

October 2023



Liver Fluke

Approaching housing and an acute risk period we should all be thinking about liver fluke.

Liver fluke, or Fasciola Hepatica, is a common parasite that affects cattle worldwide. This flatworm can lead to significant health issues, affecting the liver and overall productivity of your cattle. With the warm and wet weather we have had in our "so called summer," it has been prime breeding conditions for the mud snail that hosts the fluke larvae.

The seasonal nature of liver fluke infection results from snails shedding infective larvae onto pasture primarily during late summer and early autumn. Cattle grazing over the autumn are at risk of ingesting larvae over a prolonged period and developing chronic disease which becomes evident in late winter and early spring.

Symptoms and Diagnosis

Recognizing liver fluke infestations in cattle is crucial for timely intervention. Common symptoms include:

- Reduced appetite
- Decreased milk production
- Weight loss
- Lethargy
- Diarrhoea
- Bottle jaw
- Jaundice (yellowing of mucous membranes)

Combined with the above clinical signs we are able to diagnose fluke via the following tests:

- Regular blood sampling first time grazing animals, allowing to see exposure to the fluke in the acute phase of the disease. At this time of year this is the best option in the arsenal
- Regular feedback from abattoir returns, allowing you to monitor infestations yourselves
- Faecal egg counts: this is useful in the latter stage (typically winter/spring) of the disease process - 10-12 weeks from initial infection

With the new Ovacyte update, we have become one of the first vets in the country to be able to process liver fluke faecal testing in house.

Speak to your vet about the best time to drop in your samples.

MEETINGS COMING UP..

MEDICINE HANDLING COURSE

Beef

@ THE PRACTICE ON

THURSDAY 2ND NOVEMBER

11AM TO 1PM

(SUITABLE FOR BEEF AND SHEEP)



Date for your diary.....

CALF COURSE

WEDNESDAY 11th OCTOBER

Time and venue TBA....



SKITTLES EVENINGS IN OCTOBER



@ The Golden Swan, Wilcot, SN9 5NN
on Tuesday 10th October at 7pm

@ Old Royal Ship, Luckington, SN14 6PA
on Wednesday 18th October at 7pm

@ The Farmers Arms,
Guiting Power, GL54 5TZ
on Tuesday 24th October at 7PM

Food courtesy of Zoetis and George Vets

Raffle in aid of FCN and the DPJ foundation

RSVP on 01666 823035 or
e:farm@georgevetgroup.co.uk



UPDATE



Medicine collection time from
Pamington and Shurdington will now be
at **4.30pm** on Monday, Wednesday and
Friday.



Prevention and Control

Preventing liver fluke infestations is essential for cattle health and productivity.

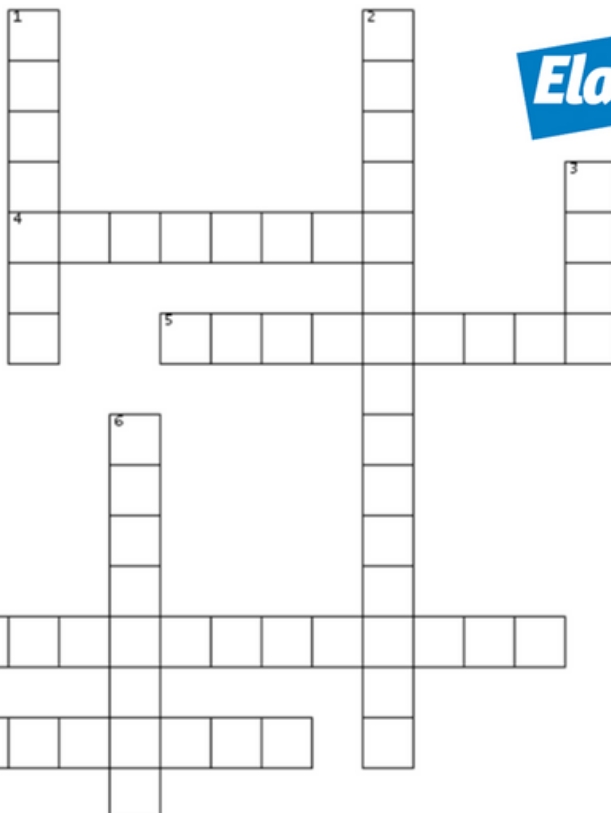
Here are some strategies:



- **Pasture Management:** Maintain proper drainage in pastures to minimize the presence of mud and the breeding ground of the mud snail, where liver fluke larvae thrive.
- **Strategic Grazing:** Rotate pastures to reduce exposure to contaminated areas and avoid grazing during peak liver fluke seasons.
- **Chemical Treatment:** With known resistance to Triclabendazole (products such as Fasinex), its use and effectiveness is in the balance. Taking a look at the stage of the fluke and risk period of infestation can mean other products may be a better and a safer choice. Consult us for appropriate anthelmintic treatments. These medications can effectively control liver fluke, but proper dosing and timing are essential.
- **Quarantine protocol for new stock:** New stock poses a threat to your system for several diseases, including the risk of bringing in new parasites. We would recommend housing bought-in animals in a quarantine facility for 4 weeks and treating with the correct product for the time of year.

A multi-modal approach involving flukicide product choice to reduce pasture contamination and drug resistance, alongside pasture management to restrict cattle access to snail habitats and quarantine of new stock with unknown infection status, is recommended to have the least impact to your cattle from this frustrating flatworm.

For more information please don't hesitate to contact us or visit the COWS and SCOPS website for detailed information on the management and control of Liver fluke and other parasitic diseases.



Elanco's Housing crossword

Elanco have put together a housing crossword to get us thinking on the run up to bringing our stock in, with a hamper as a prize. The answers and the winner will be announced in our next newsletter.

Please send in your answers with your surname, farm name, and contact information to farm@georgevetgroup.co.uk with the subject 'crossword'.

Good luck!

ACROSS

4. Liver fluke has two parts to its lifecycle. One inside the host (e.g cow) and one inside another organism, which is (3,4)
5. Before giving cattle a treatment dose, what do we need to do with our applicators?
7. A tool for assessing the internal parasite burden to see if a treatment is necessary (6,3,5)?
8. A term for bringing cattle in over the winter period?

DOWN

1. Sucking lice is one type of lice, what symptom can they cause?
2. What is the active ingredient that kills all stages of liver fluke down to 2 weeks of age in cattle (early immature fluke)?
3. An Ectoparasite at housing?
6. A symptom of mange mites (4,4)?



Joe Reskelly