



@howellsvets



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### WHAT'S ON

#### 'MAKING THE MOST OF VETERINARY MEDICINES'

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April 3pm to 5pm

Led by our vet Ellie Button at the Gavel Café,  
Thirsk Auction Mart.

**This is a red tractor compliant course.**

Call us to book your place or email  
meetings@howellsvets.co.uk



#### Show Season:

Come and say hello to us at the  
North Yorkshire County Show held at  
Otterington Hall in Northallerton on  
Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2026

**We will be supporting various shows  
across the country this summer. If you see  
our banner, come and say Hello!**

## VET'S VIEWPOINT



Written by  
Alasdair Ross  
BVM, BVS, MRCVS



As we move through April, although many of us are still lambing, it is time to think about parasite control in lambs for the growing season. The first gut worm risk to lambs is *Nematodirus battus*. The life cycle of this worm is different to the others and can cause a spike in lamb mortality quickly. This is because a mass hatch of larvae occurs after a cold snap followed by a prolonged period of over 10 degrees. This usually happens in late April/ Early May. It can present very similar to coccidiosis with black scour or even apparent sudden death. This disease cannot be monitored using faecal egg counting as the damage is done by larvae, not adults that lay eggs. The best way to know if your lambs are at risk is to check on the SCOPS forecast or speak to our team of farm vets or RAMAs in dispensary. We can support you throughout the growing season with your parasite control plan, so please do not hesitate to give us a call.

# Neonatal Calf Scours



Know what to look out for, how to prevent it and how to treat it.

Scour is the most common disease and cause of death in pre-weaned calves. Infectious and non-infectious causes can play a role. It is important to get a diagnosis so that treatment is effective and management is appropriate. Testing is performed on faecal samples.

## Managing calves with scour includes:

- Calf isolation
- Calf rehydration and supportive therapy
- Hygiene of the environment and equipment



Dehydration is usually the cause of death in these calves, so fluid therapy must be started promptly between feeds. Feeding milk as well as fluids is essential to ensure the calf has adequate energy and nutrition to aid recovery.

Mild to moderate dehydration	Scouring Can stand Has a suck reflex	Oral fluids including electrolytes
Moderate to severe dehydration	Scouring Can't stand No suck reflex	Intravenous fluids by a vet

Vaccines for both the cow and calves can be used as part of your control plan, but it is important to remember that this relies on excellent cow nutrition and colostrum management.

ADAS estimates the total cost of a scour outbreak in a 100-cow suckler herd (assuming 90 calves born) is £5,794. *MSD National Youngstock Survey 2020 (MSD Animal Health May 2020)*



Our dispensary stock a multitude of supportive products to reduce the impact of scours including:

- Electrolytes
- Colostrum supplements
- Calf jackets
- Powder calf pen disinfectant
- Stomach tubes and bottles
- Iodine and navel dips.

Forage analysis plays a vital role in calf scour management; knowing what you are feeding your cows allows you to know if and what supplements are needed to ensure good colostrum and milk supply. We offer this service through our dispensary.

