

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

All our scheduled CPD has been postponed for the foreseeable future and will be reviewed according to government advice.

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, we are constantly following government advice and reviewing how we operate. At the time of writing, our surveillance work is considered as part of protecting the food chain, but the situation is rapidly changing. Whilst permitted, we will endeavour to continue to provide our services, but test turnaround times may be increased (JK 24/03).

Vets Cymru 2020 – Cancelled



Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, Vets Cymru 2020 has been cancelled but it will be back bigger and better so please save the date 18th/19th June 2021

A large proportion of our bovine submissions at the start of 2020 were due to **pneumonia**. **Bovine respiratory syncytial virus (BRSV)** was confirmed in three separate submissions in January. One nine-month-old calf died from a group of 20 suckler calves after an acute period of coughing. A second submission was a five-month-old heifer which died after acute respiratory signs and in the third case a ten-month-old steer died after respiratory distress.



Photo 1. Bovine lungs with BRSV

Clinical signs usually seen include fever, coughing, tachypnoea, conjunctivitis and variable nasal discharge. Gross pathology seen with BRSV varies from case to case but can include bullae, deep red anteroventral lung and voluminous caudodorsal lung where alveoli fail to collapse (Photo 1).

Mycoplasma bovis and ***Mycoplasma dispar*** were the cause of pneumonia in three separate submissions. The seventh calf that died in a group of 90 purchased bucket reared calves died from pneumonia caused by *M. bovis*. There was anteroventral consolidation small abscesses seen at necropsy (Photo 2 & 3). A second calf from a different group on the same farm was also submitted



Photo 2 & 3. Typical *Mycoplasma bovis* pneumonia

for PME. The cranial lung lobes in this more severely affected case were adhered to the pleura and abscesses ranged from 1mm to 4cm.

Vaginal prolapse led to the death of a three-year-old Kerry Hill ewe. It was the third to prolapse and die in a flock of 400. There was a tear in the prolapsed vagina and ischaemic necrosis probably accounted for the death. It was carrying one large foetus weighing 6.5 kg and had significant abdominal fat reserves. The intra-abdominal pressure was the likely cause of the prolapse in this case. Excessive fat deposition in this mountain-type ewe was a factor and could have been due to feed management.

Increased intra-abdominal pressure probably accounted for **diaphragmatic rupture** in a three-year-old Lleyn ewe carrying triplets. A few days before the ewe was due to lamb, the farmer noticed that she was inappetent and was discovered dead by the following morning. Postmortem examination revealed a 7-8cm rupture of the dorsal diaphragm with herniation of small intestine into the thorax (photo 4). The rumen was full, and the three lambs in the uterus had a combined weight of 11Kg, which represented 17% of the carcass bodyweight.

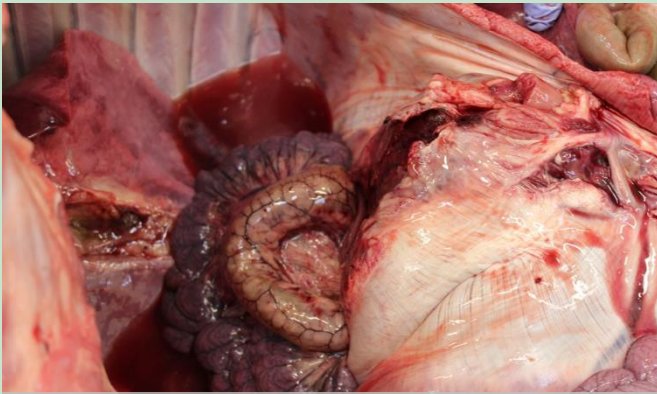


Photo 4. Herniation of intestine through diaphragmatic rupture

Histological examination of fixed diaphragm and blood vessels did not reveal any tissue defects that might account for the lesion, which was most likely caused by increased intra-abdominal pressure.

Salmonella typhimurium was diagnosed as the cause of abortion in a flock that was vaccinated against EAE and Toxoplasmosis. Several ewes aborted, became unwell and then died within a few days. At PME the intestinal contents were liquid and the significant gross findings were an endometritis with dark brown/red fetid material covering the endometrium. Salmonellosis was suspected from clinical history and the PVS was notified. *Salmonella Typhimurium* was cultured from an endometrial swab and further advice was given to the farmer of the zoonotic risk of handling infected animals.

Salmonella Dublin was the cause of abortion in two out of seven foetuses submitted to the WVSC. Only two were suitable for examination, the others had been eviscerated or skinned. No other history was provided as the possible source of infection, although contact with cattle was presumed likely, as they have carrier status for this salmonella serotype.

Salmonellosis was suspected of causing diarrhoea in a flock of 150 ewes, where 30 were affected; three had died, and seven others had aborted. Lesions seen at necropsy included numerous haemorrhages (petechial to ecchymotic) on the mucosal surface which had several punctate erosions. Longitudinal haemorrhages

were seen on the mucosa of the caecum. Culture for *Salmonella sp.* was negative but *Listeria monocytogenes* was cultured in heavy growth, and the cause of diarrhoea was likely to be **enteric listeriosis**. The most likely source of this organism was soil contamination of silage fed to the flock.

Two lambs were submitted from one holding where a large group of lambs go for winter grazing annually. By January, at least eight of these lambs had marked stiffness. One of the lambs submitted had a joint-ill and **Streptococcus dysgalactiae** was cultured but the other carcass was unremarkable. *Strep. dysgalactiae* joint-ill is usually contracted in the first six weeks of life. Liver selenium analysis revealed a **hyposeleniosis** (0.46mg/kg D) which could also account for sudden onset stiffness and poor growth in lambs. Selenium supplementation was advised. Since spinal abscesses had also been seen by the private vet during a field necropsy, a sample of spleen was sent to the Moredun Research Institute for PCR testing. A positive result confirmed *Anaplasma phagocytophilum* also known as **Tick Borne Fever** (TBF). TBF can be associated with immunosuppression and tick pyaemia and therefore likely to have been a factor, with the spinal abscesses, to account for the marked stiffness observed in the group of lambs.

FLUKE WATCH



Chronic fluke infection was confirmed in a heavily pregnant ewe presented for necropsy last week. The ewe was carrying twins and due to lamb in 14 days. The fluke burden will have caused condition loss and the increased risk of metabolic disease as the ewe was preparing for lambing and lactation. If farmers suspect fluke infection in their ewes, they should consult their vet or send in a sample of faeces for a fluke egg detection test.

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Please check the eligibility for **free carcass collection** via this website:

ahvla.defra.gov.uk/postcode/pme.asp

The suitability of submissions for a postmortem exam. must always be discussed with the WVSC duty vet.