



White Lodge Farm Newsletter

Summer

Introduction

Welcome to the summer newsletter

We welcome back a familiar face, Chris Clements. Chris has rejoined the team on a part time basis, whilst spending the rest of his time attending his farm.



We also welcome a new face to White Lodge, Nathan West. Nathan graduated from Haper and Keele University this year and is keen to get stuck into the farm and equine work.



BLUE TONGUE OUTBREAK UPDATE....

We have seen a recent increase in the suspected cases of blue tongue in the area.

Please remain vigilant and check your herd/flock daily for clinical signs.

- Swelling on face, throat, tongue, lips
- Drooling/salivation
- Ulcers in mouth
- Lameness
- Vesicles on coronary bands
- Fever
- Reproductive issues

There is a free blood testing service for up to 3 samples. Please call your vet if you suspect a case of bluetongue to arrange testing.

You can move animals to and from markets, shows, and slaughterhouses within England without a license, provided the animals are not showing clinical signs of the disease.

See the Government website for more details.

HIGH BLOW FLY RISK!

Flies usually overwinter as pupae in the soil and emerge in spring. However, recent years have seen increasingly variable weather patterns, leading to blowflies emerging at unusual times in the year (March – December).

The Sustainable Control of Parasites in Sheep (SCOPS) has developed a forecast to help farmers plan for and prevent blowfly outbreaks.

Preventative strategies

- **Application of a preventative treatment**
- **Minimise soiling of backends** - dagging, crutching and shearing
- **Treat lame sheep promptly** - flies are attracted to wounds caused by footrot and to the feet themselves
- **Reduce the fly population**
 - Inexpensive fly traps have been shown to reduce strike incidence by 80% in a season
 - Prompt disposal of deadstock is essential
 - Consider grazing more exposed pastures that have a microclimate less favourable to flies

Pre-tupping Checks

EWE MOT

Assessing your ewes prior to tupping is essential for a good lambing ahead. Here are our main recommendations for pre tupping preparation.

Body condition score (BCS)

BCS is the most fundamental point to consider when preparing ewes for tupping. Their BCS can directly affect the success of lambing. If ewes are too lean, less eggs are ovulated and they are likely to have fewer lambs. If ewes are overfat; there is a greater risk of embryonic death, increased triplet rates, prolapses and twin lamb disease. Aim for a target BCS of 3.0–3.5 depending on your breed.

Body Condition Scores:

1	No loin muscle or fat, backbone feels sharp
2	Shallow loin muscle with little fat, backbone feels smooth and round
3	Deep loin muscle covered with thick fat, backbone only felt with pressure
4	Full, rounded loin muscle covered with thick fat, horizontal parts of backbone undetectable
5	Very full loin covered with very thick fat, visible dimple in fat layer where backbone is, but it cannot be felt

Trace Elements

It is a good time to take blood samples to test trace elements. This will highlight any deficiencies in your ewes which may affect fetal growth (influencing birth weights & lamb survival). Consider bolusing or providing high-energy mineral buckets to boost conception rates.

Vaccinations

The two most common infectious causes of abortion in sheep are *Chlamydophila abortus* (Enzootic Abortion of Ewes (EAE)) and *Toxoplasma gondii*.

To help prevent this, we can vaccinate against these two agents. Vaccination needs to be done a minimum of 4 weeks before tupping begins.

With both vaccines lasting multiple years, after vaccinating your whole flock in year 1 you can usually then progress to only vaccinating bought in ewes and replacements in future years.

Teeth, Feet and Udders

It is a good time to check all ewes to highlight and cull those which have undesirable teeth, udders and feet!

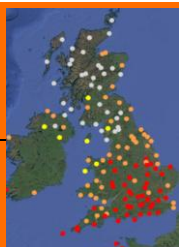


RAM MOT

Don't forget to check that your rams are fit for purpose before turning them out with the ewes...

Conduct checks 6–10 weeks before turnout, as it takes roughly seven weeks for new sperm to develop.

- **Teeth:** Check for missing or broken teeth and jaw alignment.
- **Testicles & Scrotum:** Testicles should be firm but springy, evenly sized, and move freely. Check for lumps, heat, or hard areas.
- **Toes & Mobility:** Trim feet well in advance and check for any signs of foot rot or lesions. Lamé rams will not be able to do their job!
- **Body Condition Score (BCS):** Aim for a BCS of 3.5 to 4.0. Too thin, and they lack stamina; too fat, and they become lazy.
- **Treatment:** Ensure up-to-date vaccinations (e.g. clostridial diseases). Treat for worms, fluke and external parasites (scab/maggots).



Read up on the latest blowfly forecast and advice on the SCOPS website
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/bluetongue-latest-situation>

