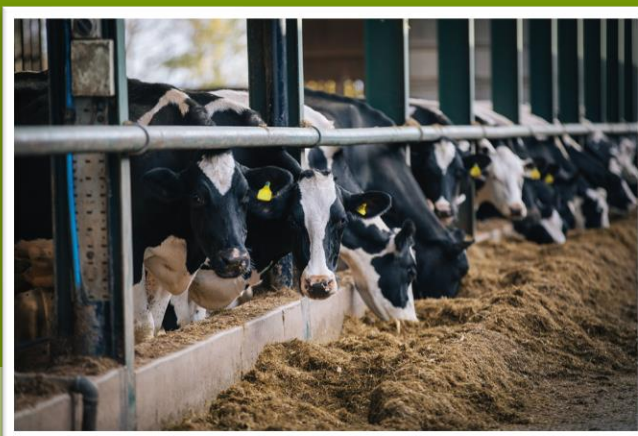


nantwich farm vets



Nantwich Farm Vets
Hurleston, Nantwich
Cheshire
CW5 6BU

24hr phone line: 01270 610349



January 2020

Dates for your diary

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 8 th Jan | Medicines Meeting
(fully booked) |
| 15 th Jan | Rearing for Returns Bite-sized Module 1
Care around calving for a healthy calf |
| 16 th Jan | Beef Club
Suckler cow fertility |
| 22 nd Jan | Medicines Meeting
(spaces available) |
| 11 th Feb | Lambing Course |
| 12 th Feb | Rearing for Returns Bite-sized Module 2
Colostrum is Gold |
| Feb TBC | Dairyland foot trimming course |
| 11 th Mar | Rearing for Returns Bite-sized Module 3
Pre-weaning nutrition |

Happy New year from everyone at Nantwich Farm Vets!

We have lots of events running in the practice over the next few months, including two more of our popular medicine meetings and the first of our Rearing for Returns Bite-sized modules.

Rearing for Returns

It's no secret that rearing replacement heifers is time consuming and accounts for a significant proportion of farm expenditure.

Spaces are filling fast on our bite-sized Rearing for Returns modules so if you want to book your place please get in touch with the office as soon as possible.

Coming soon we will be launching our Rearing for Returns Program which will involve one of our calf health team carrying out an on farm assessment and working with your team to maximize calf health on your farm





Liver Fluke in Cattle

Abi Sanders (A recent final year vet student) explains this complicated parasite

Following the warm wet conditions we have experienced this year, The NADIS parasite forecast predicts a high risk for liver fluke infections this coming winter. With the weather patterns changing and warm wet weather becoming more common, it is becoming even more important to monitor and act against fluke parasites in our livestock.

Infection

Liver fluke is an endoparasite of cattle and sheep, known as *Fasciola Hepatica*. It has an indirect life cycle meaning that there must be an intermediate host present which is essential for replication; the intermediate host being a mud snail (*Galba truncatula*).

If a cow is infected by fluke, eggs are shed in their faeces onto pasture. These eggs develop and

under the correct conditions, release a 'miracidium' which swims off through water to the intermediate host, the snail. Further development occurs within the snail, with one miracidium producing several hundred 'cercaria'. Once these cercaria are shed by the snail, they attach to blades of grass and encyst (becoming metacercaria), which are eaten by the cattle. Overall, this process can take up to 3 months in the optimum conditions where temperatures are above 10°C and wet.

Once within the host, these juvenile fluke enter the small intestine where they begin to migrate through the abdomen into the liver; this occurs around 5-7 days post ingestion. These juveniles digest liver tissue whilst moving towards and ending in the bile duct. Here the adults live and continue to produce eggs, releasing



Developing liver fluke cercaria inside the snail

them into the digestive tract. Release of eggs occurs from 10-12 weeks post ingestion.

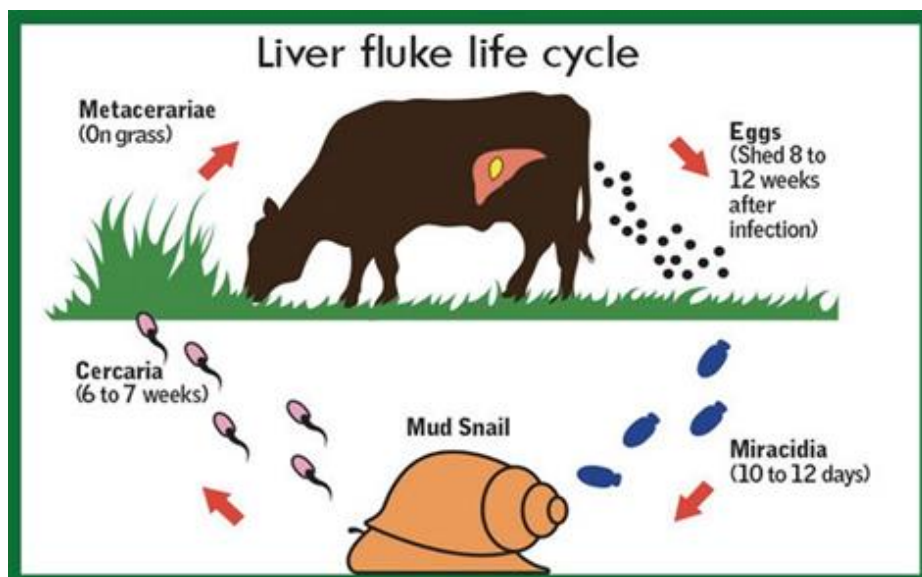
Risk factors

The major risk factors are focused around pasture conditions. If the ground is damp, wet or if there are ponds/ streams in the vicinity, this will provide the perfect habitat for snails; therefore, allowing production of the infectious agents. Temperature must be above 10°C for the growth and so the warmer the weather the quicker the life cycle occurs.

Both eggs and infectious metacercaria can survive on pasture over winter and so infection or presence of liver fluke this year will pose a risk to cattle next year.

Acute disease

Acute disease, known as Acute Fascioliasis, usually follows a wet, warm summer where there are large numbers of fluke on pasture and so a large number are ingested. When a large number of juvenile fluke are present at one time, it



causes serious damage to the liver during migration of these flukes. Acute disease normal presents October-December, with clinical signs such as weakness, pain, pale in colour, anaemia (low red blood cells) and sudden death. However, this is relatively uncommon in cattle as their livers are generally large enough to cope with this amount of damage and continue to function normally. This disease is more of a problem in sheep.

Chronic Fasciolosis is the main disease in cattle caused by liver fluke.

Chronic disease

Chronic Fasciolosis is the main disease in cattle caused by liver fluke. Chronic disease presents in late winter to springtime due to accumulation of adult flukes living in the bile ducts causing irritation, inflammation and eventually fibrosis (thickening). Cattle will present with diarrhoea and weight loss, which may progress to signs of liver failure such as abdominal swelling due to fluid, pale colour due to anaemia and swelling under the jaw. This chronic disease is our main concern in cattle and needs to be treated before reaching the end stage signs.

Diagnosis

Ideally the presence and infection of liver fluke should be diagnosed before reaching outward signs of disease. Farm history of fluke presence and pasture conditions can give an indication to the likelihood of disease. If looking for fluke, a pooled faecal sample can be taken from a group of cattle, and a faecal egg count performed; presence of any fluke eggs will indicate the need for treatment.



Cattle livers showing the damage caused by chronic fluke infection

Milk antibody levels can be tested for using ELISA, however, this will only show if the cattle have been exposed to fluke, but not whether they are currently infected. So, results should be discussed with your vet.

Another option for diagnosis would be from fallen stock post mortem or abattoir returns. The infection can cause significant damage to the liver that means the liver is rejected at abattoir inspection. If this occurs, you know you have a Fluke problem and need to treat accordingly.

Treatment in dairy cattle is particularly challenging due to withdrawal periods

Treatment

If there are clinical signs, positive test results or post mortem evidence of fluke presence, appropriate treatment should be undertaken. There are limited treatment options for fluke infections.

Treatment in dairy cattle is particularly challenging due to withdrawal periods and some products not been licensed for use in animals producing milk for human consumption including both dry cows and dairy heifers in the last third of pregnancy.

Triclabendazole is a drug that can kill all stages of the fluke (juvenile and adult), however this drug is developing resistance and so should be avoided as a blanket or preventative treatment, ideally this drug would be reserved for sheep with acute fasciolosis.

Products containing Oxytocanide can be used but withdrawal periods must be followed carefully. Milk processors are monitoring bulk milk samples for flukicides.

Prevention and control

Prevention is better than having to treat diseased animals. Taking into account the risk factors of pasture and weather conditions, some farms will be at higher risk than others. Avoiding wet pastures or places with ponds or streams will help reduce the likelihood of fluke on pasture; awareness of neighboring farms fluke status and their pasture conditions may be helpful as, for example, if their field drains or floods into your pasture, this could indirectly infect your herd.

Quarantine treatments for bought in stock are also important to avoid bringing triclabendazole resistant fluke on to your farm.

For more advice on liver fluke treatment and prevention speak to one of our vets.

Upcoming meetings

MEDICINE TRAINING COURSE + MILKSURE PART 1

****Wednesday 8th January FULL****

NEW DATE! Wednesday 22nd January, 11:15am - Nantwich Farm Vets, Hurleston, CW5 6BU - £65

If you still need to attend one of these sessions to meet your Red Tractor requirements please contact the practice

LAMBING COURSE 2020

Tuesday 11th February 2020 2pm till 4.30pm - £35

This session will cover: Lambing – theory and practical, recognition and treatment of health problems in ewes around lambing time and the care of the new born lamb

MORE MEDICINES CHANGES

Unfortunately we are still having supply issues with some of our products. We have been stocking Multiject as a substitute for TetraDelta but we are now having issues with this so you may receive **Uburo Yellow** in its place. This is a similar tube but with longer withdrawal periods of **132 hrs milk and 28 days meat**



Ceporex injection is back! This antibiotic is a 1st generation cephalosporin (not a high priority CIA) with a zero milk withhold. While we must all aim to be responsible in our use of antibiotics we know the return of this product will be welcomed by many

LAMBING HAMPER

Our Nantwich Farm Vets lambing hamper includes the essentials you need for the lambing season ahead. Hamper includes lambing ropes, arm length gloves, vet lube, iodine navel spray, stock marker, lamb feeding tube and syringe, lamb bottle and teat, digital thermometer, head torch, note pad plus other Nantwich Farm Vets goodies. All in a handy storage tray, £60 (ex VAT)



Team News

We said Goodbye and a big thank you to Matt, our Kiwi Locum vet who has been with us since the summer, we have all enjoyed working with Matt and wish him well on his travels.

Lewis is back with the team; he will be working with us until mid-summer. Lewis will be telling us a bit more about his time in New Zealand in next month newsletter, particularly around working with spring block calving dairy herds.

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