

Hello and welcome to the August Newsletter. It's been good growing weather but not brilliant harvesting weather – hope you have all had some success. Well done to all our clients who did well at the Royal Welsh Show and to our own Tom who was presented with his Dr Emyr Evans award – a framed certificate and medal!



Just a reminder from me about the two recent changes - **BVD bloods** are now an obligation for you to do every year, easiest at the whole herd TB test, and **Post movement TB testing** – needs to be done if you have purchased animals from a high risk tb area, 60-120 days after they have arrived on your farm. We are not notified of these tests so cannot nudge you. Also, we do not have the numbers of the animals that need to be tested, so making a list, with the full tag number, for us to use will save us time and you money.

Hope to see many of you at the Vale of Glamorgan Show.

Mary

Pain and Welfare in Livestock

As animal keepers we have a legal obligation to the animals under our care to ensure their need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease is met. This is legislated in the Animal Welfare Act 2006. A further piece of legislation, The Mutilations (Permitted Procedures) Regulations 2007, covers some procedures routinely carried out on farm animals, for example disbudding, which are likely to cause stress and pain to the animal it is carried out on.

So, what constitutes a painful procedure? Interestingly this is quite subjective and when using pain scores different demographics of people score pain differently. When this has been researched in livestock veterinarians across the world women vets tend to assign higher pain scores to procedures than men and younger vets are more inclined to give pain relief than older vets.

Have a think about the procedures you're carrying out on your animals. How painful would you grade them out of 10? Does this score differ to how your friends/family grade them? Consider ranking the procedures you carry out, from most painful to least.

What can we do to alleviate pain?

1. Consider is the procedure necessary? For example does the lamb need castrating? Or will it be slaughtered before it reaches sexual maturity?
2. Can we give a drug to reduce the pain? Our options in livestock include local anaesthetic and a NSAID (eg Metacam – interestingly not UK licensed in sheep). Local anaesthetics act on the nerves stopping their signals being transmitted so the animal can't "feel" the pain. These last approximately 4 hours. NSAIDs last longer, 1 to 2 days, and act more generally on the animal.
3. Remove/treat the painful stimulus. For example placing a lame animal on comfortable bedding.

It is always worth remembering an animal in pain is not going to thrive. This is confirmed in multiple studies, showing animals in pain do not feed as well, consequently do not grow as well and ultimately are not as productive.

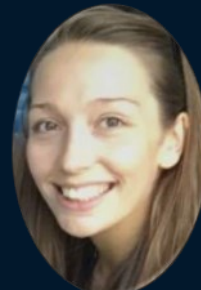
The table overleaf shows some common procedures occurring on farms, what the legislation is with regards to them and any steps we can take to reduce the potential pain associated with them:

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Cattle					
<i>Operation</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Animals Age</i>	<i>Operator</i>	<i>Local Anaesthetic/ Analgesia</i>	<i>Alternative</i>
Castration	Rubber Ring	< 7 days	Competent Stock Person	Evidence to support use but legally not required	
	Burdizzo	< 2 months	Competent Stock person	Evidence to support use but legally not required.	Use ring when <7days
	Where animal is over 2 months of age or where any methods other than the above are used		Vet only		Evidence to support use but legally only local anaesthetic required.
Disbudding	Chemical Cauterisation	< 7 days	Competent Stock person	Evidence to support use but legally not required	
	Disbudding iron	Up to 2 months of age	Competent stock person	Evidence to support use but legally only local anaesthetic required	
Dehorning	Cutting/Sawing Horn (Not to be used routinely)	< 5 months	Competent stock person	Evidence to support use but legally only local anaesthetic required. Disbud when a calf	Disbud when younger
		>5 months	Vet Only	Evidence to support use but legally only local anaesthetic required. Disbud when a calf	Disbud when younger

Sheep					
<i>Operation</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Animals Age</i>	<i>Operator</i>	<i>Local Anaesthetic/ Analgesia</i>	<i>Alternative</i>
Castration	Rubber Ring	< 7 days	Competent Stock Person	Evidence to support use but legally not required	Is it required? Will the ram lamb be slaughtered before sexually mature?
	Burdizzo	< 3 months	Competent Stock person	Evidence to support use but legally not required.	Use ring when <7days
	Where animal is over 2 months of age or where any methods other than the above are used		Vet only		Evidence to support use but legally only local anaesthetic required.
Tail Docking	Rubber Ring	< 7 days	Competent Stock person		Is it required? Will good fly control and worm control reduce issues associated with a longer tail
	Hot iron/Clamp	>2 months	Vet Only	Evidence to support use but legally only local anaesthetic required.	Use ring when <7days
	Surgical/Other	Any Age	Vet Only	Evidence to support use but legally only local anaesthetic required.	Use ring when <7days

Sufficient tail must be left to cover the vulva in ewe lambs and the anus in ram lambs

For a refresher on utilising local anaesthetic and analgesia in your animals feel free to give us a call/ ask when we are next on farm.

Upcoming events

BVD Workshop: 5th August, Pontyclun RFC, 2pm start

Ram Fertility Day: 6th August @ Tynewydd Farm. Vasectomies and ram fertility testing reduced cost.

Post Weaning Lamb Performance Workshop: 9th August, Pontyclun RFC, 2pm start

If you are interested in any of these events/dates please phone the surgery to book your place. Spaces are limited and on a first come, first served basis.



Office opening hours

Monday – Friday (Except Bank Holidays)

8.30am - 5.30pm

Emergency out of hours service

Weeknights 5.30pm - 8.30am

Saturday & Sunday all day