



# Farm Newsletter - September 2017

## MVC Annual Farm Department Social and Pub Quiz

Mid October, Date to be confirmed—The Bell Inn Chittlehampton

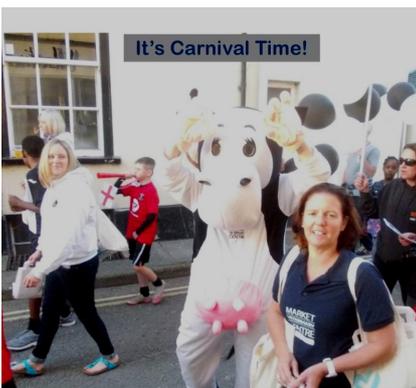


Our autumn skittles night has been very popular over the last couple of years but we thought we would try something slightly different this year! We will be hosting a pub quiz (with some veterinary content!) this year kindly sponsored by MSD.

As always refreshments will be supplied and of course if there is time we will play a round of skittles afterwards. Please feel free to come as a team (4-6) but don't worry if not we will sort numbers out on the night.

We will also be providing a little bit of information on the BVD free scheme which we have now signed up to.

For more information or to put your names down for a place please contact us at the surgery on 01769 572176. Look forward to seeing you all there



## South Molton Carnival

Saturday 23rd September from 12pm

Join us at the surgery in South Molton for this years carnival celebrations. We will be joining in the parade again this year as well as providing refreshments at the surgery

## Focus on Fluke

Following several wet summers we are seeing an increasing prevalence of liver fluke in our herds. Farms that have historically been relatively free of the disease are finding animals showing signs of clinical liver fluke and an increasing number of screening samples are coming back positive for the disease.

Liver fluke (*Fasciola hepatica*) is an internal parasite that affects the internal organs of grazing animals, including cattle, sheep, goats, llamas and other exotic farmed species. The parasites life cycle also requires an intermediate host in the form of a small snail known as *Galba trunculata*. Environmental factors also play a key role in the life cycle, particularly rainfall and temperature.



### **Clinical Signs**

The clinical signs are caused by the parasites feeding habits as they migrate through the bile ducts in the liver causing damage to the liver tissue. The signs vary according to the type of animal affected but can cause chronic disease seen most commonly in cattle, or sub-acute/acute disease which can be fatal, seen more commonly in cattle.

Clinical signs can include

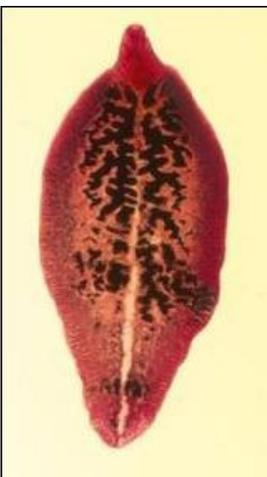
- Milk drop
- Weight loss
- Diarrhoea
- Lethargy
- Anaemia
- Bottle jaw (swelling between/below the lower jaw)
- In severe cases death

Infection with liver fluke can also cause sub-clinical disease in adult cattle resulting in production losses, such as lower milk yields in dairy cows and reduced growth rates in beef cattle. It can also make animals more susceptible to other diseases.



### **Diagnosis**

- Clinical signs
- Post Mortem
- Examination of faeces samples for fluke eggs
- Individual cow blood sampling for fluke antibodies
- Bulk milk analysis for fluke antibodies



### **Treatment**

An appropriate treatment regime should be designed to limit fluke egg output onto the pasture. The drug used must target fluke - most wormers are not effective against fluke and not all anti-fluke drugs target all stages of the fluke lifecycle. Withdrawal periods should be noted as they can be quite long.

### **Prevention**

Ideally livestock should be kept away from marshy areas, or the drainage improved. Often this is not possible and routine fluke treatments will be necessary to control the infection and limit the number of eggs and larvae on the pasture.

If you wish to discuss a plan to prevent fluke please speak to one of our vets and it can be included in your herd health plan.