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## NOVEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

### COVID UPDATE – LOCKDOWN 2.0

Here we go again, another lockdown. As before, livestock provision will continue for all necessary procedures, including TB testing, fertility work and emergencies and there will be no change to the usual out of hours provision. Other work will be performed on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the vet.

As with all businesses, we are much better prepared this time around. We have screens up at all the branches and these will all remain open for the time being; 8:30 – 18:00 Monday to Friday and 9.00 – 13:00 at North Tawton only on Saturday. This may have to be reviewed in light of any staff sickness or requirement to isolate pending COVID testing etc, so please do bear with us if this unfortunately has to happen. Similarly, vets may have to suddenly isolate and be unable for work which could put pressure on the diary and lead to us having to rearrange calls at relatively short notice. Hopefully this will not be the case, but we would appreciate your understanding in this matter if this were to happen.

Please continue to allow 24 hours for medicine orders to be processed. Emergency phone orders can be processed if required. Email orders can be emailed to [info@northparkvets.co.uk](mailto:info@northparkvets.co.uk) Monday to Friday. Due to social distancing rules and other factors, drugs will continue to be left outside in the boxes.

Thank you once again for all your support and understanding throughout this trying year. Hopefully we can move

### AVIAN INFLUENZA OUTBREAK

Avian influenza of the H5N8 strain was confirmed at a premises near Frodsham in Cheshire which rears broiler breeder chickens on 2 November 2020. Testing has now confirmed this is a highly pathogenic strain related to the virus currently circulating in Europe. A 3km Protection Zone and a 10km Surveillance Zone have now been put in place around the infected premises to limit the risk of the disease spreading. A separate outbreak of low pathogenicity avian influenza (LPAI) of the H5N2 strain has also been confirmed at a small commercial premises near Deal in Kent on 2 November 2020.



Avian influenza is a notifiable disease which can also affect humans. If you keep poultry, whether commercially on a farm, or as pets in your garden, or rearing game birds, you should keep a close watch on them for signs of disease (respiratory disease, reduced appetite, blue discolouration of combs and wattles, diarrhoea, reduced egg laying). It is imperative to maintain good biosecurity at all times. If you have any concerns about the health of your poultry, contact us as soon as possible. Poultry includes chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese, pigeon (bred for meat), partridge, quail, guinea fowl and pheasants. You should register your poultry with APHA, even if only kept as pets, so that you can be contacted if required during an outbreak. This is a legal requirement if you have 50 or more

**CHANGE TO DRUGS DISCOUNT TERMS:** Going forward “Prompt Payment Drugs Discount” will be lost if invoices have not been paid within 30 days. Surcharges will continue to be added to accounts not cleared within 60 days of invoicing. Thank you for your understanding.

## RUMA ANTIBIOTIC USAGE ANNUAL REPORT

RUMA (Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance) has just published their annual antimicrobial usage report. Once again, the UK agriculture sector has seen a reduction in the overall usage of antibiotics. We retain our position as having the fifth lowest sales overall in Europe, 71% lower than the EU average in terms of mg/PCU, a standardised unit of animal biomass.

As discussed by Jonathan on BBC Spotlight last week, the UK saw sales fall by over 50% from 2014 to 2019. The USA now uses five times the amount of antibiotics in mg/PCU across all livestock sectors compared to the UK. Specifically for beef, the USA now uses eight times the amount of antibiotics in mg/PCU as we do.

This is excellent progress and demonstrates our desire to constantly strive to improve animal health and welfare, together with ensuring sustainability and recognising the need to protect the important commodities that are antibiotics, both for animal health and human health.

RESPONSIBLE USE OF MEDICINES IN AGRICULTURE ALLIANCE

ruma



### ORDER YOUR SCABIVAX NOW

Scabivax Forte is a live virus vaccine for the active immunisation of ewes and lambs against **Orf**. Immunity develops within 4-8 weeks of vaccination and is effective for 12 months. It should **NOT be given within 7 weeks of lambing**, so plan ahead. *The vaccine should not be used on farms or in flocks where Orf is not a problem.*

### SOME CHANGES TO DAIRY

**FERTILITY DRUGS** – we are changing our GnRH product to Acegon from Receptal and prostaglandin (“estrumate”) from Cyclix to Prellim. There are no changes to withdrawal periods etc.

### IS YOUR FRIDGE KEEPING IT'S COOL, OR IS IT TOO HOT TO TROT?

A recent study with 18 farmers, who placed temperature loggers in the fridge where they normally store vaccines, found that 89% of the loggers recorded a temperature outside the required 2°C to 8°C range at least once. 43% recorded temperatures outside this range half the time.

A total of 55% recorded a temperature higher than 8°C and 39% temperature below 2°C, with 12°C the highest recorded and -11.5°C the coldest.

This raises potential concerns about vaccine efficacy in on-farm fridges, as both high and low temperatures can reduce vaccine efficacy. Live vaccines are particularly sensitive to elevated temperatures, whereas inactivated vaccines are more affected by freezing. Reduced efficacy of vaccines is at best a costly exercise for those farmers buying the vaccines, but at worst could significantly impact upon herd health, leading to increased disease, loss of production and further costs. It is advisable to use maximum/minimum thermometers or temperature loggers to track fridge temperature, as well as taking steps to maximise the efficiency of each fridge. Regularly check airflow, prevent dirt build up on grills and use a livestock specific fridge (not the household kitchen fridge).



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