR13 6PH

Tel: 01684 892661 Fax: 01684 892663

e-mail: enquiries@nationalsheep.org.uk

website: www.nationalsheep.org.uk

facebook.com/natsheep

twitter.com/natsheep

NSA represents the views and interests of sheep producers throughout the UK. It is funded by its membership of sheep farmers and its activities involve it in every aspect of the sheep industry. It is a Company Limited by Guarantee registered in England (No. 37818) and a Registered Charity in England and Wales (No. 249255) and Scotland (No. SC042853).
VAT No. 273 3469 44.

Sheep Farmer magazine is published by Shepherd Publishing Ltd
email: info@shepherdpublishing.co.uk
Tel: (01825) 722329

Designed by Hannah Thorley
email: jinjdesign@hotmail.co.uk
Mob: 07833 345705

No part of this magazine may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or shared in any form (be in electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without prior consent of NSA.

Every care is taken when compiling this magazine by NSA and Shepherd Publishing take no responsibility for errors and omissions arising from publication. Views expressed and information contained in Sheep Farmer are not necessarily those of NSA or Shepherd Publishing and, therefore, cannot be held responsible for any reason arising from them. Neither NSA or Shepherd Publishing endorses any services or products advertised in this issue.

Paper is FSC® certified. It is sourced from responsibly managed forests.



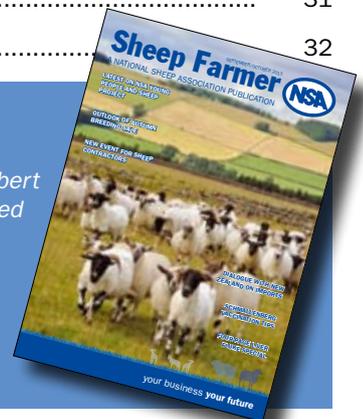
Contents

Update from NSA Head Office	2
News in Brief	3
Regional Reports	4
NSA Sheep NI Report	7
Young People and Sheep Update	8
Outlook on Autumn Breeding Sales	10
Membership Form	11
New Event for Contractors	12
The Lamb Price and New Zealand Imports	14
NSA Regional Chairman Profile: Robert Jordan	16
Removing the Slaughter Tag Derogation	18
Forthcoming Events	19
Feed Potential of Grass	20
Vaccination Against Schmallenberg	22
Body Condition Scoring Ewes	23
Infectious Causes of Lameness	24
Taking Action on Liver Fluke	26
Understanding Liver Fluke Better	28
Special NSA Offer on Wool Clothing	30
Tax Planning Advice	31
Sheep Breeding and Services Directory	32

Front Cover

The front page picture was taken by photographer Robert Smith and shows a flock of Northumberland Blackfaced and home-bred Mules owned by the Forster family at Lowes Fell, Lowgate, Hexham, Northumberland.

To approach NSA about your photo appearing on the front cover of Sheep Farmer please contact Joanne Pugh (details to the left).



ROXAN

SHEEP TAGGING IN A THIRD OF THE TIME

ROXAN TagFaster

CALL & QUOTE REF: R12.SHF

t: 01750 22940 e: sales@roxan.co.uk www.roxan.co.uk



From 12p
per tag

SEARCH YouTube for TAGFASTER

Welcome to your New Look Sheep Farmer Magazine

By Phil Stocker, NSA Chief Executive

I expect you have already noticed that the appearance of this Sheep Farmer magazine is new and refreshed and I'm hoping it meets your approval. The change in appearance signifies a major change in the magazine's production, with the responsibility for creating the magazine now coming firmly home to the NSA.

At this point I would like to thank Howard Venters and Shepherd Publishing for getting the magazine to where it is today, and indeed Shepherd Publishing is still playing a part in the production team going forward. There will be further changes to the magazine over the next issue or two, and while the appearance and readability is important, the intention is also that the content will become even more topical, practical, and interesting.

I'm writing this having returned from our Annual General Meeting, which we held at the Moredun Research Institute in Edinburgh. AGMs rarely attract a huge crowd and there is no doubt that many more people would have found

the presentations from Moredun staff and the tour of the facilities there very interesting. Moredun has a long history of completing essential work to support sheep farming, including diagnostics, vaccine development and the identification of genetic markers – and the partnership between Moredun and the NSA, which means all NSA members automatically receive the Moredun technical bulletins, is mutually beneficial in that it helps inform our members and it adds weight and practicality to their research work.

Our AGM ended an incredibly busy but worthwhile week. On the previous day we held our Breed Forum, again at Moredun, with presentations and discussion on many of the health related topics being worked on there, as well as a lively debate on 'Progress and Preservation' relating to our sheep breeds and future strategies to ensure they are fit for purpose. This will be driven jointly by some breeders and breed societies, but also by the buyers of male and female stock who will inevitably continue to move towards asking more questions and seeking more information in the future – it is far easier to buy problems in than to get rid of them afterwards! This doesn't necessarily mean that figures and statistics are the answer to everything, but more a balance of looks, EBVs and reliable production and health information.



The day before the breed forum I'd arrived back from New Zealand having been part of an industry group studying current NZ market structures and trends, production predictions and sheep farming issues generally. This trip will undoubtedly help to build long term constructive relationships with NZ sheep farmers, with whom we share markets and productivity issues. My full report is on pages 14 and 15 of this magazine, so I won't dwell on it anymore here, except to say that what with this trip and then our activities in Scotland it is wonderful to get my feet on the ground for a while, and to get back into my own bed!

Contacting NSA

Phil and the team at NSA are always available to members and interested to hear opinions, concerns and areas of interest. You can call NSA Head Office five days a week on 01684 892661, or direct an email to one of the addresses to the right.

The NSA Team

Phil Stocker
NSA Chief Executive
pstocker@nationalsheep.org.uk

Julie Jennings
PA to Chief Executive
julie@nationalsheep.org.uk

Joanne Pugh
Communications Officer
joanne@nationalsheep.org.uk

Gill Callow
Membership Secretary
gill@nationalsheep.org.uk

Charlotte Underwood
Membership Recruitment
charlotte@nationalsheep.org.uk

Helen Davies
Corporate Relations
helen@nationalsheep.org.uk

High Hopes for Future

By John Geldard, NSA
Chairman

Last year was best forgotten by most, but unfortunately the effects have lingered on in the form of out-of-control costs last winter/spring seriously impacting cash flow today. We're really grateful for the 'proper summer' we've had and hopefully it means NSA members will face this winter with good quality forage and plenty of it.

Cashflow has clearly impacted the autumn sheep sales, although people remain willing to pay for quality. Sales in

the north appear to have been stronger, and this may be that people in these areas are more dependent on livestock as their main farming activity.

This leads me onto a main concern for the NSA, which is the effect on the industry of having a cross compliance policy without any toleration. I have said for several years that this will drive sheep off mixed farms, as why would anyone jeopardise a large arable payment through slight inaccuracies with sheep eartags?

This demonstrates the absolute importance of NSA being active in the on-going discussions and ensuring officials here and in Brussels understand the challenge and the measures needed to stop the decline of sheep production, in the interest of our industry and consumers.

News In Brief

A new grandson and a NSA award

Just two days after the birth of his first grandson, HRH The Prince of Wales attended the Royal Welsh Show and collected the NSA George Hedley award for outstanding service to the sheep sector.



Prince Charles was announced as the winner of the 2012 award back in April, and NSA was delighted he was able to receive the honour in person as part of this trip to Builth Wells in July. He collected the specially sculptured statuette of a South Country Cheviot sheep from NSA President the Duke of Montrose (pictured) in the Royal Welsh Show sheep showing, and met a number of NSA Trustees and office holders, before inspecting the sheep competing in the inter-breed pairs final.

NSA Chairman John Geldard spoke at the presentation and said: "Over the last two decades the Prince of Wales has taken an enormous interest in farming, and sheep and the uplands in particular. He has great knowledge and an inspirational vision of agriculture and food production and has drawn attention both to the issue of food security and local supply chains. I have seen His Royal Highness with retailers on the edge of their seats as he gently encourages them to look at local food for the local economy, and make a real difference in some desperate times. The Prince of Wales is been directly and deeply involved in the Mutton

Renaissance, Campaign for Wool and Cambrian Mountain Lamb, to mention just three projects that are directly related to the sheep industry. We are grateful for his influence and encouragement for our sector, and believe he is a very worthy recipient of this award."

The award is presented annually in memory of George Hedley, a stalwart of the NSA (then the National Sheep Breeders Association) who was tragically killed in 1960. Nominations for the 2013 award will be invited soon.

Moredun magnificently host NSA AGM

The NSA's relationship with Moredun was strengthened yet further when the research institute hosted the NSA AGM and NSA Breed Forum at the end of August. The AGM saw the Trustees Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2012 formally adopted, plus His Grace the Duke of Montrose and David Croston elected to stand for another 12 months as President and Honorary Treasurer respectively.



The AGM was followed by a presentation by Dr Colin McInnes, Moredun's Head of Vaccines and Diagnostics (pictured), who provided a whistle stop tour of Moredun's 90-year history, including the identification of 18 new animal diseases and the creation of 11 vaccines. Another vaccine would soon be available in Australia for *Haemonchus contortus* (the Barber's Pole worm), he said, and the same technology was being used to develop a

vaccine against *Teladorsagia circumcincta* (the brown stomach worm that is very prevalent in the UK).

Three other Moredun scientists spoke the day before Dr McInnes, at the NSA Breed Forum on Wednesday, attended by NSA-affiliated breed societies. Dr Mike Fontaine discussed the frustration of developing a caseous lymphadenitis (CLA) vaccine but being unable to find an animal health company to take it through to licensing and manufacture; Dr Keith Ballingall spoke about the future possibility of finding gene markers linked to specific disease, to aid selection of ewes and rams to breed from; and Dr Chris Cousens spoke about how ovine pulmonary adenocarcinoma (OPA or jaagsiekte) had alluded Moredun in terms of finding a vaccine, but that development of diagnostic tools was positive and on-going.

You will be aware that as a NSA member you are also automatically an association member of Moredun. As well as supporting the vital research work that Moredun does, this also means UK-based NSA members regularly receive Moredun newssheets with your Sheep Farmer magazine. In fact, a lameness newssheet and the Moredun annual magazine has been distributed with this magazine – if it is missing from your package please contact NSA Head Office and let us know.

Do you need help this lambing time?

It is that time of year again when NSA offers it services to members in collating a list of farmers who would like veterinary or agricultural students to help them during lambing time. We send the list to a number of colleges and universities, and also students who contact us directly for a copy. Students looking for a valuable work experience placement then contact NSA members on the list, who negotiate terms and conditions on an individual basis.

To be included on the 2013/14 list please call NSA Head Office or email gill@nationalsheep.org.uk with your name, NSA membership number, address and contact telephone numbers, plus the dates you will require help to and from. Other useful information includes how many students/helpers you require, if you will consider individuals looking for paid work, whether or not you will provide accommodation, if you require experienced help, the number of ewes you have, and if they lamb indoors or outdoors.

We had an unprecedented number of students contact us last year, and have already been contacted by students looking for placements this winter and spring, so do no delay in contacting us add your details to the list.

New NSA South West Regional Secretary sought

NSA South West Region has an opportunity for a capable and enthusiastic person to take on the role of Regional Secretary. This is an interesting post for someone probably with an involvement in sheep farming and looking for a relatively small number of paid hours spread throughout the year. The role is to support and provide administration for the NSA SW committee and its activities, and also to link with NSA headquarters to ensure good communication and consistency.

For details and an application form please contact NSA Head Office on 01684 892661 or enquiries@nationalsheep.org.uk.



His Grace the Duke of Montrose
Honorary President

John Geldard
National Chairman

David Croston
Honorary Treasurer

Central

Bob Payne
Regional Chairman
01142 883241
07713 007734
bobandanne@handbanktexels.wanadoo.co.uk

Anne Payne
Regional Sec/Manager
01142 883241
07803 744437
bobandanne@handbanktexels.wanadoo.co.uk

Cymru Wales

David Pittendreigh
Regional Chairman
01559 395372
07866 759882
monica.pittendreigh@gmail.com

Mrs Helen Davies
Regional Development Officer
01938 590535
07976 803066
helen@nationalsheep.org.uk

Eastern

Andrew Foulds
Regional Chairman
01842 890828
07836 287281
andrew.fouldes@elveden.com

Jonathan Barber
Regional Manager
01953 607860
07712 659262
jonathan@ceressolutions.co.uk

Marches

Nick Davies
Regional Chairman
New details available soon; please contact Angela in the first instance

Angela Weston
Regional Secretary
01454 260220
07708 244151
angelaweston1@o2.co.uk

Northern

Adam Watson
Regional Chairman
01434 381243
07766 720423
admwatson@msn.com

Julie A Sedgewick
Regional Manager
01325 314650
07836 773888
jas@nationalsheep.org.uk

Northern Ireland

Maurice McHenry
Regional Chairman
02820 762093
07793 322165
mauricemchenry@hotmail.com

Edward Adamson
Regional Development Officer
02893 366225
07711 071290
edward.adamson1@gmail.com

Scottish

Sybil MacPherson
Regional Chairman
01838 200218
07796 018528

George Milne
Regional Development Officer
01334 472403
07831 511330
george.nsa@btconnect.com

South East

Andrew Barr
Regional Chairman
01273 858544
07768 867124
a.baabaa@hotmail.co.uk

Bob Blanden
Regional Manager
01666 860308
07860 689391
blanden@btinternet.com

South West

Robert Jordan
Regional Chairman
01647 433912
07879 874822
robertjordan756@btinternet.com

Sue Martyn
Regional Manager
01409 271385
07967 512660
suem@nationalsheep.org.uk

Regional Reports

Central

By Sarah Ritter, vet and Committee Member



The last couple of months have seen some quite different patterns for the Central Region and elsewhere, not least due to the unusually hot weather that we've all been experiencing. We've seen a renewed interest in haymaking around here, with anticipation now building over the increased competition within the forage section around the local shows. The general feeling is that we are a good six or seven weeks ahead when compared with last year and this more favourable weather and forage quality has also seen a proportionate decrease in the number of metabolic problems seen in flocks.

At one of our recent meetings we were discussing how sheep have picked up somewhat in condition and are looking at the best they have for a while at this time of year. This likely comes as no surprise, as we agreed all our flock masters are also looking at their best after a bit of sun on their backs!

One thing that is suffering for all this hot weather is the liver fluke, so that has got to be a plus point. With the changing climatic conditions we have been seeing increasing numbers of acute fluke in sheep throughout the year, causing both horrendous welfare problems and production losses. At least this sun should provide a bit of a break in the cycle and provide some relief.

Right in the heart of our region, the Chatsworth Estate is soon to lose its highly esteemed farm manager Ian Turner, known to many throughout the region and beyond. We wish Ian a long and happy retirement, look forward to his continued support of NSA activities and watch with interest as he continues with another matter close to his heart – the growing of outsized vegetables!



Ian Turner

The heather beetles have been causing havoc on the moors just recently, with the dry weather preventing any realistic expectations of burning of the heather for control. The recent

infestations of these beetles have a serious knock-on effect on how the heathland ecosystem functions, which in turn impacts livestock grazing. Our sheep population up there is also very important for pruning the heather and maintaining the balance with the grouse, which will also disappear if the damage caused by the beetle is extensive enough.

We seem to have an abundance of ragwort in some areas, but it is vital that sheep grazing is only practiced at an early stage on the young rosettes of the weed, in order to avoid potential health issues, so our members look like having to dig out their gardening gloves and forks!

A heavily questioned area amongst the members just now is Schmallenberg and where to vaccinate or not. The decision is based on so many variables that a discussion with the veterinary practice is timely here.

For now though we just remain thankful that we've managed to get a favourable harvest this time and keep a watchful eye out for what is to come.

Cymru/Wales

By Helen Davies, Regional Development Officer



NSA Cymru/Wales is seeking entries for the award which it presents at the Welsh Winter Fair each year. Nominees need to be under 35 at the time of the Winter Fair and have already made an outstanding contribution to the sheep industry. They must be resident in Wales and further information will be available on the NSA website.

NSA had a good Royal Welsh Show in July, including the opportunity for NSA Cymru/Wales officials to meet with Alun Davies, Minister for Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries, and discuss further our idea for using Pillar Two funding for an animal health and welfare scheme. A further meeting is scheduled for November, with the Minister to progress things further.

The region has also been involved in meetings to discuss any proposed changes to the six-day standstill and quarantine units, together with the new CAP consultation. If members have any opinions regarding the CAP consultation please let me know.

Market prices have fluctuated during the last few months and as I write this the prime lamb price has bounced back, although breeding ewe sales appear to

be slightly back on the year, which is understandable considering the winter we have had. I wish you all well with your autumn sales, be you buying or selling.

If you did not get chance to come and see us at the Royal Welsh Show, please call in and say hello this autumn – at the Builth Ram Sale on 23rd September or the Welsh Winter Fair on 2nd-3rd December.

Eastern

By Jonathan Barber,
Regional Manager



Well the Eastern Region has been enjoying the sunshine, even though that has led in many parts to a worrying decline in availability of grass. It has now rained a little and we are beginning to green up. At the time of writing harvest has been underway for a week or two, and we managed to reach 10 tonnes per hectare of winter barley in part of a 10ha field, with possible malting quality.

Volatility continues in the lamb market. However, lambs this week had moved up to 420p/kg, up 40p from the last week, which is a better way to go and cull ewe prices are good. Breeding ewe prices for good quality are pleasing – and do remember that the tup is half the flock and a very important half. So reward the good ram producers with a good price for their hard work. The NSA Eastern Region Ram Sale at Melton will be on Friday 20th September.

Another event for your diaries is to be held at Upper Wood Farm (North), Browns Lane, Maultby, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR29 3JQ, on 29th September, from 10.30am onwards. This is the home of Meg Jenkins, who earlier this year was presented with the Chris Lewis Award. It is being held on behalf of the East Anglian Sheepdog Society, it will be free and anyone within the sheep industry who is interested in working sheepdogs is very welcome to come along.

Our AGM will be held at the Heathcourt Hotel, Newmarket, at 6pm on 9th October 2013 followed by a speaker/s, which will be confirmed in due course.

We held a committee meeting at the end of July, followed by a presentation on all aspects of Schmallenberg from Matt Haslam of MSD Animal Health, who helped support the meeting – thank you. Matt was certainly one of the very best veterinary speakers who has presented to us – congratulations. All who attended I know would recommend attending his talk if you get the chance.

We wish George Hartley-Webb from our region all the best at Tech Ovin

for the European Finals of the Young Shepherds competition, which will be held at Bellac in Southern France.

Having spent most of the last three months attending shows, events, meetings and open days, I have listened to hundreds of farmers and there is no question that sheep farmers have a great level of resilience to everything that is thrown at them. I am writing this the day before jetting off to New Zealand on a study tour with a great group of people, led by Eblex. This tour is for us to learn from our fellows in NZ and for them to learn from us. Let's hope that as a result we shall all benefit.

One more date for your diaries – Eastern Region Winter Fair will be held at Melton Mowbray Market on Friday 31st January 2014.

Marches

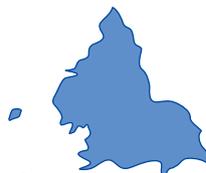
Notice is hereby given that the NSA Marches Region AGM will be held at 2pm on Saturday 21st September 2013 at Lower Berrow Farm, Ham Green, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 5TT, by kind permission of Emma and Andrew Baldwin.

There will also be a farm walk and guest speakers and we encourage all NSA Marches Region members to attend. Nominations for officers and/or new committee members are welcome and should be sent to the Angela Weston, NSA Marches Regional Secretary, on 01454 260220 or angelaweston1@o2.co.uk.



Northern

By Julie Sedgewick,
Regional Manager



We had our first regional committee meeting after NSA North Sheep in August. Our financial report confirmed the event is now much larger than even five years ago, with rather large expenses, and without the support of our sponsors we might not have made enough profit to run the region for the next two years. It only takes a very bad event (bad weather or a disease outbreak) and the region would not have an income for two years. All of the NSA regions are self-financed and the profits from the event go towards the running of the region, sponsorship support to young persons and assisting with travel for our regional representatives to NSA meetings in Malvern and London. Our members in Northern Region give up much of their spare time free of charge to attend meetings and assist at regional events.

We also welcomed three new



committee members to Northern Region at the meeting – Matt Bagley, Karl Collins and Adrian Bateson.

The region is also keen to assist in hosting a roadshow with Southwestern, who were awarded the contract to deliver the new English sheep movement database. We are aware that there will be a lot of information to convey to farmers in England about how the new system will change what is currently done when moving animals, whether they want to move to the e-reporting system or stay with a paper based system. We are hoping we can arrange meetings in November/December, so keep checking the NSA website for details.

We also discussed the consultation on ending the use of non-EID slaughter tag in England. The topic is part of a wider consultation on the introduction of an electronic movement reporting system, but the visual slaughter tag will raise the most concern. Please read the consultation document on the Defra website and send any views on the topic to NSA at Malvern.

We also discussed potential venues for the next NSA North Sheep, which will be held in the first week of June 2015 in Cumbria.

Northern Ireland

By Edward Adamson, Regional
Development Officer



What a relief it is to have another successful NSA Sheep NI behind us. It is only after the event and speaking to exhibitors and visitors that you can tell if things worked out well, and we now look forward two years and wonder how we can improve even more.

We have had to wait a long time for it, but July 2013 was a farmer's dream – long sunny days saw hay made in abundance for the first time in many years and high dry matter silage in the clamps. A good autumn to complement the summer would be ideal, as there are still some concerns about the quantity of forage saved to get us through the

winter.

The autumn breeding sales started with top quality stock in good demand with the tail ends harder to sell – no need to emphasise the lesson of that!

Consultations on CAP and the Rural Development Programme are coming to a close soon and we hope to influence decision makers to get a fair share for sheep farmers.

A few NI members made the journey down to man an NSA Stand at Tullamore Show, Ireland's biggest one day agricultural event. 60,000 visitors attend to enjoy the experience of watching over 1,300 cattle and 300 sheep compete for the various breed championships and awards. A huge array of around 600 trade stands catered for all tastes and provided an opportunity to see the latest in inventions, products, services, food and refreshments.

Scotland

By George Milne, Regional Development Officer

The NSA Scottish region has been very active in negotiations in regards to the CAP reform. The main things to consider going forward are the options that the Scottish Government has for sheep producers in the different areas of Scotland. In order to achieve this effectively it is our intention to hold a one-day conference with some key speakers in order to come up with ideas of what is best for all sheep keepers. To find this out we must see modelling figures for different parts of Scotland, whether it be LFA or non-LFA regions, so we can try to find a basic area payment that can accommodate for all different regions.

On a recent visit to the Lairg lamb sale I had the opportunity of staying the night 20 miles north west of Lairg – and this journey was a clear reminder of the amount of land that has been abandoned from sheep production in this area. To travel some 15 odd miles and not see any evidence of sheep being kept and passing two derelict houses shows the real need to have some form of activity in these areas in order to receive an area payment going forward.

It would appear that there are opportunities for young shepherds or new entrants to establish a business in these areas. However, if they are



NSA Scotland Chairman Sybil MacPherson and NSA Scotland President John Cameron visit NW Scotland to discuss stocking densities and SFP

to be able to set up viably then there will be a requirement for a significant payment or subsidy in order to achieve viable production, whilst also delivering environmental benefits at the same time.

The NSA Scottish region has also been involved in joint industry visits with the Scottish Government on two occasions to try and set a minimum stocking density in order to trigger activity to receive area payments. Whilst it is quite clear there are many variations across Scotland, it is important to have a level where all active farmers can fit into the new system, and which also allows for genuine newcomers who wish to actively manage sheep in a proper way for the future.

I would encourage all sheep farmers to make a point of attending this one-day conference – it is your opportunity to have a say in your future. Keep an eye out for conformation of the date and venue in due course.

South East

By Bob Blanden, Regional Manager

I am now able to confirm that we have a date and venue for NSA South Sheep 2014. Our hosts will be Tony Monnington and his family, who farm at Blackcap Farm, Firle, near Lewes, East Sussex. This 1,500 acre farm is tenanted from the Glynde Estate where John Ellman developed the Southdown breed over 200 years ago. However, the Monningtons have 550 Mule and Suffolk cross ewes put to Suffolk, Texel and Hampshire rams. As well as the sheep there are 50 suckler cows and wheat, spring barley and OSR.

The Organising Committee has decided to break the mould and move from mid-week to a Saturday – 28th June. This is to encourage a bigger attendance by recognising the fact there

are a large number of part-time sheep keepers in the South East, along with it being a little easier to travel around on Saturday in a very congested part of the world. Also it is hoped that school-age youngsters will be able to attend with their families. Please put the date your diary, and contact me to be involved in organising the event.

Further dates for your diaries are for a series of meetings around the region on two subjects at each meeting – the need for nutritional supplements with Jonathan Guy, and the latest on SBV with MSD Animal Health and Merial Animal Health. All meetings will start at 7pm and there will be light refreshments available, so please let me know if you will be attending.

3rd October Ashford Market
15th October Salisbury Market
16th October Thame Market
13th November Plumpton College

The final meeting in November will also be our Regional AGM and supper.

And for anyone in the South East Region under 27, don't forget we are looking to sponsor two people to attend the Sheep Breeders Round Table in November. Simply send me an email by 30th September outlining why you feel you benefit from attending. My contact details are in the panel to the left.

South West

By Sue Martin, Regional Manager

At our last AGM it was announced that I intend retiring as South West Manager at the AGM in 2014, and so we are now looking for a replacement. If any is interested in learning more about the position, see the advert on page 3. It is something I have really enjoyed doing and would highly recommend it to anyone who has an interest in sheep and likes meeting people.

A date for your diary is Sunday 15th September and a farm walk at 3pm by kind permission of Paul Tucker, Woolmers Farm, Bickington, Barnstaple, EX31 2JN. It would be helpful for catering purposes if people hoping to attend can contact me by Thursday 12th September. This is an extremely interesting farm, situated right on the estuary with the sheep grazing the salt marshes and the lambs now sold as salt marsh lambs. The date of the walk is partially governed by the tide times, and as a Sunday afternoon we hope for a large attendance. My contact details are in the panel on page 4.

Huge Support for NSA Sheep NI

By Edward Adamson, NSA NI Development Officer

This year's NSA Sheep NI event was once again held in Ballymena Livestock Market and lived up to all expectations. Excellent support from sponsors, trade exhibitors and sheep breed societies made an interesting and full day for visitors attending.

The theme for the event was 'Healthy sheep: Healthy profits' and the seminars reflected this with lameness, fluke and sustainable control of parasites being three of the topics. Marketing and the use of performance figures made up the five seminars, which all attracted full attendances as visitors try to learn best practice.

The Ulster Bank Young Shepherd Competition was won for the second



NSA NI Chairman Maurice McHenry (far left) and Committee Member Campbell Tweed (far right) look on as NSA Chief Executive Phil Stocker (centre left) presents members of the Poll Dorset & Horned Sheep Club with first prize Best Sheep Breed Stand.



Fleece competition winners Freda Magill (inside right) and Robert Macauley (inside left) with the judge, BWMB sponsor and NSA NI Chairman Maurice McHenry (far right).

time by Jonathan McKelvey of Castledearg, with Adam Crockett, also from Castledearg, coming second.

The food and craft marquee was packed with stalls, alongside the mobile kitchen supplied by GoodFoodNI where celebrity chef Sean Owens kept up a constant banter with the spectators while tantalising their taste buds with various samples of lamb dishes.

As usual the sheepdog sale was one of the main attractions where a large crowd saw dogs top at 1,200gns.

A small group of dedicated and hardworking NSA NI members were kept busy throughout the day but were rewarded with many words of praise from exhibitors and visitors. We were delighted to see so many NSA staff and members from NSA HQ making the trip over to Northern Ireland.

Competition Results

Ulster Bank Young Shepherd of the Year: 1, Jonathan McKelvey, Castledearg; 2, Adam Crockett, Castledearg; 3, Mark Hamilton, Castledearg.

Fleeces: Long wool, Freda Magill, Rathfriland (Wensleydale) – also overall winner; short wool, Robert MacCauley, Co Down (Galway); coloured, Rodney Boyd, Garvagh (Blue Texel).

Indoor Trade Stand: 1, Scottish Sheep Strategy, Edinburgh; 2, Easyrams, Pikesend Farm, Ellesmere, Shropshire; 3, Dupre/Coloured Leicester Longwool, Ballynahinch, Co Down.

Outdoor Trade Stand: 1, Quad X, Ahoghill, Ballymena; O'Donovan Engineering, Coachford, Co Cork; 3, George Hamilton Machinery/David Ritchie Ltd, Randalstown.

Sheep Breed Stand: 1, Dorset Horn & Poll Dorset; 2, Lley; 3, Wensleydale Longwool.

Over 25 Stockjudging: 1, John Mawhinney Ballymena; 2, Philip White, Portglenone; 3, Bryans McIlroy, Larne.

Under 25 Stockjudging: 1=, Ellen Murphy, Antrim, and Caroline Lyons, Ballynahinch; 3, Mark Breen, Augher.

Below: Chef Sean Owens (far right) with UFU Policy Officer Gillian Gallagher (far left), NSA NI Chairman Maurice McHenry (inside left), UFU President Harry Sinclair (centre), LMC Chairman Pat O'Rourke (inside right) and NSA NI Regional Development Officer Edward Adamson.



NSA's Young People and Sheep Initiative Continues to Grow

With eight young shepherds winging their way to France to compete in the European Young Shepherds Competition, all having qualified via NSA competitions, it seems like an apt time to look at NSA's on-going support of young people in the sheep sector and our plans for the future.

This year has been packed with activity in addition to the young shepherd competitions, including scholarships to attend the Oxford Farming Conference and the inaugural NSA Youthful Shepherd Competition hosted by NSA South East Region. Our new membership category for Under 27s is also proving very popular, with a lot of young people taking advantage of the half price subscription fee to become a NSA member.

Activities such as these, which are instigated by the NSA regions and, in the main, have been happening for many years, form the bedrock of the NSA Young People and Sheep initiative. However, two other major projects are underway – the development of a new website and the creation of an annual NSA Ambassador Group.

Both of these projects will be unveiled at a 'Getting on the Farming Ladder' event on Tuesday 8th October, hosted by sheep farmer Tim White and organised by NSA and the Royal Agricultural Society of England – see panel for more details.

The aim of the website will be to provide a much needed signposting tool for young people in the sheep sector, listing relevant advice, knowledge transfer, colleges/universities, events, support, mentors and contacts. It will link to complimentary activities by other organisations to avoid replication of services, but also provide information where we feel there are gaps in what is already available.

The new website will also strengthen the service NSA already provides via the NSA Weekly Email Update, in advertising on-farm jobs being offering by NSA members, and providing the contact details of young people looking for employment or work experience.

Also at the event on 8th October, NSA is planning to unveil the application process for the 2014 Ambassador Group. This will be the first ever NSA

Ambassador Group, with the hope of running one annually after that. Between nine and 12 young people will be selected via an application process that will be open to anyone involved in the sheep sector, be it farming or in an ancillary role.

The successful applicants will attend a number of networking and training days through 2014, giving them the opportunity to meet likeminded people, increase their understanding of technical sheep issues, receive coaching in personal development and business management skills, and take up opportunities to give something back to the sector by getting involved in wider NSA activities.

More information about the Ambassador Group and the application process will be unveiled at the event on 8th October, but if you are not able to attend then make sure you don't miss the next edition of Sheep Farmer magazine – and keep an eye on the NSA website too. Alternatively contact NSA Head Office or email youngentrants@nationalsheep.org.uk.

European Young Shepherds

The 5th European Young Shepherd Competition (or European Ovinpiades) is being held in Limoges, South France, in early September. The age requirements are slightly different the NSA version of the competition, as competitors are asked to be under 24 and involved in education.

The competitors will sit a short exam, answering 15 questions about the sheep industry in Europe, the Common Agricultural Policy, nutrition, breeding, selection, health and current affairs, plus a challenge to identify 15 sheep breeds from photos. They will then be asked to demonstrate their skills with a mobile handling system by separating three identified ewes from a group of 15, followed by a foot trimming test, classification of four finished lambs and an assessment of quad bike skills.

Representing England: Sam Bullingham, Okehampton, Devon, and George Hartley-Webb, Thetford, Norfolk

Representing Wales: Guto Roberts, Conwy, North Wales, and Rhydian Thomas, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire.

Representing Scotland: David Colthart, Pitlochry, Perthshire, and Ian Christie, Aboyne, Aberdeenshire

Representing Northern Ireland: Adam Crockett and Jonathan McKelvey, both from Castledearg, Co. Tyrone

Our thanks for Eblex for supporting the cost of the competitors going out to France.



Young People & Sheep Event

Manor Farm, Sutton Mandeville, Wiltshire, SP3 5NL
Tuesday 8th October, 10am-3pm

This is a free of charge event for all young people in the sheep sector, whether you're running your own business, taking more responsibility on the family farm, just starting out, or hoping to one day start your own flock.

It is being hosted by Tim White, who runs a flock of Easy Care sheep on rented ground over a 100-mile radius. He successfully climbed the farming ladder with no family farm behind him and will share his experiences at the event, as well as providing a farm tour.

Also speaking is 25-year-old Marie Prebble, NSA South East Committee Member and highly successful NSA Young Shepherd of the Year competitor. She will be sharing her experiences of running a sheep enterprise on a tenanted farm near Canterbury, Kent.

Nuffield Scholars Catherine Nakielny and Rob Hodgkins will also be talking about their travels abroad, looking at innovative sheep breeding techniques in other major sheep producing nations.

There is no fee for attending the NSA and RASE-organised event, which includes a buffet lunch, but you must register in advance at www.rase.org.uk/events. All are welcome to attend (NSA membership not required). For additional information contact the NSA.



Why re-invent the wheel?



Because it will save you bucket loads.

Rumevite®

The modern range of forage supplements



Sheep



Cattle



Garlic



Magnesium



Cattle Booster



Sheep Super Energy + Fish Oil



High Energy & Protein



Mag Booster

Rumevite is tried and trusted, yet better value today than ever before.

Rumevite formulations can save you up to £100 per tonne against comparable bucket-based supplements.

Drive down the cost of feeding with Rumevite.

- Improve grazing intake and forage utilisation
- Reduce labour input
- Environmentally friendly, up to 85% less plastic packaging than bucket supplements
- Suitable for all forage-based systems
- New mineral blocks to supplement grazing



Freephone: 0800 833 675

www.rumenco.co.uk

Rumenco Ltd., Stretton House, Derby Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE13 0DW email: advisory@rumenco.co.uk

Cautious Optimism for Autumn Breeding Sheep Sales

By Howard Walsh,
Contributor

Quality is selling, as it always does, and a better than anticipated start to the autumn breeding sheep sales has given cautious optimism it will continue. However, there is a clear shortage of cash after the long, costly winter and the general feeling in the trade is that buyers are looking for value for money. The only real question mark is over prospects for running lambs later in September.

The scene setter, as usual, was the Thame Summer Sheep Fair with some 24,450 head penned. Simon Draper from the three-man selling team said: "This year's buyers seemed more particular, being prepared to give a little more for the better quality sheep in all breeds, but reluctant to purchase the plainer sorts where the winter had not been kind on them."

Mules were down about £8 on the year, Suffolks similar to last year, while continental types sold to a supply-

influenced trade, where fewer forward averaged £4 to £5 more on the year.

More recently, two other seasonal fixtures have taken place – the first of North West Auction's annual Mule and Masham sales and Rugby Farmers Mart's August Fair. NWA's Matthew Probert said the 3,600 head met 'a very good trade'. Strong Mule shearlings that had wintered well were regularly £160-£185 and Mules averaged £148 overall. Mashams averaged £139 while the best continental types were from £170 to £200.

Looking hopeful

"Buyers were looking for sheep to put to the tup sooner rather than later and it is looking hopeful for the remainder of the main selling season. I suspect tuppung lambs will meet a similar trade to last year, but there could be a bit more caution around running lambs," said Mr Probert.

Almost 6,000 sheep were penned for Rugby's fixture and auctioneer Tom Wrench said he felt there had been a clear lift in prices since Thame:

Poor sheep were difficult to place but otherwise a good day with a move to Mules and the best continentals and

away from Suffolks. Best continentals sold to £168 and levelled at £118 (Beltex and Texel types). Mule shearlings topped at £160 and averaged £121 - but there was also a surprisingly firm trade for the 470 older ewes, which would average £87, said Mr Wrench.

Cash flow

Other sales were only just getting underway in mid-August, and Skipton's Jeremy Eaton said this year some of the early sales, albeit on their usual dates, were 'just early enough' for some people and he believed money was genuinely tight. Over in Gisburn, auctioneer Rachel Capstick agreed, suggesting prime lamb producers were perhaps less likely to part with cash early on, for sheep they would not tuppung until September/October.

Livestock Auctioneers Association executive secretary Chris Dodds warned however, people should not leave it too late to enter the market: "There seems to be fewer sheep available so anyone needing to replenish their flocks will not get the choice if they leave it too long. There is not an abundance of money out there, but quality always sells."

NSA Ram Sales

Ram sales too have seen a pleasing start to the season, and the NSA South West event saw a sale record of 1,650gns for a Suffolk. Suffolks were the most numerous breed on offer and 66 head averaged £581.64. Texels also met strong demand, with a top of 1,100gns and average £473. Beltex topped at £577.50 while Charollais rams saw a top of £840 and shearlings averaging £516, which was £48 up on the year.

A last minute sale of the Charollais champion for 1,500gns injected some excitement into the NSA Wales and Border Early Ram sale. There a total of 312 rams were sold in a day that saw buyers in optimistic mood. They were willing to pay for quality and the top price for both Charollais and Texels breeds was higher than last year, with the Charollais ram lamb average up £70 at £443.

Below: As with other breeding sales around the country, there was cautious optimism at the NSA Wales and Border Early Ram Sale. The main Builth Welsh ram sale is on 23rd September.



NSA Membership



Helping NSA to help you

The NSA membership subscription is vital to us – it funds our work providing a voice of sheep farmers, and enables us to provide a wide range of benefits to members, including this magazine. Help us to help you by encouraging friends and neighbours to become NSA members too – and if they join before 23rd September 2014 you will both get entered into a free prize draw to win this Rappa mobile sheep yard worth £6,800.



Details of existing member who recommended the new member below and wishes to be entered into the Rappa free prize draw.

(A correct membership number or address is needed for a valid entry.)

Name:

NSA Membership Number:

OR address/postcode:

Membership Subscription

NSA OFFICE USE

- Individual = £50
- Under 27's = £25
(Please send us a copy of your passport, driving licence or YFC card)
- Eire, Europe & Overseas = £55 (UK£)

Application Form

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

DOB: (if applying for Under 27 Membership)

NSA OFFICE USE: Proof of age seen?

Where did you pick up this application form?

Please use Gift Aid to make your subscription worth more to NSA. For every pound you give us, we could earn an extra 25p from the Inland Revenue.

To qualify for Gift Aid what you pay in income tax or capital gains must at least equal the amount we shall claim in a tax year.

Gift Aid Declaration:

I want the National Sheep Association to treat all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise as Gift Aid donation.

To Gift Aid please tick here



Payment Options

You send a cheque for the full amount made payable to 'NSA' – or fill out the Direct Debit instruction below to qualify for a 20% discount in your first year *(excluding Eire, Europe and Overseas members)*.

Direct Debit

Instruction to your Bank/Building Society to pay Direct Debits. Please complete Parts 1-5 to instruct your branch to make payments directly from your account. Then return the form to the address below.

Originators Identification Code

9 5 6 8 8 9

1. Name and address of your Bank/Building Society

The Manager of:

(Bank/Building Society)

Address:

Postcode:

2. Name of account:

3. Account number:

4. Sort code:

5. Instruction to your Bank/Building Society: *Please pay National Sheep Association Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction to the safeguards assured by The Direct Debit Guarantee.*

Signature:

Date:

For full terms and conditions of the Rappa Prize Draw please go to www.nationalsheep.org.uk/rappadraw.

I do not want my contact details passed to Rappa

The referring member does not want their details passed to Rappa

New Event Organised for Sheep Contractors

By Bob Blanden, sheep contractor and NSA South East Regional Manager

Everyone who reads this magazine will know that although some people believe sheep can be farmed with 'a dog and stick' approach, the reality is that there is actually a lot of work attached to sheep.

That aspect of labour requirement will vary with location and management practice and, to cope with peaks, it is not uncommon to call upon professionals who hire themselves out along with equipment and expertise. There is nothing new about this – shearing gangs have been touting their trade for hundreds of years, pregnancy scanning has been around for nearly 30 years, and more recently, contractors have offered a variety of methods of applying chemicals for ectoparasite control. This is in addition to providing labour for all sorts of extra work, be it foot trimming, lambing, preparing stock for sale, getting sheep ready for tugging, or 'looking' down on the Romney Marsh.

At about the time that scanning was about to start, five likeminded sheep contractors met up at the NSA South Sheep event, held in Oxfordshire that year, and with the help of then NSA Chief Executive John Thorley, decided to set up an organisation to deal with certain issues that contractors were facing – and so the British Association of Sheep Contractors (BASC) was formed. For more than a dozen years BASC dealt with a number of issues, and one of its greatest successes was setting up work permits for overseas shearers when shearing was not considered to be a skilled occupation by the Overseas Labour Department.

Livestock contractors

Eventually it was seen that it would be to the advantage of all to amalgamate BASC into a livestock section of the National Association of Agricultural Contractors (NAAC). This saw success when dealing with such issues as para-professionals scanning cows and off-label use of sheep dips after the withdrawal of the compulsory plunge dipping regulations.

However, possibly due to the

Weekend Meeting of Sheep Contractors

Friday 29th and Saturday 30th November, traveling home on Sunday 1st December.

Near Cirencester Market, Gloucestershire

Please register your interest with NSA Head Office
Call 01684 892661 or email enquiries@nationalsheep.org.uk.

perception that NAAC only deals with the annual review of work permits, we find that in recent years the number of members has reduced dramatically. If this situation were to continue, with such a reduction of membership within its livestock section, the NAAC may reconsider if the workload for dealing with work permits can continue to be justified.

Reinvigoration

Hence NSA has been asked to assist with reinvigorating this important element of the sheep industry, as we can see a lot of benefits in there being a specialist group. Contracting has often been a route that many young people have been able to use to get a foothold into the industry, and they have used it as a financial stepping stone and an expansion to their knowledge. Contractors gain extensive knowledge by working on many different and varied units which, in turn, leads to a situation where that knowledge transfer and information gathering is recognised for its worth and benefit to all.

Meeting up

In the far off days of BASC we realised the importance of meeting up and communicating with each other to share knowledge, and soon realised how much could be learned both in a meeting and over a pint (or two) afterwards.

So it is proposed to kick-start the process again and draw together everyone who offers services by having a weekend meeting on the edge of the Cotswolds near Cirencester Market. The date will be 29th November - 1st December with some quality speakers on the Friday afternoon, perhaps a visit on the Saturday to include some activity and then an informal dinner on Saturday evening.

If you are interested or know someone who should be, please use the contact details in the panel above.



Shearers, scanners and all types of sheep contractors are invited to the event in November.

SINGLE INTRAMUSCULAR INJECTION
DECTOMAX[™]
doramectin

Injectable Solution



Dectomax Injection Offer
Farmer offer while stocks last.
Purchase 2x500ml, get 200ml free.

Dectomax[®]
Take Pride in your Sheep
One handy jab treats worms and scab.

**Advice on the use of this or alternative medicines
must be sought from the medicine prescriber.**

For Further Information please contact: Elanco Animal Health, Lilly House,
Priestley Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG24 9NL. Telephone 01256 353131
Dectomax Injection for Sheep and Cattle contains 1% doramectin w/v (10mg/ml).
Use medicines responsibly www.noah.co.uk/responsible

Advice should be sought from a suitably qualified person prior to use.

[POM-VPS] Vm00006/4121



Trip to New Zealand Opens Positive Lamb Export Dialogue

By Phil Stocker, NSA

In the last issue of Sheep Farmer I mentioned that several representatives of our sheep industry were travelling down to NZ to learn what was behind their marketing decisions of 2012/3 and to discuss future trends in global sheep markets.

I was lucky enough to be one of the participants on the trip, which was funded and admirably organised by Eblex, who put together an action packed and varied programme of visits and meetings. I'm being completely honest when I say the expense of this trip was a very good use of levy payers money (the impact of NZ lamb on our trade last winter led to much consternation amongst sheep farmers and some very painful financial losses), and honest too when I say this was no holiday! On a trip that lasted some 10 days there wasn't one without an internal flight involved and a meeting or visit at the end. I didn't spend two consecutive nights in the same bed for the duration!

We managed to meet with many staff and representatives, across both the North and South Island, of:

- Beef and Lamb NZ (the equivalent of our UK levy bodies).
- The four main NZ lamb processors and exporters.
- Several farmers and farmer groups, including some farmers involved in Meat Industry Excellence who are working hard to try to optimise farmer collaboration.
- Lincoln University, a leading agricultural academic establishment.
- AgResearch, a leading sheep research and knowledge transfer body.

As guests of Beef and Lamb NZ we also had the opportunity to attend their annual National Sheep Awards in Invercargill, where we saw farmers from across NZ rewarded for outstanding performance and innovation.

This was my first ever trip to NZ. The



NZ farmer Steve Wyn Harris routinely weighing newborn lambs for progeny testing.

first livestock I saw from the plane were Belted Galloway cattle, and on arrival my immediate impression was of a very green, lightly populated and farming-centric country. This was late August, the end of their winter season, but winter in August and the weather so mild with so much grass growth is still unnerving. Everyone I met was incredibly friendly and giving with information, with many offers to 'come back and spend a bit more time'.

Building links

Overall we will have made many contacts and built relationships that can only help stand us in good stead in the future. Although you can never say never, the relationships we made could go a long way to helping avoid what I would say was anti-competitive practice that was forced on the UK sheep farmers last year, when lamb was being placed on the UK market with both NZ producers and processors losing money, with product often placed on the shelves of retailers at even lower prices and being used as a loss leader to encourage other

Sheep industry representatives on the trip:-

- Nick Allen, Eblex Sector Director
- Chris Lloyd, Eblex Industry Development Manager and Head of Knowledge Transfer
- Paul Heyhoe, AHDB Market Intelligence
- Phil Stocker, NSA Chief Executive
- Jonathan Barber, farmer, NSA Vice President and EBLEX Board member
- David Raine, farmer, NSA Vice President and NFU Livestock Board member
- Charles Sercombe, farmer, NSA English Committee member and NFU Livestock Board Chairman
- Peter Garbutt, NFU Livestock Policy Adviser

purchases.

Understandably we are always required to demonstrate that we are not engaged in activities that would take away competition in the market place, supposedly so that consumers get the full benefit of competition driving prices down. However activities that unfairly disadvantage a particular sector, and often result in even less competition in the market anyway, too often get ignored.

Now I'm back home and reflecting on the trip, I feel we know a lot more about why last year's situation arose and what the future might bring.

When we look at why last year's situation arose, we know there were several UK-based factors behind our price collapse last autumn – the bad summer weather, delayed lamb finishing and poor export conditions for UK products – but that does not answer the question of why New Zealand import prices were so low last year, when Kiwi farmers and processors were losing money?

UK retailers are very efficient in their buying negotiations and, in addition, they

Rugged rural landscape on the North Island, about one inland from Napier.

are all keen to make sure they remain competitive against their competitors. On the back of strong UK retailer pressure there was a desperate need amongst processors to stimulate cash flow to ease high borrowings and avoid being caught out with overcapacity (NZ has around 30% more capacity that is required and keeping plants full results in plant efficiency).

Particularly at Christmas, New Year and Easter, some UK retailers used NZ lamb, particularly legs, as a loss leader, actually retailing at prices lower than those being paid to NZ exporters. Similar discounts or deals were not being done with UK lamb and this led to huge price differentials with UK lamb being uncompetitive.

So will the situation arise again? Both NZ and the UK (and other sheep producing nations) are working in and are affected by global markets, whether they export or sell domestically. Talking to our NZ counterparts made it clear that we see ourselves as complementary rather than in competition – we are after all part of a declining global farming community with an interest to not just survive but actually regain some of our lost ground. It is quite reasonable to consider ways for markets to be encouraged to work in a more ethical manner, particularly in an era where fair trade is accepted as having social and economic benefits.

Everyone we spoke to agreed that market conditions have changed rapidly and the likelihood is that there will be far more competition and demand for lamb on the global market in the future – and this is for high value as well as lower value cuts. For example, New Zealand's diverse range of international markets now includes an increased demand for high value cuts in China, as the number of wealthy customers in the country increases. So while 40% of all NZ legs

What else did we learn in New Zealand?

- 90% of all lambs killed in NZ are certified to Halal standards, but all lambs are pre-slaughter stunned. Stunning is required by law (whereas we have a derogation for stunning in the UK) and the ethnic markets that request and buy Halal happily accept the product.
- The NZ Government (and the tax payer) has invested heavily for a long period in developing relationships with trading partners. NZ farming is also supported by high levels of research and knowledge transfer support. Similar levels of support are not evident in the UK.
- Use of breeding values amongst ram breeders in NZ is common place with around 350 recorded breeders supplying 70% of all rams. While it is recognised that the UK structure is very different and our breed diversity is desirable, ram values are clearly a valuable tool that has led to efficiency improvements. In addition, processor demand and related incentives have led to lamb producers seeking rams with proven breeding values.
- Somehow both NZ and the UK need to drive substantial behavioural change in retailers, processors and producers. Given the supply and demand predictions, this needs to happen for food security reasons as well as being highly desirable for social and economic benefits. For this to happen we need to work on initiatives and commitment that lead to real trust between trading partners.

currently come to UK, one industry player suggested to us that it would be less than 10% in future years.

New Zealand is unlikely to fill its EU quota due to this strong demand from China, as well as other countries. However the impact on the UK market will still be dependent on the economies of other EU states, their ability to buy NZ lamb and their demand for UK lamb.

Lamb production in New Zealand in 2013/14 is predicted to be down by 1.6 million lambs, to around 18.7m lambs. With Australian and UK lamb production also down this year, the global trading market could be down by around 5m lambs this season.

Fewer lambs

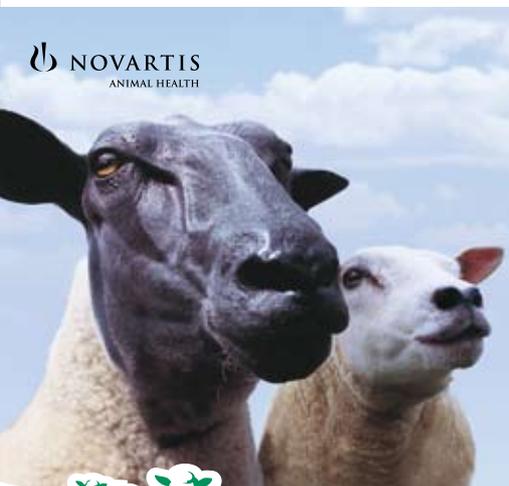
Conversion from sheep production to dairying continues in New Zealand, and the result will further reduce NZ lamb production. Any future environmental limitations and controls placed on dairy farms are likely to be dealt with by further investment in infrastructure

rather than a switch back to lamb production, due to the investment already made.

It is in our interests to keep lamb on the shelf and available to consumers – if it is done right then NZ supplies keep volume moving and keep lamb on people's menus. The answer has to be greater public awareness of the benefits and eating quality of lamb, which is a premium meat in both eating quality and all the public goods that come from sheep farming.



Out-wintered ewe hoggs on lush winter grass.



For further details about FASIMEC® DUO, visit: www.farmanimalhealth.co.uk or telephone: 01276 694402
Novartis Animal Health UK Ltd., Frimley Business Park, Frimley, Camberley, Surrey, GU16 7SR.

FASIMEC® DUO 50 mg/ml + 1 mg/ml Oral Suspension for Sheep contains 50 mg/ml triclabendazole and 1 mg/ml ivermectin. Fasinex 5% Oral Suspension contains 5 mg/ml triclabendazole. FASIMEC® DUO and Fasinex® are registered trademarks of Novartis AG, Basel, Switzerland. Advice on the use of these or alternative medicines must be sought from the medicine prescriber. **Use medicines responsibly** (www.noah.co.uk/responsible). [POM-VPS]. FAB/0613/602 rdp19388

* Triclabendazole, the active in Fasinex® 5% and Fasinex® 100

FASIMEC® DUO – The combination drench with *Fasinex®* and *ivermectin*.

One dose against fluke and worms that delivers results.



Mix of Breeds and Selling Options Suits Family and Farm

By Joanne Pugh, NSA

With his stock sold as a mixture of finished lambs, store lambs, quality rams and in-demand breeding females, NSA South West Regional Chairman Robert Jordan doesn't like to put all his eggs in one basket. And this variety of selling options – coupled with a wide selection of breeds – suits both the land type and his family's traditions and interests.

Robert and his brother David are the fourth generation of the Jordan family on the farm, and Robert and his wife Rebecca already have a budding fifth generation in the form of Charlotte (10) and Jack (7). Despite their long history in South West England, it is almost like stumbling across a corner of Scotland tucked away on the edge of Dartmoor, Devon, when you come across the family's Galloway cattle and Scottish Blackface ewes. But when you see them standing alongside South Devon cows, North Country Cheviots, Herdwicks, Scotch Mules, Texels and Greyface Dartmoor sheep (not to mention the oldest registered herd of Dartmoor ponies in the UK) you begin to appreciate the variety at Moortown Farm, Gidleigh, Chagford.

These mainly traditional breeds all suit the farm, which is a mixture of in-bye

“It's terrible land, but that's why we do so well selling tups, because they can go anywhere from here and do well.”

Robert Jordan



The Jordan's are seeing strong demand for their home-bred Texel rams.

and common land, where spring arrives late and the peat and granite soil makes finishing stock off grass difficult. But this loyalty to traditional breeds does not stop Robert and his family being forward-looking – instead of being limited by what the farm offers, they are striving to improve pasture where they can and sell an increasing number of finished lambs each year.

Better grass

“We sell 100 of our best lambs, finished off grass, from the end of June, and are increasing this number as we improve our grassland,” Roberts says, adding that many of his store lambs are sold at more than 30kg and ‘don't need a lot more to be ready’.

“We plant stubble turnips and kale each year, to graze ewes on in spring, and we use this to improve our grassland by reseeding behind them. The fields we can plough are few, but we have had success direct drilling and will continue this where we can.”

The farm is 225ha (550 acres) of in-bye land, made up of 175ha (430 acres) owned and 50ha (120 acres) rented. It is complemented by a 200ha (500-acre) moorland enclosure rented from the Duchy Estate, plus access rights to the 1,000ha (2,500-acre) Gidleigh

Farm facts

- Moortown Farm, Gidleigh, Chagford, ran by Robert and Rebecca Jordan, Robert's parents John and Diane and brother David.
- Robert is the current NSA South West Regional Chairman, finishing his two-year term in February 2014.
- The farm supports a mix of sheep breeds on common and in-bye land, ranging from 300m to 425m (1,000-1,400ft) above sea level.
- All store and finished lambs are sold through Exeter Market, and breeding stock sold at market, breeding sales and from home.
- 50 South Devon cows calved in Oct/Nov and 50 in April/May, all indoors; 100 Galloway cattle calved in April/May, mainly outside.
- Some calves kept as replacements, others marketed as breeding heifers or sold as suckled store calves.
- Whole family keen on showing sheep, cattle and Dartmoor ponies. Very successful year, including inter-breed pairs (Blackface), Blackface champion and Cheviot champion at Royal Bath and West, and any other breed champion (Cheviot) at Devon Show.
- Silage, hay and haylage made in mid-July, and root crops grown annually, plus straw and other feed bought in.
- Farm committed to a variety of environmental stewardship agreements, including HLS and UELS.

Common. The common land is used to support 550 Scottish Blackface and 150 Herdwick ewes, mostly kept pure but with the occasional Blackface cross

Below: Bought-in Scotch Mules produce three crops of Charollais and Suffolk lambs before being sold on.



Herdwick thrown in. These hill ewes are all 'leared' (hefted) to the common and spend just three weeks of the year (at tupping time) on the in-bye land, when 400 in-bye ewes are over-wintering at a dairy farm to ease up pressure on the grass.

"The hill ewes are very low input, low output – if we can get 90% weaned then we're doing well," says Robert, giving tick control as the biggest input cost. Ticks are a problem across the farm, with ewes and lambs all have to be treated regularly, and very few cattle bought in, as a closed herd appears to encourage a natural immunity that bought in heifers and bulls just can't match, even with regular chemical control. The common supports 100 pedigree South Devon and 100 Galloway cattle through the summer, with 50 of Galloways out-wintered there too.

In-bye ewes

The in-bye land is used to run 140 North Country Cheviot ewes, all kept pure and averaging around 150% weaned, plus 170 Scotch Mules crossed to the Suffolk and averaging about 170% weaned. There are also 20 pedigree Texels, ran for commercial ram production, and a handful of Greyface Dartmoor ewes, kept to encourage the enthusiasm Charlotte and Jack already have for showing, and to teach them about the history of the area and the breed their great grandfather used to keep when he first came to the farm. The children are also keenly aware of their heritage in that they are already competent horse riders and help gather the hill ewes at key times of the year, as while the farm has moved forward in many aspects, the rough ground and rocky outcrops will never be accommodating to vehicles or quad bikes.

The Blackface and Herdwick ewes are put to the tup in mid-November and lamb



A mix of Blackface, Herdwick and Cheviot tups used on the farm.



Robert and Rebecca Jordan with Charlotte (10) and Jack (7).

outside, while the other females are tupped three weeks earlier and lambed outside but with the option of coming inside for 24 hours after birth if needed.

Progeny within all the breeds is watched closely for signs of promise and a select number of Texel, Cheviot and Blackface rams are sold as breeding stock, plus some Cheviot and Suffolk Mule females. All other lambs are sold mainly as stores, apart from 100 finished lambs and all the Scottish Blackface wether lambs.

The Blackface ewes are kept pure, as Robert prefers to buy in his Scotch Mules, purchasing 75 ewe lambs from Dumfriesshire each year and putting them to a Charollais as lambs, before switching to the Suffolk. This is because there is strong demand for three-year-old Scotch Mules, but only for uniform batches of females that Robert feels he would only be able to achieve if he crossed a large number of his Blackfaces. Robert says he could probably push these Mules to lamb at 200% if he kept them for longer, but has a good business model by getting three crops of lambs and selling them on.

As with buying in the Mules, there is a similar irony in Robert and Rebecca breeding Texel rams and using a Suffolk on their own stock. But the demand in the area is for black-faced lambs, be they for breeding or finishing.

"The Suffolk lambs are always a few pounds ahead of the white-faced lambs around here," says Robert. "If I could sell all my lambs deadweight I would have no hesitation in swapping to the Texel, especially given the issue of finding a commercial-type Suffolk tup, but we just can't finish lambs here.

"It's terrible land, but that's why we do so well selling tups, because they can go anywhere from here and do well. We like showing, but us trying to get Texel ready early to compete with the lowland men is impossible."

With her family being early converts to the breed, Rebecca brought an enthusiasm for Texels to Moortown and overcame Robert's initial scepticism. "We had a few when we were first married and I never thought they would do – but they are very hardy sheep and do well here," he says.

Performance

So from the Galloways and Scottish Blackfaces arriving in the 1940s, to the Texels making an entrance more recently, it is clear the breeds at Moortown all have to prove themselves and earn their keep year after year. After all, they have to keep up with the family's determination to keep improving, be it pushing for better grass to finish more prime lambs or striving for top breeding animals. And if the proof is in the pudding, what better evidence than Robert and Rebecca topping the Texel ring at the NSA South West Ram Sale this August.

More online

This is the third in an on-going series featuring NSA regional chairmen from around the UK. If you've missed previous articles on Geoff Lawn (recently retired NSA Northern Region Chairman) and Bob Payne (NSA Central Region Chairman) you will find them in the members-only area of the NSA website.

The members-only area also features electronic versions of Sheep Farmer magazine, back editions of the Weekly Email Update, minutes of NSA committee meetings, and fact sheets on drivers' hours, tachographs and trailer-towing guidelines. If you are unsure of your log-in details for the website, call 01684 892661 or email membership@nationalsheep.org.uk.

Movement Recording Changes

By Phil Stocker, NSA

The non-EID slaughter tag was seen as a hard-won concession for sheep farmers in England and Wales in 2010, giving them the option (unlike in Scotland and Northern Ireland) to use a single visual slaughter tag or a single EID slaughter tag in lambs going straight to an abattoir or via a collection centre or red market.

But use of the EID slaughter tag has been falling, with only 31% of single batch tags sold last year being electronic, and the incorrect use of non-EID tags creates problems reporting movements of mixed batches of lambs from different farms (batch-within-batch).

Defra has proposed removing the visual tag as an option in England and, with a 20th September deadline to respond to a consultation, NSA has been discussing the issue widely in all our forums and regions, including Wales, as there is no doubt the Welsh Government will be making similar noises soon.

England is slightly ahead of Wales because a contract has been awarded to a company called SouthWestern to develop an English electronic database to record sheep movements by 1st April 2014. Wales is also working towards an electronic system, but has yet to decide how to deliver it.

‘Real time’

The electronic system in England will mean farmers, abattoirs, markets and collection centres will be able to report movements online, with an electronic database capturing information in ‘real time’, or certainly much more quickly than the current system of putting AML forms in the post. Farmers without internet access will still be able to post a form, but to the database provider instead of their Local Authority.

Logic suggests that non electronic tags in an otherwise electronic system will create problems, but can an additional 50p per lamb be justified for lambs that are genuinely going straight to an abattoir? This is an incredibly tricky issue, so let’s go back to the points of principle and remind ourselves what the objectives of individual identification and movement reporting are all about.

Although originally linked to the old ewe premium and guarding against fraud, nowadays it is about protecting against exotic disease spread – specifically foot-and-mouth, but other



Mixed batches of store lambs without EID tags are creating problems.

trade-affecting diseases too. The aim is to have a system that can quickly identify movements to isolate disease spread, reduce culling and keep trade open as far as possible (or reopen it as quickly as possible). Any management information farmers choose to link to individual sheep is an added, optional bonus.

Simplicity

So it’s quite simple – we need a system to prevent foot-and-mouth disease spread. There is extremely little risk when sheep remain on their holding of birth and, that is why we still believe tagging is not necessary until they move for the first time. If their first and only move is straight to an abattoir, with no other collections, mixing or unloading in between, the disease risk is so low that EID tagging cannot be justified.

So what are the potential implications of retaining the non-EID tagging option for these animals? The first one is still having a variety of tagging options that may confuse and complicate, and the second is distortion of the market place caused by additional costs for lamb finishers selling live and savings for those selling dead.

The NSA is one of the strongest supporters of livestock markets, but 90% of NSA members communicating with us on this matter see no justification for mandatory EID tagging for lambs going

direct to slaughter – and going back to the principle of what we are trying to achieve, they are right and we will keep reiterating this.

Ministers and Defra officials have made it very clear they want full EID, saying our current ‘non-compliance’ with EU law puts them in a very difficult negotiating position in Brussels. In response to that, NSA will be making two very clear points when we reply to the Defra consultation.

Firstly, we do not see the justification for EID tagging for lambs truly going direct from holding of birth direct to slaughter, and we do not accept this will damage our highly valued livestock markets. The marts are there to put competition and value into lambs, so the additional cost of the tag will be realised and returned to the farmer.

Secondly, if sheep farmers must take on the cost of additional electronic tagging and adopt a new movements database in April, this MUST be met with commitments from others too. These include:-

Tolerance

Defra committing to re-opening discussions on cross compliance tolerance in Brussels – the more we are doing to protect and defend ourselves the greater the justification for a level of tolerance in line with the effectiveness of the technology.

Doing away with the six-day standstill – electronic records that are instantly accessible should remove the need for a standstill, as is the case in Northern Ireland. In the event of a foot-and-mouth outbreak movements would be immediately closed down while the database is interrogated to trace affected movements.

An equivalent level of mandatory recording and reporting by abattoirs (via markets where appropriate) back to farmers, so the investment by farmers is offset by the receipt of useful carcass information.

I reiterate that this is a very tricky issue, but NSA will continue to battle with it and try to make decisions that are in the long term interest of the sheep farmer.

The Defra consultation closes on 20th September. You can respond directly at <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/farming/05a57241>, or feed your views to NSA (via the Head Office or your Regional Chairman).

Transforming Data Into Profit at 2013 Sheep Breeders Round Table

Anticipation is mounting for the forthcoming Sheep Breeders Round Table, a biennial event supported by NSA that draws breeders from right across the UK and further afield.

The theme for the 2013 event is 'Transforming data into profit' and includes sessions on the future of terminal sire evaluation, across-breed EBVs, the outlook for lamb production, engaging the next generation of sheep farmers, the cost benefit of sheep genomics, genetics of lamb survival and breeding for meat quality, to list just a few.

The key note speaker is John McEwan, Senior Genomics Scientist for AgResearch in New Zealand. He will be speaking on the future of sheep breeding in New Zealand, while a duo of other international guests, Jenny Strömne and Tomas Olsson, will introduce a new sheep breeding programme that is being implemented in Sweden.

Sheep Breeders Round Table runs from 12 noon on Friday 1st November to 1pm on Sunday 3rd November at Eastwood Hall, Mansfield Road, Eastwood, Nottingham, NG16 3SS. You can download a full programme and booking form at www.nationalsheep.org.uk/SBRy or call Karen Morris at Eblex on 02476 478828.

NSA is one of six partners involved in the Sheep Breeders Round Table along with Eblex, HCC, QMS, KTN Biosciences and SRUC (formerly SAC). And NSA South East Region is offering to sponsor two free places to people aged under 27 – see page 6 for more information.



Balancing Farming and the Environment at NI LFA Events

NSA is also a partner in two on-farm events being organised in Northern Ireland to look at sustainable farming in Less Favoured Areas (LFAs).

The events, organised by the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) and supported by NSA and others, will look at the balance between income from sheep and cattle production and support from the Single Farm Payment, LFACA and agri-environment schemes. Speakers will therefore discuss ways to improve livestock production systems, while also managing land to maintain its eligibility for SFP and making the most of agri-environment schemes.

The importance of livestock in the management of LFAs (as outlined in the NSA *Complementary Role of Sheep in Less Favoured Areas* report) will also be discussed.

The first event – Tuesday 24th September – will be held at Greenmount Hill Farm, Glenwherry. The farm was purchased by CAFRE exactly 50 years ago, and this half century landmark is a fitting time to highlight the work currently being undertaken to develop its livestock enterprises while also enhancing the environment.

The second event – Thursday 26th September – will be held at Russell Scott's farm near Gortin, Newtown Stewart. Russell has won awards for his sheep production system, while also fully availing himself of agri-environment schemes to develop a wildlife corridor and carry out hedge restoration on his farm.

NSA will have a presence at both events and looks forward to seeing members and non-members on the two farms. There is no requirement to pre-register for either event; simply turn up on the day.

Ewes and lambs share Tracesure health benefits

Lambs born to Tracesure-bolused ewes on a Welsh hill farm are achieving target sale weights earlier than expected.

Aled Jones runs 1,250 ewes on a low-input system and boluses the entire flock after scanning.

He winters sheep on deferred grazing and boluses with the Tracesure traffic lights system to ensure good utilisation of the energy and protein in the grass.

"The lambs are born stronger, fitter and with more vigour. The ewes produce more colostrum so that benefit passes to the lambs. The lambs grow quicker in the spring," says Aled, of Berllan Helyg, near Llangollen.

Lambs are bolused with Tracesure at weaning and Aled can fatten more lambs than he could pre-bolusing.

The benefit is evident in the replacement ewes too. "They are bigger for the following year," says Aled.

Aled Jones' lambs are born stronger and fitter thanks to Tracesure.



It's time to get serious about selenium

For further information contact:

Charles Mackenzie (Scotland) 07790 857 580

Tim Nixon (S. England) 07500 048 392

Iwan Davies (Wales) 07790 372 828

Tom Rayner (N. England) 07769 694 427

www.animax-vet.com

Look Out for Leaf Spot

Farmers should keep an eye out for leaf spot (also known as Drechslera) in grass fields this autumn, as reports of this fungal disease have risen sharply over the past two years. Encouraged by wet and cloudy weather, pastures in the west of England and Wales are most susceptible, although all areas of the UK are at some risk.

The disease attacks the leaves of the grass plant, starting as small black speckles which develop into brown/black lesions, often with a yellow halo. The leaf eventually dies, reducing grass yield and feed quality. Sheep will reject infected grass, allowing the disease to spread further.

Ryegrass swards are often seen to be heavily infected in September and October, but the disease persists in cold weather, causing more damage and plant loss.

Crosshead

Growing grass varieties with a proven high level of resistance is the best way to minimise the effects. There is a wide range of resistance to the disease – ranging from 3 (very susceptible) up to 9 – and the scores and high risk areas are all identified in the full version of this year's Recommended Grass and Clover Lists.

"In the west of the country I would only consider growing varieties with a Drechslera score of 5 or more," suggests Mr Kerridge. "Varieties such as Solomon, Premium and Toddington are good – the latter was bred in a high risk area in the south west of England."

Where the disease has taken hold in established pastures that are being grazed, remove the infected material by topping or tight grazing, to reduce the chance of disease spread and survival into the winter.

Leaf spot causes black brown lesions on grass. (Photo courtesy of NIAB TAG)



Don't Ignore the Feed Potential of Grass

High quality pasture can provide enough energy for flushing ewes, lactation and lamb finishing, and significantly reduce overall feed costs, but it has to be managed well, according to Hefin Richards of the Profeed Nutrition Consultancy.

At a meeting in Lancashire organised by seed company DLF Trifolium, Mr Richards said the yield and quality of grass leys can be phenomenal, easily matching or beating other crops in terms of productivity and nutrient supply. However, it requires a certain focus and attention to detail to get the grazing right. In a sense, grass is its own worst enemy – it grows and looks green even with little intervention – yet how productive is it?

"High quality grass swards, which have energy contents approaching 11 MJ ME, can sustain lamb growth rates of more than 150g/head/day, and see them finished at four to six months of age," said Mr Richards.

Modern varieties

"But this won't happen on old swards that contain a high proportion of weed grasses, and only yield 7t DM/ha/year. Reseeds with new modern varieties can produce twice that and have a much higher feed value. Plant breeders have been working hard in recent years to improve the feed quality of grass varieties, as well as characteristics such as yield and persistence."

At the meeting, Tony Strickland, DLF Trifolium's perennial ryegrass breeder based in Gloucestershire, explained DLF has been working on improving the digestible fibre element of grass, rather than focussing on increasing the amount of water soluble sugars found in grass. Fibre plays an important part in ruminant

digestion, promoting saliva production, which is essential for keeping the rumen working properly. However, it is also important that the fibre can be broken down easily to release the large amount of energy stored within it.

"Perennial ryegrasses vary widely in their fibre digestibility," said Mr Strickland. "We are developing and trialling new varieties which are at the more digestible end of the scale. We feel this has more potential than chasing higher sugar or protein content, as there is often a trade off between these two – grasses high in sugar are often lower in protein and sometimes have lower fibre digestibility. Breeding for better fibre digestion does not adversely affect any of the other important feed characteristics."

Digestible fibre

"The amount of water soluble sugars in grasses also fluctuates during the season and at different times of the day – whereas the digestible fibre content remains fairly stable, so we see this as a more important trait to breed for."

Mr Richards suggested that the best grasses for feeding sheep are those that provide a balance of energy sources – quickly digested sugars (for an instant boost to the animal), slightly slower digested carbohydrates (to maintain energy levels over a longer period) and digestible fibre (a long lasting energy source that also helps to keep the rumen healthy).

He says: "Finishing lambs quickly on cheap feed like grass and grass and clover leys, and marketing them when demand is high, will produce the biggest financial rewards, so it's worth investing in pastures and using them to their full potential."



Well managed pastures can support ewes, lactation and lamb finishing.

For Earth, For Life

Kubota



FREE UPGRADE PACKAGE ON ALL RTV's ORDERED/PURCHASED JULY 15TH - OCTOBER 31ST 2013

Save more with Kubota when you buy a RTV this autumn with a **FREE UPGRADE PACKAGE** saving up to **£1150+vat** + on a great selection of working essentials, including roof, windscreen kit, wipers and tow hitch.

With outstanding versatility, simple operation and legendary reliability, it's even more affordable to own a Kubota.

SAVE UP TO
£1150 +VAT

PLUS
0% FINANCE OVER **2*** YRS

+ Package varies per RTV Model.
Ask dealer for details.

* Terms and conditions apply.
Contact your Kubota dealer for details.

FIND YOUR LOCAL DEALER OR BOOK A TEST DRIVE TODAY

Tel: 01844 268 000 www.kubota.co.uk

Premier Sheep and Premier Lamb Drench

Organically chelated trace element vitamin supplements
Not all mineral drenches are the same



Farm trials have shown an improvement in lambing percentage of up to 12%.
Drench with Premier Sheep four weeks prior to tupping
and lambs with Premier Lamb at weaning.



For more information please contact Jonathan Guy

T : 01886 880482 M : 07866 607466 E : jganimalhealth@aol.com W : www.jganimalhealth.com

Still Time to Schedule in Schmallenberg Vaccination

Commercial sheep producers concerned about the potential impact of the Schmallenberg virus (SBV) on their 2014 lamb crop can still schedule in pre-tupping vaccination of ewes and bought-in flock replacements, says Alfredo Sanz Moreno, MSD Animal Health livestock veterinary adviser.

He says: "It's still possible to timetable vaccination with Bovilis SBV alongside other vaccines, although ewes must receive their 2ml dose subcutaneously and not concurrently with any other vaccine before being put to the ram."

Timetable

As Sheep Farmer was going to press he said farmers purchasing replacement breeding stock at upcoming autumn sales still had time to vaccinate incoming replacement stock alongside the rest of the flock – see table – but that veterinary advice should always be sought.

Bovilis SBV received a provisional marketing authorisation from the VMD in May. Studies submitted by MSD Animal

Suggested vaccination programme	
Apr 2014	Lambing
Mar 2014	Heptavac-P Plus pre-lambing booster (following a primary course no more than 12 months prior)
Nov 2013	Tupping
Oct 2013	Enzovax and Toxovax for abortion
Sep 2013	Bovilis SBV
<i>This schedule if provided as a guide only; always consult your vet.</i>	

Health demonstrated the new vaccine to be safe and efficacious in sheep and cattle. Onset of immunity is three weeks after vaccination, although the duration of immunity is not yet established. This means it is too early to tell if the vaccination will be a one-off or require an annual booster.

"Bovilis SBV was developed in response to industry demand, but not enough time has yet lapsed to establish the duration of immunity provided by this new vaccine. Studies are on-going in this area and as soon as the trial data is available we will share it with veterinary surgeons and the wider industry," said Mr Sanz Moreno.

Jabbing tups

A colleague of Mr Sanz Moreno addressed the NSA Cymru/Wales Committee on the topic of Schmallenberg vaccination a few weeks ago, and here questions were raised about vaccinating tups. MSD Animal Health is not allowed to comment on this, as like the length of immunity, there is not enough data yet to support any claims. The advice is to consult your vet and to remember that if you do take the decision to jab your rams it will induce

an immune response and, therefore, cause a temperature rise. This is the case with all vaccines and, in males, will affect semen production. Therefore it is good practice for any vaccination of rams to do it well in advance of tupping (at least three weeks) and to check their temperature and take veterinary advice to ensure they are up to serving ewes.

Immunisation

MS Animal Health's vaccine is licenced for the active immunisation of sheep to reduce viraemia caused by SBV. The new vaccine contains inactivated Schmallenberg virus plus adjuvants to stimulate the immune response and is available from veterinary practices in 20ml and 100ml vial sizes. It is thought that another animal health company is also seeking authorisation in the UK for a SBV vaccine, but this has not been given the go-ahead yet and so Bovilis SBV is the only vaccine currently available.

Keeping NSA members up to date

Be it availability of Schmallenberg vaccines, comment on the lamb price, the latest news or tips on sheep management, the NSA Weekly Email Update is packed full of relevant information every Friday.

If you are not receiving the email it means we do not have a valid email address for you. Call NSA Head Office today to inform us of your email address, or email membership@nationalsheep.org.uk.



Flocks lambing in April or later still have time to vaccinate against SBV.

FARMPLUS *Constructions Ltd*
TIMBER BUILDING SPECIALISTS

Sheep Housing Sheep Troughs & Barriers Cow Housing



CALL NOW ON 01772 785252
www.farmplus.co.uk



accountants and financial planners

Professional Adviser
awards 2012
WINNER
 Best Small Adviser Firm

Tax, Accountancy and Financial Planning from the heart of the West Country



www.oldmillgroup.co.uk

Dorchester 01305 268168 Wells 01749 343366
 Exeter 01392 214635 Yeovil 01935 426181
 Melksham 01225 701210





Body Condition Score Ewes for Better Health and Management

By Katie Brian, Eblex BRP Project Manager



Body Condition Scoring (BCS) is a simple technique and effective tool for assessing adequacy of nutrition through all the stages of the reproductive cycle. It can contribute significantly to good husbandry, welfare and performance.

Checking condition at specific times throughout the year allows changes to be made if necessary, such as rations or stocking rate at grass. Also if condition is managed correctly, it should lead to fewer health problems and less lambing difficulties.

Body condition indicates the previous nutritional status of the animal and is assessed on a scale of 1–5. Score 1 is extremely thin and score 5 is extremely fat. Ideally body condition should be assessed to the nearest half score.

Body reserves

Body condition drives sheep systems, as it allows ewes to build up reserves when the feed availability is good and the demand on them is low, e.g. during the dry period or mid pregnancy. Those reserves can ensure ewes are more robust at pinch-points, such as late pregnancy or early lactation, when it can be a challenge to meet all their requirements. The aim is to have 90%



Body condition scoring

of ewes at the target body condition at tugging, e.g. 3-3.5 for lowland ewes. We are not aiming for big swings from very thin to very fat – ewes should move a maximum of 1.5 scores through the year.

Growth rates

There is evidence that ewes on target for body condition at tugging and managed correctly through pregnancy will have lambs with higher growth rates. We also know that ewes with lower than ideal BCS are at more risk from getting mastitis.

Body condition is assessed by handling the ewe over the loin. Use fingers on one side and your thumb on the other side to feel the transverse processes. Taking these assessments into account, it is usual to score all ewes on a scale of 1-5, using half scores as intermediate points along the scale.

Scoring ewes

To get an impression of a flock as a whole, randomly score 10% of sheep from the middle of the group. Record the condition score of each sheep with an X on a chart. The middle score of the distribution is close to the average. In the example here the median value is 3.0 but by using the chart you can see that the average is just less than 3.0.

				X					
				X					
			X	X					
			X	X	X				
			X	X	X	X			
		X	X	X	X	X			
	X	X	X	X	X	X			
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
1.0	1.5	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0	4.5	5.0	

Condition score ewes every time they are handled. A representative proportion should be felt to ensure feeding levels are appropriate, but handle all ewes individually at critical points through the year:-

- At weaning – this allows time for condition to be modified before tugging.
- At tugging – check target scores; there is still time to remove thin ewes.
- Mid pregnancy – there is still time to change feeding levels.
- Late pregnancy – thin ewes can be identified and given preferential treatment.



Ensuring correct body condition score can make ewes less prone to mastitis.

Condition score cannot be altered rapidly. Weaning earlier (at 10-12 weeks or earlier for ewe lambs) can be used as a tool to prevent further condition loss. This can be done by group, by individual or at a flock level. It is likely to be particularly beneficial after 2012/2013, as ewes will be in poor condition and will need more time to recover. It takes six to eight weeks on unrestricted grazing for ewes to gain one BCS.

Post weaning

It is unlikely that there is significant benefit of keeping lambs on ewes longer if they are above target. It is probably best to wean and then manage the fat ewes as a group. Segregate ewes post weaning into three groups:-

- Fat (more than 3.5)
- Fit (3-3.5)
- Thin (2.5 or less)

[These targets are for lowland flocks and may vary in an upland situation].

Condition scoring is an easy technique to learn and is straight-forward and quick to use on individual animals. It allows essential management decisions to be made and enables high standards of husbandry to be achieved – and ensures costly welfare problems are avoided.

For free cards to record the body condition score of your ewes on, visit the BRP literature section at www.eblex.org.uk, call 08702 418829 or email brp@eblex.ahdb.org.uk.

Knowing the Common Infectious Causes of Lameness

By Agnes
Winter
and Clare
Phythian, Moredun



Lameness in sheep flocks is one of the most common and persistent disease problems. As well as being a major welfare concern, persistent lameness in a significant proportion of a flock has direct economic consequences, with the cost to the industry of footrot alone having been estimated at £1.50 per sheep in the total UK flock.

Knock-on effects of lameness include failure to gain weight, weight loss, metabolic diseases in pregnant ewes, reduced birth weight of lambs and poor colostrum production by ewes, leading to increased lamb mortality and poor performance.

There are many causes of the condition, but where lameness affects a significant proportion of a flock, infectious agents are usually involved. The most common causes of lameness in the national flock are interdigital dermatitis (scald) and footrot, which are essentially different stages of the same condition and are caused by bacteria called *Dichelobacter nodosus*. Another infectious disease which is becoming a problem in many flocks is contagious ovine digital dermatitis (CODD), which can cause severe lameness.

Lame sheep should be attended to as soon as practically possible and infectious forms of lameness must be dealt with on a flock basis.

It is important to make sure that the diagnosis is correct before deciding on treatment. Confusion can arise and



Lameness, particularly during pregnancy, can cause weight loss, metabolic diseases reduced birth weight of lambs and poor colostrum production.

misdiagnosis can be the explanation if well recognised treatments for what is assumed to be footrot do not seem to have the desired effect.

Veterinary advice should be sought to confirm diagnosis and to formulate a plan to treat and control, in particular if lameness is sudden in many animals, persistent or fails to respond quickly to commonly used treatments. Rapid identification and early treatment are essential to prevent spread throughout the flock, and constant vigilance is necessary once control is achieved.

There are many types of lameness, with causes involving infectious agents, environmental and mechanical factors, variations in horn quality and other unknown factors. However it is possible to significantly reduce the most common types – interdigital dermatitis, footrot and CODD – and to keep other types under control by implementing the following:-

- Make sure **diagnosis** is accurate and involve your veterinary surgeon.
- **Inspect** daily if possible, certainly at not more than 3 day intervals, to reduce spread. The key early indicator of lameness is a head nod.
- **Treat** every individual lame sheep as soon as seen and as soon as possible to gather. Treat cases even when lameness appears mild – don't wait until it has become severe as lesion severity and lameness do not always correlate. Ewes which become lame during late pregnancy should be treated when seen rather than being left until after lambing. Gentle handling should ensure that no extra stress is involved; if necessary the affected foot can be lifted and examined with the sheep standing restrained against a wall to save turning the animal over.
- Do not carry out **foot trimming** on footrot affected feet, as this significantly delays healing.
- **Separate** infected animals until they have cured.
- **Monitor** the situation by assessing the level of lameness in groups of sheep during routine stock inspections and record the number of animals treated for lameness.
- **Record** which animals become lame.
- **Cull** repeat offenders and chronic cases.



This picture taken by Moredun's Agnes Winters shows a severe footrot infection.

- **Select** animals with sound well-shaped feet.
- **Buy** only sound replacements and select those from your own flock which have never been lame.
- **Isolate** new stock and examine feet.
- **Identify** key control times to prevent spread infectious causes of lameness – e.g. housing and turn-out after lambing.
- **Consult** your veterinary surgeon and make lameness part of your flock health plan, devising flock-specific treatment and control plans and discussing whether other strategies such as vaccination may be appropriate and cost-effective for your flock.
- Provide **clean grazing** by allowing two weeks break (as long as possible if aiming for eradication).
- Where used, **foot bathing** facilities must be in good order and the product used at the correct concentration and according to manufacturers' directions regarding stand-in times and standing on hard (clean) ground after bathing.

There is more on sheep lameness in the free 16-page Moredun newsheet included with this copy of Sheep Farmer magazine. For other Moredun newsheets, or if you are interested in becoming a member of Moredun, please contact the Moredun Communications Team on 0131 445 5111 or visit www.moredun.org.uk.

The Williams family of Beili Ficer Farm, Llansawel, achieved a scanning percentage of **200%** with only 2 out of 450 ewes empty with the help of **Agrimin 24-7** boluses for sheep.



PROFIT
from increase in lambing percentage

PROFIT
from better lambing vitality

PROFIT
from a bolus lasting 18 x longer than a traditional liquid drench



Agrimin 24-7's unique formula of Iodine, Selenium and Cobalt has proven to improve both ewe health and prolificacy plus improving lamb vitality and survivability from birth.

t: +44 (0)1652 688046 e: info@agrimin.co.uk
www.agrimin.co.uk



EBLEX Annual Conference 2013

Beef and sheep production at home and global marketing of red meat

Tuesday, 5th November



Stareton Hall
Stoneleigh Park
Warwickshire
CV8 2LZ

A free one-day conference for beef and sheep producers and the meat processing sector, looking at the opportunities ahead for beef and sheep farmers and the changing face of red meat retailing in a global marketplace.

Topics under discussion will include:

The opportunities learnt from US and Brazilian beef and lamb production and how they can be applied at home

Ed Green, Banks Farm, Somerset

The wider, global opportunities for quality beef and lamb

Jean-Pierre Garnier, EBLEX Export Manager

The changing face of red meat retailing

Andrew Loftus, Farm Operations Manager, Morrisons

The challenges and opportunities for the sheep sector in serving the Halal market
Rizvan Khalid, Senior Director, Euro Quality Lambs

The road ahead for beef and lamb production
Adam Quinney, NFU Vice President

The outlook for English beef and lamb
Nick Allen, EBLEX Sector Director

To reserve your free place, phone 0870 608 6610 or email: conference2013@eblex.ahdb.org.uk
Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.



EBLEX



FREE TO EBLEX LEVY PAYERS

Industry Comes Together as Fluke Problem Continue to Increase

By Joanne Pugh, NSA

As someone who has always 'routinely treated' for fluke, George Milne ran into serious problems last year when fluke suddenly exploded on his farm and he lost significant numbers of sheep.

George is known to many people as the NSA Scottish Regional Development Officer, taking a lead on policy areas in Scotland and regularly engaging with the Scottish Government and other bodies. But George also runs a farm at St Andrews, Fife, just north of Edinburgh on the east side of Scotland.

The east side of the UK has not been associated with fluke historically, but Kinaldy Farm, where George has beef and sheep, has always been a wet farm with typical mud snail habitats, and so control of fluke over the years has been to routinely dose ewes and lambs at key times.

Large losses

The article over the page (pages 28-29) looks at why routine treatments are just not an option in an era where weather patterns are so unpredictable and risk factors on farms vary hugely. The evidence of this was seen on many farms around the UK in autumn 2012 through to spring 2013, when losses were considerable.

Through experiencing the problem himself, and talking to many NSA members going through the same thing, George decided to use his high profile position to ask for help and raise the profile of liver fluke.

"For a while in the winter it really was very difficult," says George. "It



George Milne (far left) called for help in April and brought together Philip Skuce of Moredun (left), Elspeth Scott of SAC Consulting-Veterinary Services (centre), Scottish Chief Veterinary Officer Sheila Voas (right), and NSA Scotland Chairman Sybil MacPherson (far right) on his farm.

really does get you down. I wish I'd got help sooner. You feel embarrassed that you're losing sheep but you can't keep them living and it's really tough on people. Because of my role people were coming to me and telling me what was happening on their farms – and it became increasingly clear that I wasn't the only one struggling."

George called on the Scottish Government, Moredun and SRUC (formerly SAC and still in charge of SAC Consulting and Veterinary Services) to acknowledge that fluke is now such a serious problem on so many farms that help is desperately needed to increase understanding of different testing regimes and drugs, and drive work with new diagnostics and treatment options.

This plea resulted in a working group visiting George's farm in April 2013, and thanks to commitment from the research organisations involved, coupled with involvement from Novartis Animal Health, investigative work has been ongoing at Kinaldy ever since. This work is comparing different diagnostic tests in terms of how early they can pick up fluke burdens in lambs, and if there are better options than dung sampling – see panel. Future work will also look at the role of reseedling in reducing mud snail and/or fluke populations.

This work has unveiled that George has triclabendazole resistance on his farm – but of far greater importance than this resistance is the fact that George genuinely knows he has it and has not

Diagnosing Liver Fluke

Checking dung samples for fluke eggs will only reveal the presence of adult fluke in a sheep – you can get a negative dung sample from sheep riddled with immature fluke that are causing huge damage to the animal but are not yet laying eggs to pass in the faeces. This delay between infestation and a positive faecal egg count (FEC) is a real problem in controlling fluke and using triclabendazole responsibly to

slow down resistance.

Speaking at the Moredun meeting, Dr Philip Skuce and colleagues from Moredun said that while some alternatives to FEC had limitations, value was being found in faecal antigen testing (available commercially as BioX). Dr Skuce said fluke of all ages would 'vomit' secretions into the liver bile and this could be tested for in sheep dung, revealing the presence of fluke just three to four weeks after infection, compared to 11 weeks for FEC. Dr Skuce said to work with a vet when using BioX, to ensure the right approach was taken to collecting and testing dung samples and interpreting the results.

On George's farm he ran 10 lambs in what he considered to be a high fluke risk field and 10 in a low risk field. 18 of these lambs tested positive for faecal antigens in June and all 20 a few weeks later in July. At the same test in July only two of those lambs presented a positive FEC test.

"Using this test could really help to catch lambs early and stop the impact of fluke on daily liveweight gain," says George. "But it's vital to test first, treat and then test again. This way you treat at the right time, use the right product and know the drug worked. Test-Treat-Test – all farmers need to do it."

jumped to any assumptions. Reports from around the UK suggest that an increasing problem is farmers assuming they have resistance but not testing for it.

This was a dominant theme at a meeting at the Moredun Research Institute a few weeks ago – a meeting thought to be the first ever to bring together farmers, vets, research organisations, stakeholder groups (including NSA), SCOPS, animal health companies, meat processors and the Government specifically on the topic of fluke.

At the meeting Fiona Anderson of Novartis Animal Health said 2014 would mark 30 years since triclabendazole became available, at which time it revolutionised fluke treatment because it was, and remains, the only product to kill fluke at a very young age. Triclabendazole quickly became very heavily used and resistance was reported for the first time in 2000; the number of confirmed resistance incidences is still very low compared to the volume of triclabendazole treatments.

New actives

Fiona said animal health companies were looking for new actives, but farmers could not rely on that being a quick fix, as even if a new active was identified tomorrow, it would be 12 years before it was licenced for use on farms. Professor Julie Fitzpatrick of Moredun said a fluke vaccine was the ultimate goal, but was many, many years off.

In the meantime there was a very real problem of farmers assuming they had resistance as the result of one treatment failure, causing them to stop



Lambs that were only a few weeks old back in April have been tested for fluke on a regular basis ever since.

using triclabendazole and remove a vital tool from their fluke control armoury. This was just as serious a problem as farmer assuming they didn't have a triclabendazole problem and continuing to routinely treat with a product that would not work.

Heather Stevenson of SAC Consulting put the problem into context, saying that of 30 farms recently identified to SAC as having a resistance problem, only one was confirmed. Fiona said it was vital to test for resistance instead of assuming it was present, and to report suspected resistance problems to your vet or the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, so Novartis could investigate.

Novartis investigated 50 cases in 2012 and checked three areas before confirming if it was resistance:-

- Reinfection: Did the drug work but the sheep become quickly reinfected by grazing fluke infested pasture? [No flukicide (triclabendazole or any other active) offers "persistency" so will kill fluke that are present at the time of

treatment but not protect sheep from fluke ingested after the treatment].

- Faulty product: Was the drug produced properly or was a faulty batch produced in the factory? [Fiona said this has never happened yet.] Or was the drug stored incorrectly at the merchants or on-farm, removing its efficacy?
- Under dosing/incorrect use: Was the drug administered to the sheep correctly and at the right dose?

Fiona said that only after answering all these questions could resistance be confirmed, which just showed all the issues twwhat could cause a treatment to fail other than fluke on the farm being resistant to the drug. She urged farmers to engage more with their vet about fluke, to put a plan in place and test routinely, to measure fluke burdens before treatment and check the drug had worked afterwards.

Turn over for more guidance on whole farm plans for controlling fluke.

Healthy Hooves ECOTM

The Footbath Solution for Sheep

- Fast Acting
- Long Lasting
- Reduce Zinc Sulphate usage
- Easy to use
- Lowers pH of Footbath Solution



Tel +44 (0) 2476 452 299 Fax +44 (0) 2476 650 311
Email: sales@healthyhooves.eu Web: www.healthyhooves.eu

Different Approaches, But One Common Goal to Control Liver Fluke

By Russel Fuller



of Tyndale Vets and Ian Bates of Fenwold Veterinary Practice

Liver fluke infection, caused by *Fasciola hepatica*, is becoming more common across the UK, with the highest rates of infection seen in South West England, West Wales and South West Scotland. Flukicide resistance (to triclabendazole products) has been confirmed in sheep in the last few years and, given our understanding of resistance to wormers, this would suggest that resistant fluke are here to stay.

Understanding fluke infection requires an understanding of the life cycle (see diagram), and appreciation that fluke do not pass directly from cow to cow or sheep to sheep, instead they have to go via snails. That is why infection is typically seen in the autumn and winter, after the eggs have had time to hatch and the larvae develop in snails. The multiplication phase in snails is temperature dependent (80 days at 15°C but only 20 days at 30°C), so the weather will affect infection levels.

Farm testing

Before embarking on a liver fluke treatment regime it is important to determine whether a fluke problem actually exists on your farm. Treating unnecessarily costs you money and time, and promotes resistance. Testing for liver fluke can be done in the following ways, and makes it possible to build a strong picture of the overall parasite burden on farm, not just fluke.

- Faeces test for eggs: This will only show current infection by adult flukes,



The liver fluke causes damage by migrating through the liver. Pictures courtesy of Merial Animal Health.

so will be negative for the first 12 weeks of a sheep becoming infected.

- Slaughterhouse information: Most abattoirs will report when livers are condemned due to fluke damage. Once fluke is confirmed, the farm will need its own individual plan drawn up, as conditions and risks will vary considerably. Two principles need to be followed – reducing infection and appropriate monitoring/medicine use.

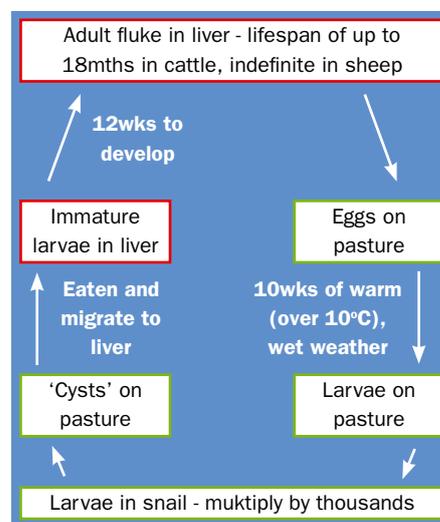
Infected areas

Any field with a snail habitat will remain permanently infected once fluke becomes established, even if left unstocked by livestock for several years, as fluke can infect all mammals, including rabbits and deer. So while strategic treatment using flukicides will help control the problem, long-term there will need to be a move towards preventing infection and reducing our reliance on medicines, as is happening with gut worms. Limiting new infections relies on preventing access of the grazing animals to snail habitats or removing snail habitats from the farm. Possibilities include:-

- Not grazing known fluke fields: A possibility if only some fields have a known fluke problem, assuming there is sufficient other grazing and the 'fluke' fields can be used for silaging etc.
- Strategic grazing: It may be possible to limit grazing of fluke areas in the autumn, limiting the number of new flukes entering the animals.
- Fencing fluke areas: This will prevent new fluke infections, but some farms may need to run an alternative water source to certain fields.
- Long term drainage of fields: Removal of the damp areas will remove the snail habitat and therefore the fluke risk

Each option has limitations, so farmers need to consider what is possible on their farm. It is also important to carry out monitoring and think about medicines use:-

- Treatment frequency during the grazing season will depend on environmental conditions: Wet summers provide greater habitats for the intermediate host snail and encourage proliferation of both the snail and fluke. NADIS provide regional forecast summaries which



help to decide treatment protocols

- Treat with the right product at the right time of year: You will need a product that kills immature stages in October and mature stages in January. Rotate flukicides on a yearly basis to reduce resistance.
- Perform regular FECs, but remember egg shedding is intermittent and none are produced until adult fluke are present 12 weeks after infection.
- Investigate all case of ill thrift and remember plenty of other causes exist (trace element deficiency, dental disease, lameness and chronic conditions such as Johne's and scrapie etc).
- Investigate sudden deaths: Clostridial disease commonly causes sudden deaths secondary to liver tissue damage caused by an underlying fluke problem
- Quarantine bought in stock and use a flukicide to avoid introducing fluke in animals carrying the parasite. As levels of resistance to the fluke medications rise, it may become prudent to dose using two different fluke medicines at quarantine.
- Resistance (especially to triclabendazole) is increasing so any perceived treatment failures should be thoroughly investigated. It is important that both drug and non-drug control measures are used together, rather than relying on medicines alone. To treat liver fluke, you need to strategically treat with a flukicide product tailored to your individual farm and the stage of the fluke lifecycle, which is determined by the time of year and local farm factors such as climate,

grazing management, stocking density, ground conditions etc. There is no such thing as a 'routine' or 'blanket' control programme.

Data sheets may not be the most stimulating read (and can even induce a state of stupor!) but failing to abide by guidelines in the data sheets can result in reduced efficacy. For example, the Fasinex data sheet reads 'protect from frost' and the Combinex data sheet says 'store in a dark place below 25C', meaning the Landrover dashboard or passenger seat is not a suitable drug cabinet!

As well as storing a drug properly, ensure all drenching equipment is clean and correctly calibrated before use, and DO NOT mix products in the same drench.

Dosing rates

Accurate dosing according to weight is very important, as under-dosing is a strong driver for resistance and overdosing risks toxicity. As a rule of thumb, treat according to the heaviest in the group and divide a group into two if there is a wide weight variation.

Only a limited number of flukicide

products are available and not all will kill all the different stages of the fluke life cycle – for example, triclabendazole has activity against the mature and immature fluke down to two weeks in cattle, whereas nitroxiil injection only has activity down to six weeks (so fluke less than six weeks old will not be killed), and albendazole only kills adult fluke. Also, there is variation between the different methods of application, as oral preparations kill younger stages than injectable preparations.

Product choice

These points are important, as most of the liver damage is caused by the migrating immature fluke. Also, the inability to kill the earlier stages means that repeat treatments may be needed approximately eight to 10 weeks later, once young fluke missed by the first treatment come within the age of the 'killing zone'. And remember no flukicide has any kind of persistent action, so reinfection can occur immediately after treatment.

Treatment for an acute outbreak of disease should include the use of a product containing triclabendazole,

as this kills all stages of the parasite. However, due to increasing concerns over resistance, it may be prudent to use another product (e.g. closantel) to remove any late immature or adult flukes that escape the effects of triclabendazole. No other flukicide is available that offers the wide spectrum of activity of triclabendazole.

Whole farm

The whole farm approach to prevention and appropriate treatment will become increasingly important, as our reliance on flukicides will need to be reduced, either due to legislation limiting the flukicides available or the ever present threat of resistance. Planning now for the future is important, as many of the prevention strategies require considerable investment of time and money, and some farmers may find that the requirements of their agri-environmental scheme do not match their fluke control requirements.

However, there is some good news. Trials for a vaccine are currently underway, so in the future we may have a far simpler way to control fluke.



FLUSH FOR SUCCESS ...SHAPE UP YOUR SHEEP!!!

TYPICAL COSTS
3 - 5p
per ewe per day

JOB DONE!

RESEARCH PROVEN

CRYSTALYX
EXTRA HIGH ENERGY

- ✓ Crystalyx optimises performance by stimulating forage intakes and digestibility while providing all essential minerals, trace elements and vitamins.
- ✓ Optimizes condition of Ewes and breeding Rams for maximum fertility.
- ✓ Has double the sugar content of nearly all other block supplements
- ✓ Helps off-set the high cost of bought-in feeds

For more information call the Caltech Helpline:
016973 32592
email: info@caltech-crystalyx.co.uk
www.caltech-crystalyx.co.uk

Follow Caltech Crystalyx

15% Discount on Performance Wool Clothing

Thanks to a generous offer from Armadillo Merino, all NSA members are being offered a 15% discount on online purchases of Armadillo base-layer garments between now and 31st December 2013.

Armadillo Merino, which specialises in short and long sleeved tops, boxers, long johns, gloves, socks and hats, was established in 2011 by Andy Caughey, who has followed a career in the wool industry, including international marketing manager for the New Zealand Wool Company.

Demanding roles

He identified the suitability of merino clothing for people in high-risk roles, such as the military, police, fire fighters and rescue officers, and has been marketing 'next-to-skin protective clothing' ever since.

"A layer of merino knit next to the skin will improve the feeling of comfort for users and help towards maintaining a more stable core body temperature in demanding environments," says Mr Caughey, referring to both cold winters and hot summers.

He works on the principle that the flame resistance nature of woollen clothing (up to 660°C), coupled with UV protection, anti-static, thermo-regulation, moisture management (it can absorb up to 35% of its weight in moisture without feeling wet) and anti-odour properties make it ideal for high risk occupations. And given that farmers work in extreme conditions too, why not for them too? Wool has been protecting man against the extremes of climate for centuries, so visit www.armadillomerino.com and use the promotion code NSA15 to obtain your 15% discount on purchases.

NSA deal

"We want to support all sheep farmers and those working in the agricultural activity this autumn and winter by offering them an exclusive NSA discount code on the purchase of Armadillo Merino base-layer garments through our website," Mr Caughey says.

Campaign for Wool Gears up for Wool Week

By British Wool
Marketing Board



With British Wool Marketing Board having reorganised its marketing department to channel more resources into Campaign for Wool (CfW), it is with even greater enthusiasm that CfW approaches its main focus of the year – Wool Week, help from Monday 14th to Sunday 20th October.

Tim Booth, BWMB Marketing Manager, says: "Earlier this year Wool House at Somerset House, London, presented a vision for wool as a modern, versatile, lifestyle fibre and featured a showcase of interiors, fashion and the world of artisan and craft making, along with a hi-tech educational suite. Wool Week will help build on the momentum and interest built up by Wool House and will stage a huge variety of events across the UK."

Central to BWMB's involvement in Wool Week will be a brace of 'Pic-Knit' events, which will see knitters converge on two locations (Kendal in Cumbria and London) to undertake mass knitting events and help spread the word about wool as a modern, vibrant fabric.

There are also a number of activities planned with the carpet industry to help drive demand for high wool content carpets, Mr Booth explains. "This is particularly important for BWMB, as most British wool is used in carpet manufacture. Driving carpet demand in turn helps increase demand and hence prices for British wool. We are also hoping to work with a leading retailer on a carpet promotion to lift the awareness

of the many uses high quality, wool rich carpets can be put to and the benefits they offer in a modern home."

Further afield the CfW is also holding new events in both Italy and China, with the first ever Italian Wool Week taking place from 10th-16th September in conjunction with department store La Rinacente and trade show Milan Unica. And in China, a country where there has already been significant CfW activity, there will be the first Chinese staging of the Wool School, an event pioneered in the UK last year. This event will challenge Chinese fashion students to make garments from wool to show the versatility of wool as a modern fashion fabric.

In the USA the focus is very much on promoting the green sheep logo, says Mr Booth. "The iconic green sheep logo of CfW is eye catching and easily remembered and is quickly becoming the key symbol in the USA wool market. We are trying to develop it as the logo to follow and are working with a number of key manufacturers to get their commitment to using it across the USA."

In a move central to driving increased use of wool in interior design, CfW is working to develop a wool education module for interior design and architecture for America's continued professional development providers, says Mr Booth. "This will help keep architects and interior designers up to speed with the latest uses and technologies surrounding wool and should help them make better use of wool products in their work. This should be transferred across to the UK too in due course, to help increase wool use here too."



A Look at Tax Planning, Avoidance and Evasion

By Richard Haines,
Old Mill Accountant
and Financial
Planner

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) have played a PR masterstroke over the past couple of years with the very public disgracing of celebrities such as Jimmy Carr.



In these straightened times, no doubt we all have a sense that we should be 'doing our bit' in terms of paying tax, but sadly there is no real consensus between taxpayers, big businesses and the government over what constitutes a fair level of tax to pay.

Despite the current climate and the media hysteria, the sentiments of Lord Clyde's famous statement (see panel) still hold true, and each business and individual remains fully entitled to structure their affairs in the most tax efficient manner. Therefore, an element of tax planning is sound business sense for all farmers.

While there will always be instances of illegal tax *evasion*, often highlighted in the press with instances of income not being declared or proceeds from criminal activity, this is at the extreme end of a broad spectrum that HMRC is seeking to narrow.

Instances of tax *avoidance* have featured most in the press by Carr and others, which although not illegal, is deemed to be against the spirit of the tax legislation by exploiting particular loopholes which HMRC generally move quickly to close. HMRC frame most of these instances as 'immoral' and while many, particularly in the wider population, would agree, the attitudes of taxpayers to this can be very variable.

The third and most important part of the spectrum concerns genuine tax *planning*. This captures the majority of our work on clients involving good, common-sense structuring of business or personal tax affairs to ensure that tax liabilities are kept at a manageable level.

A good example is a farming business, including many sheep farming enterprises, trading as a partnership where the individuals are suffering higher rates of tax (at up to 62%) on their profits, which restricts their ability to reinvest in the business, repay debt and allow a decent level of drawings for the proprietors. In contrast, if the business traded as a limited company allowing it to take advantage of lower corporate rates of tax (typically 20%), there could be substantially more profit retained for positive reinvestment. Generally it is the aim of farmers to reinvest much of their profits, certainly in good years, to build the business for future generations so retaining profits in a company is normally perfectly acceptable.

However this illustrates an example of where individuals can clearly restructure their affairs to take advantage of different tax rates which HMRC themselves decide upon and set. No tax evasion, no avoidance, just common sense tax planning.

Old Mill Accountants and Financial Planners look after over 1,500 farmers. Find out more at www.oldmillgroup.co.uk.

"No man in this country is under the smallest obligation, moral or other, so to arrange his legal relations to his business or to his property as to enable the Inland Revenue to put the largest possible shovel into his stores. The Inland Revenue is not slow – and quite rightly – to take every advantage which is open to it under the taxing statutes for the purpose of depleting the taxpayer's pocket. And the taxpayer is, in like manner, entitled to be astute to prevent, so far as he honestly can, the depletion of his means by the Revenue."

Lord Clyde. *Ayrshire Pullman Motor Services v Inland Revenue*. 1929

POLYTUNNELS
SHEEP HOUSING
Invest in the best for lambing success
01962 772368
sales@mcgregorpolytunnels.co.uk

First choice for all your farming requirements

improved condition
decreased performance
better digestion
healthy hooves

For almost 160 years, the Osmonds brand has been trusted by generations of farmers, nutritionists and veterinary suppliers.

If you need quality animal health products that you can trust, choose Osmonds – we won't let you down!

For our full product range call
01948 668100
or visit www.osmonds.co.uk

Osmonds Est. 1894
First choice for generations

Sheep Breeding and Services

To advertise contact Helen Davies on
Email: helen@nationalsheep.org.uk
Mobile: 07976 803066

The Terminal Sire

Tel/Fax:
01539 567973
www.beltex.co.uk



Blackface Sheep Breeders' Association

Information on the breed and sale dates available on our web site or from:-
Aileen McFadzean, Tel/Fax: 01738 634018
Email aileen@scottish-blackface.co.uk
www.scottish-blackface.co.uk



Bluefaced Leicesters

Sire Of The UK Mule
Tel -
01228 598022
www.ukmules.co.uk
www.blueleicester.co.uk

CHAROLLAIS SHEEP

No 1 Easy Lambing
Terminal Sire

WEB charollaisheep.com
EMAIL
office@charollaisheep.com
PHONE 01953 603335

Like Us on Facebook



CHAROLLAIS
SHEEP
SOCIETY



British Berrichon

"The HARDY,
EASY LAMBING,
EASY CARE Sheep"

For information please contact
Sue Powell 01989 770071/07974 360807
www.berrichonsociety.com
email: berrichon@btconnect.com

CAMBRIDGE

QUANTITY WITH QUALITY
CROSSBREDS OF DISTINCTION

Details from: Alun Davies, Pharm House,
Willaston, Neston CH64 2TL
Tel: 0151 327 5699
Email: d.a.r.davies@liv.ac.uk
www.cambridge-sheep.org.uk



Dorper sheep are hardy, prolific
milkers that shed their wool,
can breed all year round,
producing fast growing lambs
and succulent meat. They are
renowned around the world
for quality carcasses and
conformation.
Excellent terminal sires.

Contact details at
www.dorpersheepsociety.co.uk
or call Nicky 07710 352793

Charmoise Hill Sheep



- HARDY Hill Sheep
- Add SHAPE to your prime lambs
- EASY Lambing
- Terminal Sire suitable for
tupping EWE LAMBS

Please contact David Trow Tel: 01686 688234
www.charmoisesheep.co.uk

Easy Care

The rapidly expanding choice for
the serious low cost sheep system

Visit www.easycare Sheep.com
Or Tel: 01407 840250/07788 585309
email: lolo.owen@tiscali.co.uk

BEHIND EVERY SUCCESSFUL RAM
ARE HARDWORKING EWES!
LLEYN EWES!
Lleyn Sheep Society
Gwenda Roberts - Secretary
01758 730366
office@lleysnsheep.com
Heather Stoney - Promotions
079666 99930
promotions@lleysnsheep.com
www.lleysnsheep.com

HAMPSHIRE DOWN

for details contact:
Richard Davis
01 494 488 388
richard@rickyard.plus.com
www.hampshiredown.org.uk

ILE DE FRANCE

The best of both worlds
For use in the de France
Lean, Lush and Easy lambs
www.iledelfrance.co.uk
Secretary Edward Adamson
Tel: 07711071290

Hebridean Sheep

www.hebrideansheep.org.uk
Hebridean Sheep are enjoying
a dramatic return to popularity.
Contact:
HEBRIDEAN SHEEP SOCIETY
01908 611092
Old Breed for New Times

North of England Mule Sheep Association



THE ORIGINAL & BEST MULE

(Bluefaced Leicester x Swaledale or
Northumberland Type Blackface)
For full Auction Mart Sales List
Contact Marion Hope
Telephone 01387 371777
e-mail: nemsa@btinternet.com
website: www.nemsa.co.uk

Power to Perform all year round



Fast Growing Lambs

PD & DH Sheep
Breeders'
Agriculture House
Acland Road
Dorchester DT1 1EF
Tel: 01305 262126
www.dorsetsheep.org

NORTH COUNTRY CHEVIOT

The Ideal
Crossing
Sire
for all Hill
Ewes

The Ideal
Ewe for
producing
Mules &
Half-Breds

Profit from Quality Store Lambs
— Short or Long Keep
Tel: 01461 600673 for sales details

Scotch Mule Association

Contact: George Allan
Tel: 01292 591821
Website: www.scotchmule.co.uk
email:
scotchmule.association@yahoo.co.uk

ROUGE

The easy lambing terminal sire
producing quick growing lambs with
excellent meat to bone ratio.
Secretary: Sue Archer
Tel/Fax: 024 7654 1766
email: secretary@rouge-society.co.uk
www.rouge-society.co.uk

SOUTHDOWN

the traditional, modern terminal sire
Southdown Sheep Society
Details from the Secretary:
Mrs Gail Sprake Tel: 01986 782251
secretary@southdownsheepsociety.co.uk
web: www.southdownsheepsociety.co.uk
"The breed that makes ends meat"

Suffolk



For semen sales visit:
www.suffolksheep.org
Suffolk Sheep Society
Telephone:
028 2563 2342

SWALEDALE SHEEP BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

England's Premier Hill Breed.
Ewes are supreme for breeding
Mule Lambs.
Rams are ideal for crossing
with other Hill Breeds for
increased lamb production
on the hill.

Secretary:
John Stephenson
Barnley View, Town Head,
Eggleston, Barnard Castle,
Co. Durham DL12 0DE
Tel: 01833 650516



"For a top quality carcass"

Secretary: Andrew John
Darkes House, Conderton, Tewkesbury,
Glos GL20 7PP Tel: 01386725229
Email: info@vendeen.co.uk

LLEYNYS

High Index Signet Rams
Top 1% and Top 5%
6 EBVs 300+
DNA for Myomax and Scrapie
Also Females, all MV
DENOAK 01387 810292
Flock 381

Wiltshire Horn Sheep Society

THE WOOLLESS MEAT SHEEP
No wool, no shearing
just excellent quality meat.
Secretary: Mrs C Cormack
Tel: 0844 800 1029
email: info@wiltshirehorn.org.uk
www.wiltshirehorn.org.uk

FOR SALE HAMPSHIRE DOWN

High index rams
BRITISH MILK SHEEP
Prolific and milky
Call 01564 742373 or visit
www.ardenandaspleyflocks.com
We can deliver to you

GEORGE MUDGE SHEARING

New and second hand
mains and 12V machines.
Full range of spares.
All requisites for shearers.
NZ Super Crook for only £25
Contact 01822 615456 or
info@georgemudgeshearing.co.uk
www.georgemudgeshearing.co.uk

Baber Suffolk and Texel Rams

Performance recorded - Grass fed
Selling 'Genetics not Cosmetics'
All stock sold direct from farm.
Peter Baber 01647 252549
Visit: www.baber.co.uk

Nettex Sheep Conditioning Drench

Flushing of ewes pre-tupping will increase ovulation rate and lambing percentages

BOOST EWE NUTRITIONAL STATUS PRE-TUPPING

Nutritionists are urging sheep producers to take action now to boost ewe fertility in the run up to tupping.

"It's always important to ensure ewes are on a rising plane of nutrition before they go to the ram, but this good management practice is more important than ever this year," says Nettex technical and marketing manager Nia Williams.

She points out that the long winter and late, cold spring has taken its toll on many flocks and farmers must take the opportunity now to boost ewe energy, mineral and vitamin status before it's too late. Failure to do so could mean conception rates being compromised. And that means fewer lambs on the ground next year.

"Ensuring ewes are fit, healthy and well nourished before they go to the ram really does set the die for annual flock profitability. Get it right and barring any underlying disease problems you will maximise the number and quality of eggs produced, and ultimately the number of lambs your flock produces. And provided your rams are in tip top condition too, you should be able to look forward to a good 2014 lambing season."

Soil mineral leaching

She also says that because of significant winter and early spring rainfall in many areas, higher than usual mineral leaching from soil has been reported. "It is not only soil mineral content that has been affected, but also soil structure and condition. Whilst grazed grass usually has a good mineral status, much lower levels have been available from grazing this summer."

Nia Williams says that one of the most effective ways of preparing ewes for tupping is to give them a proven conditioning drench high in cobalt, selenium, iodine, vitamin E and vitamin B12.

"Vitamin E prepares the ewe for pregnancy, cobalt promotes bigger, stronger egg production and healthy foetal development. In fact lambs from ewes supplemented with cobalt pre-tupping have been found to be more active in the first three days after birth – a critical period for lamb survival. Selenium helps maximise the number of lambs born and vitamin B12 is necessary to help drive dietary carbohydrate metabolism, which in turn means a fitter, healthier ewe at tupping time. These are all vital nutrients and when supplied within a drench offering Collate proven absorption technology, you can be confident your investment in a ewe nutrition booster will pay off. It's ideal for preparing rams too, and can also be used to give growing lambs a boost," she emphasises.

The Nettex Sheep Conditioning Drench passes easily through all drenching guns and is available from agricultural merchant outlets in 1, 2.5 and 5 litre packs.

For further information, contact:

Jim Melia (Northern England/Scotland) Mobile: 07836 674867

Robin Kennedy (Northern Ireland) Mobile: 07850 302226

Richard Williams (Wales) Mobile: 07894 423833

Nia Williams (Central England) Mobile: 07801 552957

Alan Bloomfield (South & South West England) Mobile: 07836 743090

Nettex is currently offering a 1 litre bottle FREE when you buy 2.5 litres

For technical nutritional advice please contact:
Nia Williams - Technical Marketing Manager: 07801 552957

Fast working energy and nutrition delivered directly into the bloodstream

Maximise your flock's profitability pre-tupping

- Vitamin B12 – improves feed efficiency
Important for ewe & ram body condition, energy levels and ram fertility and stamina
- High Levels of Vitamin E – Optimises opportunity for a successful pregnancy
- Cobalt / Selenium / Iodine – enhances lamb survivability and vigour at birth
- Chelated Zinc – supports foot and udder health

PROVEN ABSORPTION
COLLATE
TECHNOLOGY

Buy 2.5 litres
and get an
extra litre
FREE

Ideal
Pre-tupping
Drench



NETTEX

T: 01634 257150 F: 01634 257165
E: info@net-tex.co.uk www.net-tex.co.uk

IF ONLY SHEEP WITH RESISTANT WORMS WERE THIS OBVIOUS



- Incoming stock can bring someone else's resistance problems onto your farm.
- Even healthy looking stock can carry resistant worms, so why take the risk?

Quarantine drench all incoming stock with ZOLVIX, and fight resistance now.

Have you tried ZOLVIX yet?

See your vet to find out more about ZOLVIX or visit
www.farmanimalhealth.co.uk



 **ZOLVIX**[®]
MONEPANTEL



EVERY FLOCK, EVERY YEAR



protecting the future of your flock

For further information about ZOLVIX contact: Novartis Animal Health UK Ltd, Frimley Business Park, Frimley, Camberley, Surrey, GU16 7SR. Tel 01276 694402 or in Ireland Tel 051 377201.

ZOLVIX contains 25 mg/ml monepantel. ZOLVIX[®] is a registered trademark of Novartis AG, Basel, Switzerland.

Advice on the use of this or alternative medicines must be sought from the medicine prescriber. Legal category: **POM-V** in UK and **POM** in ROI.

Use medicines responsibly (www.noah.co.uk/responsible) UK/ZOL/13/0072 rdp19443