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Newsletter

July 2026

Summer is now in full swing, with warmer temperatures bringing plenty of activity in the fields – and unfortunately an increase in flies and midges too. This makes it an important time to stay vigilant for seasonal challenges such as summer mastitis in cattle and flystrike in sheep. Taking preventative action now can help avoid costly health and welfare issues later in the season. We are also entering a higher-risk period for Bluetongue, so it is worth keeping up to date with the latest guidance and discussing any concerns with the practice.

Although the sheep breeding season may still seem a little way off, now is the ideal time to start preparing. Consider whether teaser rams need to be organised, and before long it will be time to carry out tup MOTs to ensure rams are fit and ready for work. If you are planning to use Toxovax or Enzovax this autumn, please remember to order vaccines well in advance. Toxovax should be administered at least three weeks before breeding, while Enzovax requires a minimum of four weeks. Both vaccines can be given at the same time, helping you prepare your flock for a successful breeding season.



Bluetongue Update 2026 - What You Need to Know - Stephen Bradley

Bluetongue (BTV) continues to pose a real dilemma to Northumberland farmers, particularly as we move into the warmer months. So how do you decide what to do for the best for your herd or flock?

The latest situation in England in the last 12 months is 340 farms with 778 positive animals detected. Although that may not sound like a lot, it's likely that many more have been affected as only 3 animals per farm were tested. There have not been any cases in Northumberland but the spread has continued north into Cumbria, so its not far away.

We are now in the highest risk period (April to November) when midge activity is greatest. These midges can carry BTV and spread the virus between animals. Other routes include movement of infected livestock and contaminated semen, embryos, or foetuses.

The signs have been well reported in cattle - reduced milk yield, lethargy, nasal discharge, lesions on teats. Sheep can develop mouth ulcers, swelling, lameness, fever, and possible death. There have also been fertility issues such as abortions, stillbirths and high barren rates in both species. Dummy calves are a more recent sign which has been seen in new-born live calves. These can be born weak or deformed, be blind, have difficulty standing, neurological signs and a poor suck reflex. These fertility issues or abnormal calves may be the first sign of infection. Severe outbreaks in 2025 saw only around 50% viable offspring which is devastating.

There was good uptake of vaccine in 2025 but much lower in 2026. It's worth remembering that no treatment exists for bluetongue but there are 3 BTV-3 vaccines available in GB. Please speak to your vet to discuss your vaccine requirements. There is no evidence that BTV-3 vaccines reduce

fertility but in fact the disease itself is linked to abortions and reproductive losses. It's important to remember it's a notifiable disease so **report suspected cases immediately in England: 03000 200 301.**

For those intending to sell tups in Scotland, 1st June to 9th September is the high-risk period. Unfortunately this means licensing and testing will be required as last year. Although the licensing is slightly less onerous there will still be the maximum 7-day turnaround time to observe between sampling and moving to Scotland. Cattle can be moved without testing if they have had a complete course of Bultavo-3 vaccine, they can be moved 21 days after primary course or boosters are given. They will still need a license as well as records of purchase of vaccine and dose dates. Again, please discuss with us if you are planning to move any stock to Scotland.



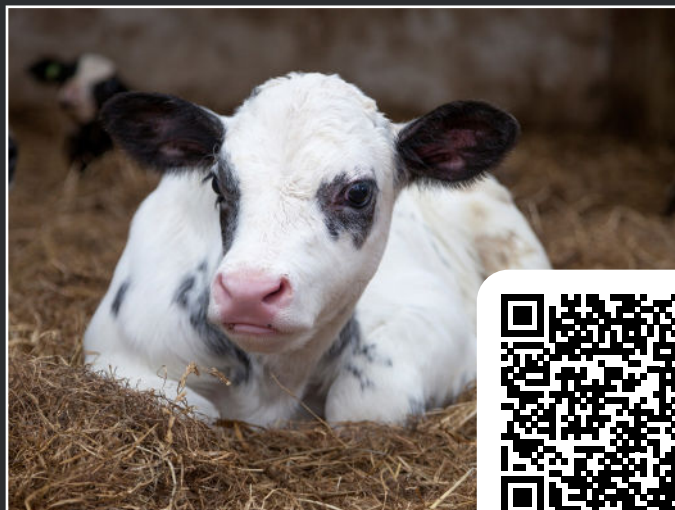
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Upcoming AHDB Meeting

Raise em' right or pay twice:

At H&H Carlisle, on the afternoon of the **21st July** there is a farmer focused session for GB Calf Week to look at healthy calves and how to reduce antibiotic use whilst keeping stock healthy - a great line up of speakers are booked for this with Ben Strugnell (Farm Post Mortems Ltd), Kat Hart (The George Veterinary Group) and Julia Wadeson (Calf to Cow Consultancy) and can be booked here: [Raise em' right or pay twice – Farmerfocused session | AHDB](https://ahdb.org.uk/events/raise-em-right-or-pay-twice-farmer-focused-session) (<https://ahdb.org.uk/events/raise-em-right-or-pay-twice-farmer-focused-session>)



Red Tractor Medicines Training

Many of you will have completed this training since it became compulsory in 2018, and there's no need to repeat it, unless you want to!

However, if you have new staff involved in the handling of medicines and would like them to do the course, please email pamela.brown@cvsvets.com

Initially we put on 6 free of charge meetings attended by up to 100 people at a time but more recently we have only had a few people requiring training, for which we have made a small charge, but they are a bit more interactive. These can be done on-farm, or to save a visit charge, at our Alnwick surgery.



Do You Know Your Worm Resistance Status in Your Flock?

Drench tests allow us to determine if the wormers you are using are still fully effective in your flock.

The Animal Health and Welfare pathway AHWP can be used to fund a post drench test by submitting up to 15 samples before and after worming from groups that have a worm burden.

Please collect 10-15 samples from sheep that have been treated with wormer at the following timings to check for resistance to the product:

- 7 days post drench for Yellow drenches - Levamisole (Levacide)
- 10-14 days post drench for White drenches - Benzimidazole (Albenil)
- 14-16 days post drench for Clear drenches - Macrocytic lactones (Cydectin)
- 14-16 days post drench for Orange drenches - Monepantel (Zolvix)



Don't Forget to Use!

- **Enzovax** and **Toxovax** in sheep, for prevention and control of abortion. Please get your orders in as soon as you are able, to help ensure the vaccine is ready when needed. These must be given at least 4 and 3 weeks pre-tupping respectively.
- **Ovivac** and **Heptavac** - to protect against clostridial disease and pasteurellosis
- **Fly prevention** - Klik Extra, Klikzin, Crovect, Dysect sheep pour-ons for blowfly etc. and Swish or Dectospot/Spotinor for cattle to reduce fly worry and other fly related problems such as summer mastitis.
- **Boluses and injections** to prevent trace element deficiencies.
- **Huskvac** in cattle for lungworm control.