

# February 2025 Newsletter

[www.penbodevets.co.uk/farm](http://www.penbodevets.co.uk/farm)



**Penbode Farm Vets**

Since 1840



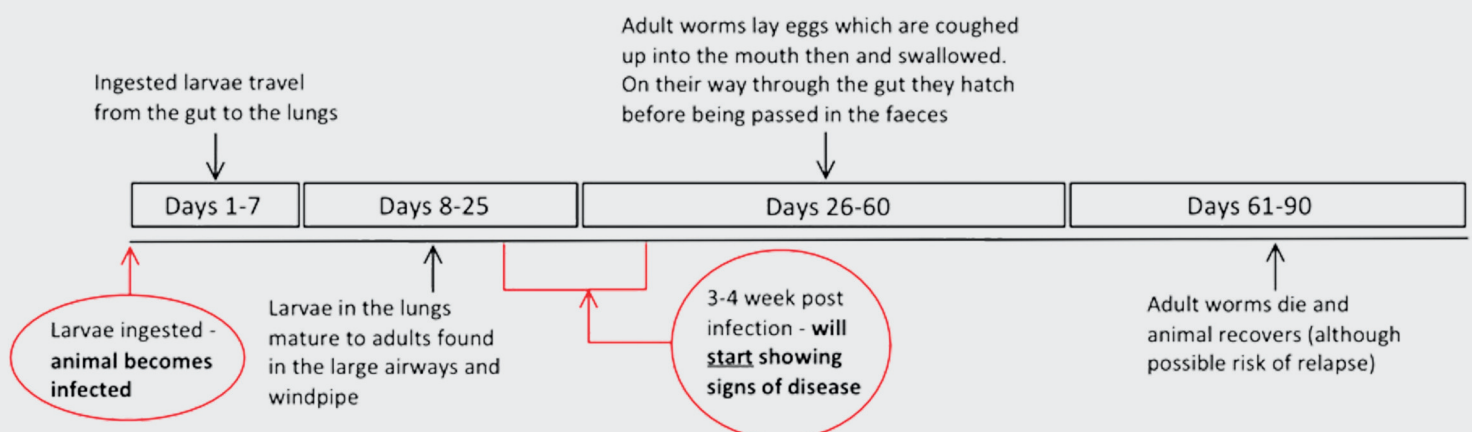
# Lungworm

By Matilda Herridge-Nowell  
BVetMed MRCVS

In this cold icy weather, it may seem like spring turnout is an age away. But now is the best time to start thinking about what you can do to prevent lungworm in your cattle; particularly in your first-season grazers.

Lungworm, also known as Husk, is caused by a parasite called *Dictyocaulus viviparus*. It causes bronchitis (inflammation of the large airways of the lungs) and pneumonia resulting in signs such as coughing, fast-breathing, weight loss, reduced milk yield and in severe cases may simply be found dead.

The lifecycle can be seen summarised below. One of the key timings to be aware of is the time between a cow ingesting larvae off the pasture to showing signs of disease. This is around 3-4 weeks. However, if disease is severe signs may be seen after just a week. If the parasite burden isn't too high and the animal recovers, long-lasting lung damage may remain. Even when they start to show signs of recovery they can relapse; which is usually fatal. This is thought to be due to the aspiration of dead worms.





First season grazers are most at risk because they have no immunity to lungworm. Immunity to lungworm is relatively quickly gained compared to other parasites, but is also quickly lost. This is why it is important that cattle are re-exposed every year to avoid lungworm cases in adult cattle. In most cases this occurs simply from grazing regular pastures. But what can be done for first season grazers who have no previous exposure? Their first natural exposure could be potentially fatal, but it is important that they are exposed in some way in order to build immunity. The safest way to achieve this is to vaccinate them with Huskvac.

Huskvac is an oral vaccine given in two doses four weeks apart prior to turnout to animals eight weeks and older. It takes two weeks following these two doses for them to gain immunity. Therefore, the first dose should be given around six weeks prior to turnout. It doesn't prevent disease, but does reduce severity of clinical signs and lung lesions associated with lungworm.

If you are interested in ordering Huskvac or discussing lungworm please call the practice and we will be happy to help. Our team of vet techs are also on hand to come out on farm to administer the vaccine for you as admittedly it isn't always the easiest task! If you would be interested in this service please call your nearest Penbode branch.

For any client who uses Huskvac, We will carry out mob faecal egg counts free of charge on the vaccinated group to monitor the need to treat them for worms.







# OUR VET TECH SERVICES

Our **Vet Tech** services offer a hassle free way of ensuring your regular health tasks are completed. Many of these jobs can be time consuming and our team of Vet Techs are highly trained and experienced to complete these tasks. We offer a range of service packages or one off visits to suit any farm size or type.



- **Vaccinations**
- **Calf Tracker**
- **Disbudding**
- **Mobility and condition scoring**
- **Collecting Qscout samples on farm**
- **Dry cow audit**
- **Youngstock Audit**
- **Tail Clipping**
- **Udder singeing**
- **Mastitis culture sampling**
- **CMT Testing**
- **Worm resistance checks**
- **Teat end scoring**



# LAMBING BAYS AND LAMBING OUT OF HOURS SERVICE

We have purpose-built lambing bays at all of our farm practice locations (**Holsworthy, Stratton, Bradworthy and Camelford**). We can meet you at these lambing bays both during the day and out-of-hours for any small ruminant procedures or emergencies. You might recognise them if you have ever joined us for our popular lambing and calving courses too.

## The benefits of making use of our lambing bays are as follows:

- Good lighting, ventilation and easy access to mains water and electricity mean that our surgical outcomes should be improved due to reduced operating time and better visibility.
- We have specific surgical tables which allow good restraint of small ruminants, reducing stress to the animal (and you!), contamination of the surgical site, and reducing operating times.
- The lambing bays are all cleaned and disinfected with approved products after use, and the lack of bedding means that risk of surgical site contamination is reduced.
- Bringing animals in to us reduces the cost to you – during the day this means you don't have to pay a visit charge, out-of-hours a small charge applies but this is always less than the cost of a visit.

Other procedures we have performed in our lambing bays include enucleating a ram (removing his eye), castrating rams, piglets and goat kids, vasectomising rams, examining sick lambs, and even a goat blood transfusion!





# Lameness in the Lambing Shed

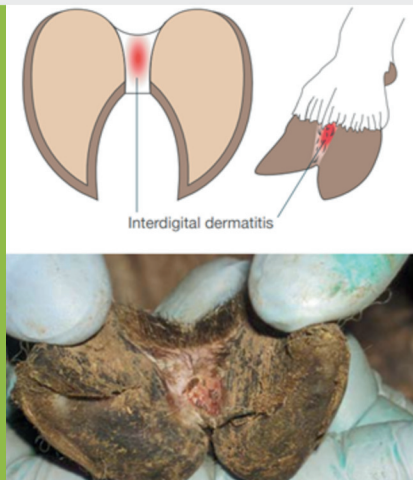
**By Amy Smyth  
BVetMed MRCVS**



When sheep are all brought into the same area, the chances of spread of pathogenic bacteria from one foot to another (or one sheep to another) is much higher. Do you know how to recognise the different lameness syndromes we commonly see and how to treat them?

## **Scald, strip, Ovine Interdigital Dermatitis.**

Red/pink inflammation between the toes, often slimy and smelly.

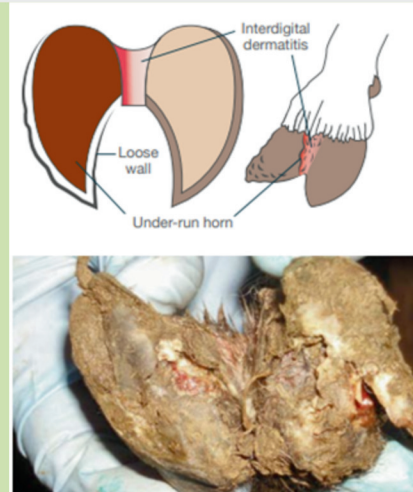


Spreads when sheep are densely stocked, when conditions are damp or the feet are damaged by rough, sharp surfaces. Can develop into footrot.

Do not trim!  
Use a footbath every time lambs are handled or gathered to disinfect the feet and treat cases with a topical antibiotic spray.

## **Footrot**

More severe inflammation between the toes, with oozing pus, a distinctive foul smell and separation of the hoof horn, starting between the toes.



Spreads similarly to strip, especially in heavily soiled areas and when sheep are housed.

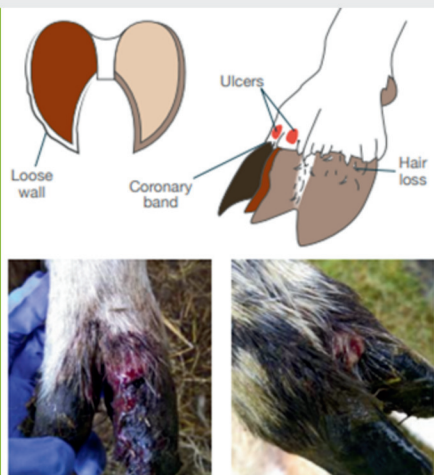
Do not trim!  
A long acting antibiotic injection and antibiotic topical spray should be given immediately. Pain relief may help.

5-point plan!



## CODD

Ulcerated area at the coronary band which progresses to separation of the outer hoof wall.

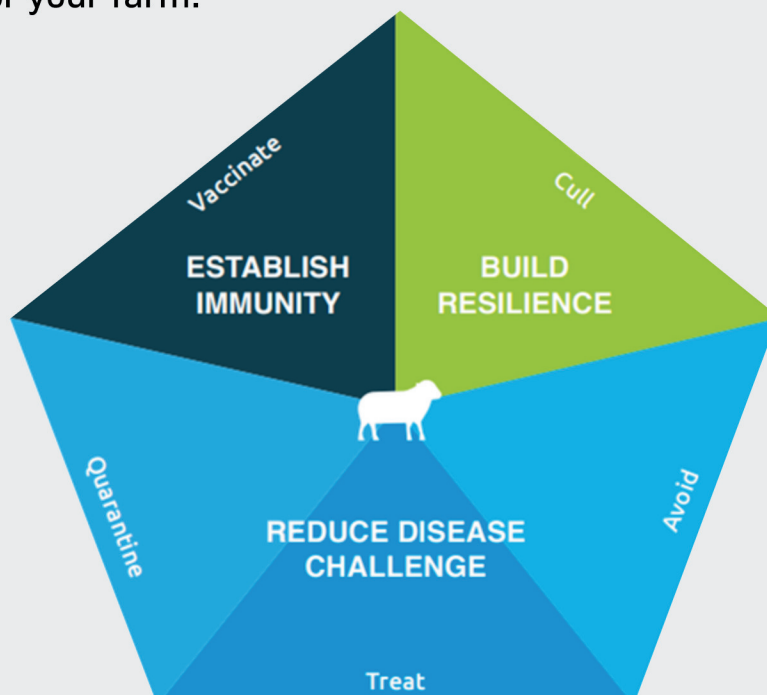


Very contagious, with often severe outbreaks, often bought in or spread on hands or trimming equipment.

Do not trim! Treat with a long-acting amoxicillin or speak to a vet about using a higher class antibiotic if needed. Pain relief may help.

Lameness can be extremely frustrating to treat, as infections are often mixed – with the causative pathogens from multiple diseases being present at once. The best way to reduce cases is to follow the Five Point Plan:

- Cull repeat offenders.
- Quarantine incoming or currently infected stock. Consider different pens in lamb shed for lame sheep
- Treat and isolate cases promptly and appropriately.
- Avoid spread by footbathing, improving drainage and reducing heavy traffic areas (e.g. around gates, troughs, etc.).
- Vaccination – discuss with one of our sheep team whether this could be a good fit for your farm.



There are also other non-infectious causes of lameness – if you think you are seeing lots of cases of shelly hoof, toe abscess or toe granuloma, please get in contact with one of the sheep team to discuss this further.



# Upcoming Courses 2025

**Pre-Lambing Flock Health Club Meeting** – Wednesday 5th February - Starting at 6:30pm - Bridgerule Village Hall, EX22 7DZ, 6:30pm. Free for FHC members or £5pp. Pasty, pudding and cider.

**Calf Scour Meeting (dairy)** – Thursday 13th Feb, Holsworthy Golf Club 6:30pm. A dinner and discussion evening on calf scour, introducing Bovilis Cryptium, the new Cryptosporidium vaccine. Free to attend (limited to 2 spaces per farm).

**Prime Beef Club meeting** – Tuesday 18th March, 11am – 2pm – On farm meeting by kind permission of Great Moreton Estate, EX23 9LY with a focus on bull fertility. Free for prime beef club members or £5pp, includes pasty lunch.

**Foot First Aid Course** – we are hoping to run another cattle foot first aid course in March/April time, please register your interest with your local branch or email [jay.waylen@penbodevets.co.uk](mailto:jay.waylen@penbodevets.co.uk) and we will notify you when we have a date.

**Mastering Medicines Course** – Tuesday 1st April – 10am Penbode kiosk @ Holsworthy Market. £30pp ex VAT

**DEFRA approved 3 day AI course** – Tuesday 29th, Wednesday 30th April & Friday 2nd May - £495pp. 10am – 3pm. Day 1 – Kiosk at Holsworthy Market, Day 2 and 3 on farm.



# North Devon: AHDB Taking steps to enhance cow mobility

**Tuesday, 25 February 2025**  
**11:00am - 2:00pm**  
**Newlands Farm, Youlstone,**  
**Bude, North Devon**  
**EX23 9PT**



*Join AHDB at this meeting to help you take steps to enhance your herd's mobility while cows are housed and at the same time boost profits and public perception.*

Lameness is expensive, requiring additional time and treatment costs, while also leading to lower yields and a shorter productive cow lifespan.

This event offers practical, actionable ideas you can implement on your farm to improve cow welfare, even when time and resources are tight.

You'll hear from mobility mentor **Penbode Farm Vet Dan Forrester** who will share best practices about identifying and applying the right solutions for your cows, and learn how progress has been made at Newlands Farm. Hoof Health Consultant James Wilson will share the learnings from his PhD about the targeted use of NSAIDS to reduce lameness.

*This event will cover*

- The key factors affecting cow mobility while housed
- Managing cows on concrete
- Practical ideas for reducing lameness, including footbathing and trimming protocols
- Safe cow movement through feed, handling, and housing areas
- Benefits of the Healthy Feet programme and lessons from High House Farm

If you want to create a future where your cows move with confidence and ease, leading to happier and healthier lives, then this meeting is for you.

**To book your space please scan the  
QR code to head to the AHDB  
website**





## HEPTAVAC® P Plus – LIMITED OR UNAVAILABLE STOCK SITUATION

Alternative products are available which contain similar components to Heptavac P Plus, speak to your vet or RAMA about which are most suitable for your flock situation:

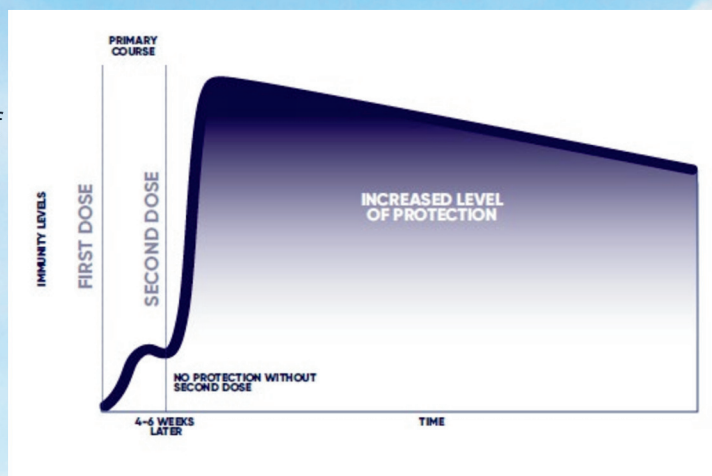
	<i>Clostridium perfringens</i> type C: Struck	<i>Clostridium perfringens</i> type D: Pulpy kidney	<i>Clostridium septicum</i> Braxy	<i>Clostridium chauvoei</i> : Blackleg, metritis	<i>Clostridium novyi</i> type B: Black disease	<i>Clostridium haemolyticum</i> : Bacterial red water	<i>Clostridium tetani</i> : Tetanus	<i>Clostridium perfringens</i> type B: Lamb dysentery	<i>Clostridium sordellii</i> : Abomasitis, toxæmia malignant oedema, metritis	<i>Clostridium perfringens</i> type A: Enterotoxaemia	<i>Mannheimia haemolytica</i> , <i>Pasteurella trellosi</i> Pasteurellosis
<b>Bravoxin</b> sheep & cattle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Heptavac-P plus</b> sheep	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
<b>Ovivac-P plus</b> sheep		✓	✓	✓			✓				✓
<b>Ovipast plus</b> sheep											✓

### If no alternatives can be sourced:

Pregnant ewes should be prioritised, particularly first-time lambers and gimmers. These need a dose of Clostridial/Pasteurella vaccine (containing a lamb dysentery component) 4-6 weeks prior to lambing, this will protect the ewe directly and the lamb indirectly through Maternally-Derived Antibodies (MDA) in colostrum.

If the pregnancy booster is delayed and given to the ewes later than the 4–6 week period prior to lambing, be aware this will protect the ewe, however will provide a limited or unknown level of protection to the lamb via colostrum. Also consider the stress of gathering ewes very close to pregnancy, which can predispose to miscarriages.

New-born lambs should be prioritised as much as possible. Lambs need a dose of Clostridial/Pasteurella vaccine from 2-3 weeks of age and another 4-6 weeks later.







Heptavac P Plus is recommended for lambs being kept as replacements, however in a low stock situation, another vaccine could be used such as Ovivac P Plus or Bravoxin. Any sheep which are then kept and used for breeding in subsequent years will need a full primary course of Heptavac P Plus in pregnancy.

Rams should be fully vaccinated including yearly boosters due to the higher cost of these animals, Ovivac P Plus or Bravoxin can be used in the absence of Heptavac P Plus.

Animals which are not able to be vaccinated will be at risk. Older animals are likely to have increased natural immunity compared to younger animals. Certain strategies can be employed to try and manage the risk:

- **Reduce stress**– stress predisposes to both Clostridial and Pasteurella disease. Stress can be caused by gathering, handling, administering products or medications, mixing groups, moving, sudden weather changes, worrying with dogs etc.
- **Good nutrition** – animals should be in good body condition without being fat. Sudden changes in nutrition can predispose to the disease so make any changes gradually.
- **Avoid fields/situations where sheep have succumbed to clostridial or Pasteurella disease in the past** – some clostridial bacteria live in the soil and seem to be more associated with certain fields. Disturbed soil can increase the risk so avoid groundworks etc. in fields. Moving sheep onto sugar beet or other fodder crop in autumn is also associated with increased disease risk.
- **Ensuring animals are fit and healthy** – by making sure they are worm-free, lameness is under control, fluke is managed where this is a risk, and that they are not suffering from any other diseases which can bring down their immune resilience (e.g., MV, Johnes, CLA, Orf, OPA).
- **Excellent hygiene** – at lambing time, all equipment and personnel should be scrupulously clean, lamb navels must be dipped, tagging, docking and castrating must be done to the highest standard.
- **Excellent colostrum management** – lambs must receive 200ml/kg colostrum in the first 24 hours of life and 200ml must be given in the first 2-4 hours.
- **Manage the environment** – if the animals are indoors; clean bedding, replaced regularly, plenty of clean, fresh water, sufficient nutrition which is easy to access, not crowded, good ventilation, dry underfoot conditions. If sheep are outside; make sure the fencing is a good standard and the grass is not being eaten down to bare soil - provide supplementary nutrition if required.
- **Manage trace elements** – blood testing can be undertaken to identify deficiencies and supplements can be provided.

### Things you should not do:

- Use a half dose of vaccine – this will not provide protection
- Miss the second dose of the primary course – the animal will not be protected

Once vaccines become available again, sheep which have not received a primary course of 2 doses 4-6 weeks apart, or those which had an interval of >12 months between booster doses should be restarted on the primary course for full protection.

Heptavac® P Plus contains antigens from 7 clostridial species and antigens from the most important serotypes of *Mannheimia (Pasteurella) haemolytica* and *Bibersteinia (Pasteurella) trehalosi* and is indicated for the active immunisation of sheep against disease associated with infections caused by these bacteria. Legal category **POM-VPS**. Ovivac® P Plus contains antigens from 4 clostridial species and antigens from the most important serotypes of *Mannheimia (Pasteurella) haemolytica* and *Bibersteinia (Pasteurella) trehalosi* and is indicated for the active immunisation of sheep against disease associated with infections caused by these bacteria. Legal category **POM-VPS**. Bravoxin® contains toxoids of *C. perfringens* type A, B, C and D, *C. chauvoei* whole culture, *C. septicum*, *C. haemolyticum*, *C. novyi* type B, *C. sordellii* and *C. tetani*. Legal category **POM-VPS**.

UK-OVL-220200006

Further information is available from the SPC, Datasheet or package leaflet. MSD Animal Health UK Ltd. Registered office Walton Manor, Walton, Milton Keynes MK7 7AJ, UK. Tel. 01908 685685. Registered in England & Wales no. 946942. Advice should be sought from the medicine prescriber.

**Use Medicines Responsibly.**

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# Do you have unneutered cats on your farm?

Your local Cats Protection branch would like to help...

Talk to us about the TNR programme in your area (Trap, Neuter and Return). We can provide humane cat traps and offer neutering for FREE.

Neutering benefits individual cats as well as playing a crucial role in controlling the colony population. It reduces the risk of infections and diseases, prevents fighting, prolific breeding and promotes happy, healthier cats. This means that in return they will help keep the rodents on your farm under control.



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For more information or to register interest, please email [enquiries@holsworthy.cats.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@holsworthy.cats.org.uk)

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Holsworthy, Bideford and Okehampton branch  
[cats.org.uk/holsworthy](http://cats.org.uk/holsworthy) 03453 712 717 |  
[enquiries@holsworthy.cats.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@holsworthy.cats.org.uk)

 @catsprotection



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