



# Newsletter

JANUARY 2009



## BLUETONGUE



Looking back on 2008 it seemed inevitable that we would face a major Bluetongue (BTV) epidemic. In all other Northern European countries where BTV8 had 'seeded out' in the previous season there had been an explosion of the disease the following summer.

So what stopped the disease in its tracks so completely and utterly? The answer is simple: VACCINATION. The strategic vaccination program for BTV8 has got to be the biggest animal disease control success of recent times. The only problem is that it has been so totally effective you might be tempted to reason that the outbreak would never have happened anyway. But don't be fooled into thinking that the summer wasn't favourable to the midge vector—there were more than enough around to transmit the disease.

Look across the channel to France where there have been over 20,000 cases of BTV8 this season due to patchy and uncoordinated use of vaccine, and a comparison with the Netherlands where widespread vaccination (following a major problem in 2007,) has led to only a handful of cases this year, and those were in unvaccinated stock.

There were several suspected cases of adverse reactions to vaccination, but these were officially logged as only 2 cases in 10,000 which is surely infinitely better than a herd or flock infected with BTV.

The arrival or threat of other strains of BTV is cause for concern although hopefully these have been controlled and no doubt manufacturers are working on multi-variant vaccines.

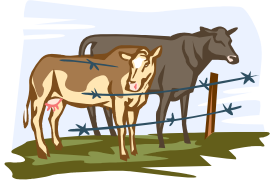


Plan your BTV8 herd vaccination early this year to avoid a clash with pre-turnout procedures such as Lepto, Blackleg and Huskvac.

## TB

If the Bluetongue story can be considered an unqualified success then TB control in 2008 is approaching an unqualified disaster.

We have found over 500 reactors at our Holsworthy branch alone in 2008 compared to just over 300 in 2007, and over 20% of all our farms had reactors at some time during the year.



Since Foot and Mouth we seemed to have been 'containing' the disease at about the same level. We hope the escalation does not continue next year. A bit of a vain hope, unfortunately.

## FALLEN STOCK

Remember it is all change at the start of 2009

- The OCDS is ending.
- Cattle under 48 months go to Knackers or kennels.
- Cattle over 48 months still go to BSE testing centres.
- At least this means we may be able to carry out more post-mortem examinations on adult cattle at Stattons!



## LAMBING CLUB

\* This covers all veterinary fees for all lambing related problems brought into the surgery e.g. lambings, caesars, prolapses, sick lambs, post mortems.

\* £120 for 200 ewes.

\* Contact the surgery for more details.

