



East Anglia Support Group
Newsletter Number 1 January 2008
Secretary: Suzannah Coke

Woodcarver's Cottage, School Road, East Rudham, King's Lynn PE31 8RF
Telephone: (01485) 528944 Email: zannah@which.net
Sponsored by Anglia Farmers www.angliafarmers.co.uk & Catfield Hall

We are working from an old database of addresses, if you no longer wish to be a member or wish to continue being part of our group and your subscription is due for renewal please contact Suzannah at the address above – membership costs minimum £5 per annum – cheque to 'EASG RBST'.

2008 Shows and Events

Please contact Roger Bowden if you can help for a few hours at any shows, we offer a big incentive – free tickets! (01359) 270084 bowdens2dsl.pipex.com

RBST EASG AGM - Scole Inn – 10th March 2008 – 7.30pm. Peter Titley, Chairman of Council (RBST) has agreed to speak. He is looking forward to telling us what is going on at the Trust, and what is planned for the future. A light buffet will be available, please return enclosed form and send cheque to the Secretary - there will be a raffle as usual.

SPRING FLING

www.norfolkshowground.co.uk
27th March 2008 – 9am – 3.30pm.
Tickets only £5 including a hog roast lunch and a drink. This fun filled event is aimed at 4 – 14 years.

**MID SUFFOLK SHOW,
STONHAM BARN** - 12th - 13th
April 2008

SOUTH SUFFOLK SHOW
www.southsuffolkshow.co.uk
11th May 2008

SUFFOLK SHOW
www.suffolkshow.co.uk
28th - 29th May 2008

**EASTON COLLEGE OPEN DAY,
NORWICH** - 1st June 2008 – we hope to have a stand.

**COUNTRY FAIR AND RURAL
PASTIMES, EUSTON HALL**
8th June 2008

ROYAL NORFOLK SHOW

www.royalnorfolkshow.co.uk
25th - 26th June 2008

HELMINGHAM HALL

- 4th July 2008

**SUFFOLK SMALLHOLDERS,
STONHAM BARN** - 20th July 2008

WAYLAND SHOW

www.waylandshow.com
3rd August 2008

AYLSHAM SHOW

www.avlshamshow.co.uk
25th August 2008

TRADITIONAL NATIVE BREEDS SHOW & SALE

www.grassroots.co.uk/melton.html
12th-13th September 2008

Bursaries

The RBST Support Group is offering £50 bursaries to any young handlers – it has now been decided that with more animals coming off the Watch List, and with only a finite number of Young Handlers in East Anglia, that we will spread the net wider, and make it available to all youngsters, irrespective of whether they have a rare breed and are members of the Support Group. Please contact Gail Sprake for further information and an application form. (01986)782416 gail@meensfarm.fsnet.co.uk

Mary Anne Morrison wondered if anybody can help her with her lambing – March/April. She is having a neck operation and will be needing help - MORRIA134@aol.com
01206 262391

The Norfolk Sheep Club - 01603

731306. All meetings held at 7.30pm at St Faiths Centre, Newton St Faith, Norwich.

20th February – Discussion with a vet from Chapelfield Veterinary Partnership about current health problems

19th March – Keeping flies/maggots away - Novartis

16th April – Preparing sheep for showing

May/June – Local farm walk

30th July – Day visit to Sheep 2008 at Malvern

July/Aug – Weekend trip away

Suffolk Show tickets - there was one unsold lot (2+2 plus car parking) at our RBST EASG Dinner held last June. If anyone is interested in putting in an offer please contact Kerry Long - 01485 600824 - kanga@which.net If you were going to the show anyway, this is an opportunity to raise funds for the Group.

FOR SALE

2 **Portland** rams, good & stocky.
2 **Portland** shearlings (1 due to lamb in April and the other was not put with the ram). Some good show quality **Whitefaced**

Woodland ram lambs and ewe lambs also available.

Tel: 01842 862702 or email: christmashill@btconnect.com
www.christmashill.co.uk

3 berth caravan (double + single) - old but still serviceable for shows
(01485)6000

NFU Open Meeting on BTV
10th January 2008
(rough notes taken by KL)

Dr Ian Frood, NFU Regional
Livestock Board Chairman-
Introduction

66 premises affected. Long term effects devastating and it could be with us for years if we don't get our plans right. BTV in the second year is a completely different disease. Virus spread by infected *Culicoides* midges. A 'clean' midge can bite an infected animal and become infected itself. NOT transmitted animal to animal
NO public health issue
NO slaughter policy
NO compensation
1st case Sept 28th 2007
Protection Zone & Surveillance zone. December 20th 2007 - start of vector free period.

Anthony Greenleaves, Divisional
Veterinary Manager, Animal Health,
Bury St Edmunds

Predominantly cattle, some sheep.
Typically singletons
60% of herds around +ve cases also had the disease
3% of flocks ditto
Further work being done at original 39
Bloods from cattle that were previously negative.
Trying to identify 'sentinel' animals
Forming a vaccination strategy
Gaining further info on spread within herds.

Vector Free - end anticipated late March. A farmer stood up & said he had one of the original 5 cases. He had today received the results of recent blood tests. 50% of his cows & 25% of his calves +ve.

Daan Dercksen, specialist in small
ruminant health, Holland

Anthropod-borne viral disease of ruminants.
Orbi virus. 24 serotypes. Assoc. with primary vascular damage.
Culicoides midges have been in Southern Europe for 10 years. In August 2006 BTV hit Holland 'out of the blue'. Clinical signs vary from nothing at all to very diseased animals. Sheep not so likely to be bitten but

more severely diseased when they are. In Holland they have an 'Animal Health Service Ruminant Watch' many small flocks & herds in Holland - lots of hobby farmers.

14/8/06 (Holland)

Farm 1 - 28 ewes & lambs - 1 dead lamb & 1 sick ewe

Farm 2 - 90 ewes & lambs - 1 dead ewe & 2 sick lambs

That was the start of BTV in the country.

Symptoms

Swollen heads & tongues, wet lips & noses but more like heavy sweating than dripping. Mucous membranes of eyes & mouth red to purple (unlike bottle jaw where there would be anaemia) High fever. Lameness. Hold noses in water to cool them (owners think they are drinking)

Differential Diagnosis

Orf, fluke, malignant catarrhal fever, milk allergy, FMD, photosensitization

There are 15 different species of *Culicoides* in Holland. *dewulfi* is PCR +ve. There is NO imicola which has caused devastation in Africa.

Cases Known

2006 456 Holland
885 Germany
695 Belgium

These numbers probably much higher.

2006 was the warmest winter on record and midges were still being caught on 31/1/07

Much more virus around in 2007 Last case was 13/12/06, first case 12/7/07
By December 2007 there had been 6423 cases (in reality probably 5-10 times as many)

Treatment

Dexamethasone in severe cases

NSAID's

Antibiotics

Supportive fluid therapy

Stress reduction & nursing

Frequent changes of water (due to holding noses in it)

Soft bedding & shelter

Easily digestible food

Efficacy of pour-ons?? Don't expect too much

Rams are often infertile for several months and as this often hits in late summer, it is a big problem.

We need a vaccine that is:

NOT live, SAFE, Effective

Vaccination strategy

Protection against clinical symptoms

Eradication

Mass vac. Of all 'kept' ruminants ? shortage - smart strategy - negative cattle first.

Question on dipping sheep. Daan said some hobby farmers had practically drowned their sheep in dip & still they got BTV.

Kevin Pearce NFU Head of Food & Farming

20,000,000 doses of vacc. ordered from Intervet for England. (Wales ordering their own) Scotland don't seem to think they need it.

1st batch due end May. More in June & bulk in July.

Priority - Protection zone. 2 million doses due in May. 1.2 doses will cover sheep & cattle in protection zone. ?

Voluntary tho' private vets will encourage it. Should be with private vets within 24 hours of being released & straight out to clients who will vacc. their own stock. Surveillance zone will be dispensed with and protection zone gradually moved out as vacc. done. Cost?? between 60-70P per dose. Cattle will need 2 (? a month apart) and sheep only 1, then both will need yearly booster. Only for serotype 8 at the moment. One needle per animal as blood can spread disease.

Withdrawal, shelf life etc. - still to be verified.

Q & A
Can you vaccinate a sero +ve animal - shouldn't be a problem with a dead vaccine.
Sero+ve animals can move to live (post vacc) after 60 days.
How long is an animal viraemic? 60 days cattle 30 days sheep but may be longer.

Are we looking at the offered EU funding for vacc? Looking into it but many strings attached (eg govt vets to do work)

How will we prove we've vaccinated? Our vets' records & our med. records.

Will there be a drop in fertility or milk production after vaccinating? Don't know.

Why have we ordered all vaccine from one company? Govt. decision based on expense.

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