Now is a good time of year to try and get on top of sheep lameness. Before trying to tackle lameness it is very important to understand the differences between the three biggest causes of sheep lameness:

**SCALD**
Inflamed interdigital area. Easily treated with oxytetracycline spray or formalin footbath. If left untreated can lead to foot rot.

**FOOT ROT**
Underrun sole, hoof wall may come away. Pus often present with a foul smell. Needs antibiotic spray plus an injection of long acting oxytetracycline (Alamycin LA). Foot bathing with formalin can be beneficial if large numbers affected.

**CODD**
Separation at the coronary band (where the skin and horn meet), with hairloss and ulceration. Infection spreads down inside of wall and hoof capsule may be shed leaving raw tissue/bone. Needs specific antibiotic treatment as unlikely to resolve to Alamycin LA. Drugs from a similar class to Micotil such as Zactran are the best antibiotics to use to target CODD. If large numbers are affected then regular foot-bathing with an antibiotic solution, such as LINCOSPECTIN, may be essential to get on top of the problem.

Drugs like Zactran can be used ‘off licence’ but they have long meat withdrawals. This is why it is vital to target ewe CODD problems now to avoid infecting next seasons crop of lambs.

For all infectious causes of lameness it is important NOT to trim the feet. Ideally lame ewes should be marked and isolated from the rest of the flock. If the infection fails to resolve the animal should be euthanised. Individuals with recurrent lameness should be culled as soon as drug withdrawal times allow to reduce the spread of infection within the flock.

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**Care with Concentrates**

When feeding concentrates to sheep it is VITAL to only feed SHEEP concentrates. Both cattle and pig feed contain copper at toxic levels to sheep which can prove fatal! Even feeding large quantities of sheep concentrates over a prolonged period can be risky, so always monitor sheep.

Clinical signs only occur once the liver has been severely damaged. Affected sheep are weak and their breathing becomes rapid and shallow due to anaemia. They may appear jaundiced (yellow tinge to gums, around eyes and even skin) and produce dark, brown/black urine. Due to the sudden onset of signs animals may just be found dead.

If you are worried about copper toxicity call Penbode Vets and speak to one of the vets for FREE advice on how to avoid problems.

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We plan to hold ON FARM Sheep Discussion Groups in the future. To be part of these please email farm@penbodevets.co.uk. Topic suggestions welcome.
Most clients are aware that they should not trim feet of acutely lame sheep. However, lots are still guilty of doing so because they cannot seem to resist the urge to pick up their hoof shears. STOP and THINK!

**Quick Lameness Facts**
1. Most causes of lameness are infectious. **Infected tissue cannot begin healing until suitable antibiotics are administered.**
2. The **healing process is severely delayed** by even minor foot trimming.
3. The bacteria that causes Contagious Ovine Digital Dermatitis (CODD) loves metal and will happily live as a **reservoir of infection on your hoof shears.**
4. Trimming long toes of sound sheep is an easy way to introduce infection and cause problems such as ‘strawberry toe’. Which would you rather, **sound sheep with long toes** or lame sheep with tidy feet?

**INJECT LAME SHEEP WITH A SUITABLE ANTIBIOTIC ON DAY 1 AND MARK THE INDIVIDUAL**

**ONLY CONSIDER TRIMMING THE FOOT IF THE SHEEP IS STILL LAME IN 1 WEEK**

If you would like more information on how to tackle lameness at the flock level please contact your usual branch for FREE advice. If required, one of the Penbode Sheep Vets can put together a tailor made Sheep Lameness Control Plan to help reduce lameness and improve the profitability of your flock.

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**Endofluke 10 Oral Drench**
- Contains Triclabendazole
- Treats ALL stages of liver fluke from early immature to adult
- Meat withdrawal 56days

**SPECIAL CASH PRICE**

£58.59 + VAT FOR 2.5L

Also suitable for beef cattle and dry dairy cows if given at the start of the dry period.

Speak to your local branch for further details.

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**Fluke Treatment Reminder**

Immature fluke migrate through the livers of sheep and can cause sudden death. To prevent this we recommend using a flukicide product that specifically targets immature fluke. For that reason products that contain Triclabendazole should be used in sheep at this time of year.

For breeding ewes and rams we recommend using a **single action** product such as Endofluke 10 or FasineX 5%.

In young sheep, such as stores or ewe lambs, gut worms could still be a problem. These animals could be treated with a combination drench that targets gut worms and immature fluke such as Fasimec Duo or Combinex.

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PENBODE BENCHMARKING GROUP

We shall recommence the Penbode bench-marking scheme with the Winter Sheep Newsletter to fit in with the next production cycle for 2016.