Bovilis SBV has been licensed for use in cattle and sheep in the UK; in fact it is the first vaccine for Schmallenberg virus in the world! Many of you have been asking for some time if and when this vaccine would be available having seen first-hand the devastation caused by the Schmallenberg virus last year. We have experienced a wide range of symptoms as this virus has moved through the livestock in this area. Some herds had high temperatures and diarrhoea, others suffered from milk drop while some had reproductive problems such as late embryonic death and abortion storms. In addition, both cattle and sheep farmers have had to deal with a significant number of deformed offspring resulting in a lot of difficult deliveries and Caesarean sections.

The vaccine is not licenced for use in pregnant animals or in breeding bulls and rams. Cattle require a primary vaccination of two doses of 2ml approximately 4 weeks apart administered in the muscle. Sheep require a single 2ml dose administered under the skin. Cattle must be at least 2 months of age and sheep must be at least 4 months of age. The onset of immunity is 3 weeks after vaccination.

As with all veterinary medicines it is important that you read the datasheet before you use the product to make sure you are using it correctly. As with most vaccines Bovilis SBV should be kept refrigerated. Once a vial is broached the contents should be used within 4 hours.

Advice on revaccination will follow in due course as we learn more about this new disease. There is still considerable debate among experts about how long immunity lasts following natural infection although there are reports of flocks and herds suffering losses this spring having been exposed the previous year also.

Visit our stand in the Agri T ent at Cheshire Show for more details about this vaccine.

We will be joined on our stand by a representative of MSD, the vaccine producers, who will be on hand to answer all your questions.
Important weapon in battle against wormer resistance

An important weapon in the battle against the under-recognised problem of wormer resistance is the role of ‘refugia’. This involves the practice of allowing a population of susceptible worms to survive on pasture or in untreated sheep, among which any resistant worms will be diluted. Even if resistant worms are present on a farm, it is still possible to keep the flock in the SCOPS green zone (see graphic) if their numbers are kept low and they remain at low concentration among a large anthelmintic-susceptible majority of the worm population. It is also becoming more widely understood that moving sheep onto clean pasture straight after worming is a particularly bad idea, contrary to advice that was on offer in the past. This is because clean pasture’s absence of susceptible worms ‘in refugia’ rules out such a dilution effect and risks establishing an entirely resistant worm population.

A novel strategy included in the computer modelling was the concept of dual-active wormers. These contain two or more active ingredients with different mechanisms of action against worms. Essentially, if some resistant worms survive one wormer, most of them will be killed by the other. Table 1 shows the simple mathematics involved. This concept of ‘additive efficacy’ means that dual-active treatments can achieve highly effective worm control (e.g. 99% as illustrated) and, as long as an adequate refugia population is maintained, can also help delay the development of resistance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Mathematics of a dual-active wormer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Number of worm before treatment</td>
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<tr>
<td>First active ingredient (90% efficacy) kills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of worms surviving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second a/i (90% efficacy) kills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of worms remaining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual-active efficacy</td>
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Startect is a dual-active sheep wormer offers better lamb performance and tackles resistance head on. STARTECT® is the first-ever dual-active wormer in the UK, employing two active ingredients from different wormer groups. One is derquantel from an anthelmintic class called spiroindoles. The other is abamectin, an ML wormer never previously available in this country for use in sheep. Both active ingredients have high efficacy in their own right and the purpose of co-formulating them is enhanced efficacy against target worms, including those with resistance to other wormer groups, and to protect both active ingredients from the development of resistance in the future. Using a dual active wormer means that if one drug fails to kill all worms, the second can kill survivors. At the same time as impacting lamb performance beneficially, each active ingredient also protects the other from resistance development, according to Andrew Montgomery. “STARTECT kills worms resistant to BZ, LV and ML anthelmintics and is suitable for routine use to help delay further development of wormer resistance and resultant drench failure,” he says.

The drench is suitable for use in adult sheep and lambs. To minimise the overall amounts and frequency of wormer use, guidelines recommend a moxidectin co-formulating them is enhanced efficacy against target worms, including those with resistance to other wormer groups, and to protect both active ingredients from the development of resistance in the future. Using a dual active wormer means that if one drug fails to kill all worms, the second can kill survivors. At the same time as impacting lamb performance beneficially, each active ingredient also protects the other from resistance development, according to Andrew Montgomery. “STARTECT kills worms resistant to BZ, LV and ML anthelmintics and is suitable for routine use to help delay further development of wormer resistance and resultant drench failure,” he says.

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The importance of refugia is highlighted by computer modelling of UK sheep worm populations under a variety of treatment and management regimes that has been conducted by the Food and Environment Research Agency (FERA).

Pain management in calves during and after dehorning: benefits of improved welfare and reduced stress

In recent years there have been major advances in our understanding of pain in farm animals which has led to changes in the way we approach painful conditions and procedures. Pain in farm animals has been shown to adversely affect normal behaviour such as lying and feeding, reduce weight gain, increase stress and ultimately reduce animal welfare. And dehorning is no exception. Studies have demonstrated adverse physiological and production-related effects due to pain associated with dehorning. These include an increase in stress hormone levels, a decrease in ruminal activity, an increase in head shaking as well as a reduction in the time spent grazing and more time spent lying down. Analgesics such as local anaesthetics and NSAIDs (non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) can be administered to control pain and reduce these negative impacts. And as dehorning is a routine procedure, the importance of managing this pain becomes even more significant in terms of improving animal welfare.

The acute pain of dehorning is controlled by using local anaesthetic, however the longer term pain that outlasts this anaesthesia can have a significant adverse impact on calf health and welfare. Research has shown that the pain associated with dehorning lasts up to 44 hours - and this is where the long acting NSAID, Metacam for Cattle - now licensed to control the pain associated with dehorning - can be used to bridge the gap. This new licence for dehorning is the first for an NSAID. And the fact that the analgesic effect of Metacam has been shown to last up to three days, means that it can provide pain relief ideally suited for calves undergoing dehorning. Research has shown the additional benefits of using Metacam when dehorning include:

- Reduced stress responses – heart rate, respiratory rate and cortisol
- Reduced sensitivity to pain in the dehorned area – positive impact on suckling behaviour
- Reduced frequency of pain related behaviour – less ear flicking and head shaking
- Increased feed intake – Significantly more weight gain with Metacam in the 10 days post dehorning

Talk to your vet today about Metacam and the added benefits of use in dehorning.

NEW LICENCE
Long acting Metacam for Cattle – Dehorning

Stay out of the Red!

Pain management in calves during and after dehorning; benefits of improved welfare and reduced stress

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