Richard and Rachael Knowles of Boundary Farm near Sapcote (LE9 4LT) are hosting an open farm Sunday on the 5th June from 11am – 4pm. Guaranteed to be a great day out with all the family. Activities such as; tractor and trailer rides, straw pit lucky dip, milking demonstration, sheep shearing, machinery display, lots of fun activities, refreshments and much more. Broughton Vets will be there so come and say hello!

**MAY BANK HOLIDAY**
Monday 30th May:
CLOSED
As always, we are available for emergencies out of office hours on 07711 434290

**RED ALERT**
The recent cold weather is likely to have delayed hatching of Nematodirus battus eggs and when the temperatures finally begin to rise, a mass hatching of eggs combined with lambs being older and consequently eating more grass is likely to lead to a high risk of Nematodirus disease this year.

**Clinical signs:** Profuse diarrhoea (black-green, pale yellow then colourless and scanty), rapid dehydration and in severe cases death (<30%).

**Main risk factors** to consider are:
- Cold days suddenly followed by a period of warm weather
- Lambs grazing pasture that carried lambs last spring
- Lambs that are old enough to be eating significant amounts of grass (c. 6-12 weeks old)
- Groups where there is also likely to be a challenge from coccidiosis
- Lambs that are under other stresses e.g. triplets, fostered on young or older ewes

If you believe that your lambs are at risk, a white wormer drench should be sufficient to treat the disease (see SCOPS website), but please give the practice a ring for further advice.

**NJMP JOHNES**
The National Johne’s Management Plan launched earlier this year to bring consistency and clarity to the control of Johne’s disease on farm. Johne’s is a bacterial disease affecting all ruminants. Unlike other bacterial diseases, there can be a long period of time (years!) after infection before any signs are seen.

Animals can only be infected as youngstock and calves may even be infected in utero however they are usually infected in their first 3 months. **Despite this** cattle usually show no clinical signs until around 2 years or older. This may be earlier in small ruminants.

Milk is one route of transmission, but faeces is the major source. Calves and other ruminant youngstock should therefore be kept away from adults known to be infected.

Cattle showing clinical signs will lose weight and have profuse diarrhoea. Diarrhoea is not a feature of Johne’s in goats and sheep.

Unfortunately no treatment is available and so these animals should be euthanised on welfare grounds.

Early testing is key, allowing cull before clinical losses occur. Repeat tests are often necessary, as animals may not test positive for the first time until they are close to shedding disease.

Be aware and take action – every farm is different but there is a strategy for you to control Johne’s disease. Action Johnes is about choosing strategies that meet the needs and aspirations of individual farmers. One of the six strategies for Johne’s disease control from the National Johne’s Management Plan, worked through with your vet as part of your herd health plan, will help you manage the risk of Johne’s disease on farm.

The six different control strategies are:-
1. Biosecurity protect and monitor
2. Improved farm management
3. Improved farm management and strategic testing
4. Improved farm management, test and cull
5. Breed to terminal sire
6. Firebreak vaccination

For more information on these strategies and which strategy is most suitable for your farm, please discuss with us and/or visit the action Johnes website: www.actionjohnesuk.org

**COCCIDIOSIS**
Coccidiosis is the major differential diagnosis for Nematodirus with many lambs showing profuse diarrhoea and rapid weight loss. Coccidiosis is associated with intensive husbandry. The choice of medication as prescribed by the veterinary practitioner will depend upon individual circumstances. Sheep must be moved from infected pastures/premises as soon as disease becomes apparent.

Please give us a call if you wish to discuss Nematodirus or Coccidiosis or, for more information, use this link; http://webinars.nadis.org.uk/distributors/broughtonvetgroup.aspx or log onto: www.nadis.org.uk

www.broughtonveterinarygroup.co.uk
TB TEST CHANGES
The APHA recently announced changes to legislation and control measures for TB. Some of these changes are explained below. How these changes affect you is dependant on which “TB area” your farm is located in. All farms within our practice area (Leicestershire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire) are now in the TB “High Risk Area”.
The changes can be summarised as follows:
1) Post movement testing
The Post Movement Testing will affect people farming in the low risk area. This obliges them to post movement test all animals bought onto the farm from a higher risk area. They may also volunteer to have a Government-funded pre movement test if they meet a number of criteria, such as number of animals being sold, previous test history and location. If you are in a higher risk area looking to buy in from a lower risk area, it is worthy of discussion.
2) Alterations to short interval tests following a breakdown
At the same time, any herd suffering a TB skin test reactor will require a minimum of two short interval tests, which will be interpreted on the severe reading before they are cleared of TB.
This updates a previous system where a mixture of interpretations was applied, dependent on various factors. It is expected that this will result in less undisclosed TB on farms in high risk areas.
3) Private blood testing may be available
There is now an opportunity for farmers in the high risk area (yearly testing) to apply to APHA to undertake a private gamma interferon blood test if they meet certain criteria, such as the animals being currently free from disease and not removing the statutory skin test. It should be noted that the blood test will not be allowed as a ‘second opinion’ following a positive skin test.
These measures feed into the cattle control side of the TB eradication strategy. There is more information at www.TBhub.co.uk. Please ask any of our vets if you require further information.

MANAGEMENT OF LATE CALVING BEEF SUCKLERS
One of the costliest problems in beef production is late calving cows and their reproduction management. The target for length of bulling period in UK beef cows is 9 weeks. The primary cause for late calving cows is keeping the bull with the cows and heifers for more than the ideal period of nine weeks to serve the late calving cows; thus stretching the calving period above the desired 10 week target and potentiating the problem.
For maximum efficiency and profitability, a beef cow needs to calve once every 365 days to produce the maximal weight of calf weaned per cow bullied – the best measure of output in a beef herd. It is known that a beef cow needs at least 45 days for her uterus to involute and be ready to conceive again, which leaves only another 40 days or 2-3 cycles for her to get in calf (gestation 280 days plus 45 days involution plus 40 days breeding, 21 day cycles). If a cow calves late in an extended calving period (over 10 weeks) this will mean that she may only have 2-3 weeks before the bulls are put back in, and will not yet be cycling again. In addition to this, the first cycle has low conception rates, so many late calvers have only one true cycle with the bull, thus leading to a higher percentage of empty cows in your herd at the pregnancy diagnosis.
It’s been shown that an empty cow costs on average more than £2 per day (~£720/year) when only considering feed costs. Even if you choose to cull barren cows after autumn pregnancy diagnosis, the prices for meat carcass are often low in that period so, whether kept or culled, the late calvers cause considerable economic losses to the farmer. We can reduce the problems described above by oestrus synchronisation of these late calving animals before the bulls are put in for the next breeding period. Oestrus synchronisation in beef cattle consists of identifying the animals at risk (i.e. those that have calved beyond the recommended 10 week period of those in poor body condition score) and putting them on a hormonal treatment programme. One favoured approach is the use of an intravaginal device and intramuscular injections administered according to a strict time protocol. The medicines cost approximately £25 per animal, making this a viable economical solution.
Oestrus synchronisation programmes are commonly used in non-pregnant cattle but there are also programmes that can be used in cattle which may have early pregnancies (eg late calvers) without any risk to the foetus. This allows more opportunity for late calvers to get in calf within the 9 weeks breeding period. We currently have an offer of support and can provide some free intravaginal devices for farms willing to undertake oestrus synchronisation on a significant number of (over 20) cattle and willing to record all feedback results and experiences from the oestrus synchronisation programme undertaken. Please give us a call if you wish to discuss management of late calving sucklers and/or oestrus synchronisation.

A NEW APPROACH TO DRYING OFF COWS
Velactis has recently been launched. This novel product is designed to help cows reduce their milk production as soon as they go dry.
It is given by single injection at drying off and has been shown to reduce mastitis during the next lactation, improve comfort and so lying time of cows during their dry period and to reduce milk leakage from animals after drying off, so improving the efficacy of any tubes which have been used as part of a drying off protocol. Please discuss with us how it might help you.

www.broughtonveterinarygroup.co.uk