



**alnorthumbria**  
veterinary group

# Newsletter

August 2019

So far this summer, we have had excellent weather for grass growing, but this brings with it its own problems – the warm and wet weather is encouraging flies, so be sure to keep up to date with fly repellents such as Spot On or Swish. We are also currently dealing with a sheep scab outbreak: all neighbouring farms have been contacted, but this serves as a stark reminder of the importance of biosecurity measures, such as double fencing and treating bought in-stock as well as remembering the risks of showing animals.

Though it seems we have just turned stock out, it is never too early to start thinking about vaccinations for housing, especially pneumonia vaccines such as Rispoval 4, 2 and 6 weeks before housing in calves.

## **TB Situation in Northumberland** By

**Richard Cuthbert**

On 24<sup>th</sup> July, we were present at a very well attended meeting in Otterburn, organised by the NFU, regarding the TB situation in Northumberland.

Some of you may be aware there are two Radial Zones in effect in Northumberland at the moment. Those affected all know who they are, as we have been in contact with them. We would like to stress that Northumberland is still classified as TB Free.

A radial zone is established after finding a positive reactor on a TB skin test, and then a positive culture is found in the lab. A 3km zone is then triggered from the edge of all the fields of the affected farm – in this case one farm with two premises – and all cattle are tested 3 times at 6 month intervals. If this is clear then the restrictions will be lifted.

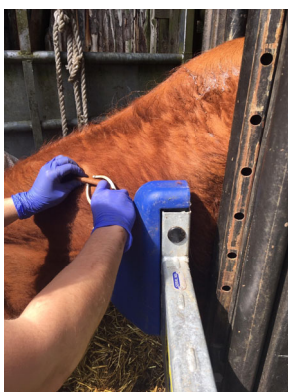
The cow in question was very locally sourced and had no movement since its introduction to the herd more than 10 years ago so it is not known where this specific bacterium has come from yet. This is part of the purpose of the radial zones – an enhanced surveillance measure to check local cattle – which will show if it is in the local wildlife population or crossing fences by cattle to cattle contact. At the time of print there is no evidence of this.

We would however like to stress the importance of sourcing TB free cattle **BEFORE** purchase. Cattle movement is to blame for the outbreaks in Cumbria and Derbyshire – both of which were TB free not so long ago. If cattle must be bought from a HRA (high risk area) then we would suggest asking for a Gamma Interferon test before purchase. If this and the obligatory post movement TB test are clear this can give more (but not definitive) certainty that the animal is TB free.

Buying straw from high risk areas is also a risk. This is relatively safe if picked up straight from the field, but if it has been stored and then badgers allowed to play in it, the TB mycobacterium can stay infectious for 3 months. Bought in slurry is also high risk.

For those clients that are classified as finishing units, we would like to draw your attention to becoming a 'Licensed Finishing Unit'. This essentially means badger proofing your sheds, and those cattle that come into the premises are all destined for slaughter straight into an abattoir. The main benefit is the exemption from post movement TB testing and radial testing.

For more info, please visit [www.tbhub.co.uk](http://www.tbhub.co.uk), speak to your local branch or veterinary surgeon.



Measuring skin thickness as part of TB intradermal test

### **Dates for the Diary!**

We are proud to sponsor and support many events across the county over the summer months, so here are some dates to add to the diary.

**Coquetdale Young Farmers Speed Shear**  
**Friday 2nd August**

**Simonside Country Fair**  
**Sunday 11th August**

**Tour D'Alnorthumbria**  
**August Bank Holiday Weekend**

Not long now until our budding cyclists hit the saddle for their charity bike ride.

We have sponsorship forms in local branch or you can donate online

[www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tourdalnorthumbria](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tourdalnorthumbria) to donate to R.A.B.I.  
[www.goldengiving.com/fundraising/tourdalnorthumbria](http://www.goldengiving.com/fundraising/tourdalnorthumbria) to donate to Street Vet.

**Glendale Show**  
**Monday 26th August**

The show will be held in the Glendale Show ground just off the A697. Alnorthumbria will have a stand with complimentary snacks and drinks, so feel free to pop along for a chat. Good luck to all our clients competing!

**Ingram Show**  
**Saturday 14th September**

**Farmer Meeting – Minerals in Ewes and Red Tractor Medicine Training**  
**Monday 23rd September**

This is our final medicines training meeting, and will also include a talk on achieving good mineral balance in ewes, sponsored by Bimeda. Refreshments will be provided, and the meeting is free of charge to all.

Please RSVP to your local branch if interested



## A French View of Northumberland

By Mathilde Mennetrey 3rd Year Vet Student, University of Lyon

As neighbouring countries, both punctuated by an agriculture industry well-established in their territory, the United Kingdom and France seem to have very different breeding systems.

Firstly, let's set the scene for each animal's production. While France is the EU's biggest cattle herd with 19 million head of cattle, the UK is ranked first in the sheep sector with 23.1 million animals. This can be seen on the diagram opposite: the main difference in distribution of animal production is small ruminants. Thus, sheep production accounts for 9% of British industry with the majority being meat farms, while for France the 3% includes goats, dairy sheep and meat sheep. Thereby, it can be explained why 25% of the mutton consumed in France comes from the UK, and that the British sheep flock is 4 times larger than the French flock.

One of the most significant things for a French person visiting the Northumberland area is surely the presence of all those sheep and sometimes cattle in the hills. Through this stratified breeding system, we can see that there is a desire to strengthen rural development and favour extensive livestock farming ... the integrity of the region is better preserved! In France, although 80 percent of the animals are bred in intensive systems, extensive breeding is still preferred and often comes under "label" conditions. These labels are numerous since there are altogether 65 designations of origin for animal products (45 cheeses, 3 butters, 2 creams and 15 meats and derivative products) - almost all recognised on a European scale.

And where do veterinarians fit into all this? In France, the lack of farm vets is becoming more and more problematic (only 4000 still work in rural areas, out of the 18500 total) pushing French vet schools to increase the number of places available. In the UK, the veterinary network in rural areas seems more proportional, with a ratio of farms to veterinarians of 4 (against 9 for France) according to national statistics.

Regarding risks and health regulations, the two neighbouring countries are still tied together by similar laws, mostly for the risks of BSE, foot-and-mouth disease, tuberculosis or brucellosis, although this will surely change in the next few months.

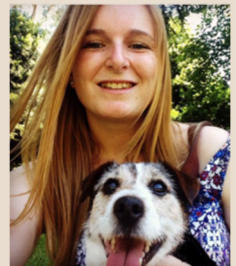
| FRANCE                       |     | U.K                          |     |
|------------------------------|-----|------------------------------|-----|
| MILK (AND 36% MILK PRODUCTS) |     | MILK (AND 33% MILK PRODUCTS) |     |
| CATTLE AND VEAL              | 28% | CATTLE AND VEAL              | 23% |
| POULTRY                      | 14% | POULTRY                      | 19% |
| PIGS                         | 13% | PIGS                         | 10% |
| EGGS                         | 4%  | SHEEP                        | 9%  |
| SHEEP/GOATS                  | 3%  | EGGS                         | 4%  |
| OTHERS                       | 3%  | OTHERS                       | 2%  |

## Introducing...

At Alnorthumbria, we have a strong tradition of taking on young vets, and instilling a strong work ethos, and this year is no exception – we have welcomed two new graduates into our farm animal team. Here is a bit more about them:

### Daisy

"Hi I'm Daisy, I am originally from Bath and decided to become a vet after spending a lot of my childhood on a small holding in West Cornwall where I discovered my love for all animals great and small. In my spare time, I enjoy playing netball, horse riding, and long walks. I have been getting to know Northumberland after lambing here for the past 5 years and am looking forward to exploring new places on my days off. I will be working as a mixed vet at Alnorthumbria and I am looking forward to meeting you all out and about on farm!"



### Jonny

"Hi, my name is Jonny and I will be working at Alnorthumbria as a mixed vet. I am originally from Jarrow but spent a lot of my teenage years working on a hill farm near Hexham which was part of the motivation for me to become a vet. I have particular interests in surgery and reproductive health in cattle and sheep. Outside of work I enjoy running, tinkering with anything mechanical, drinking coffee and clay pigeon shooting (although slightly out of practice currently!) I look forward to meeting you very soon either out on farm visits or in the practice."

## Don't Forget to Use!

- **Cevac Chlamydia** and **Toxovax** in sheep, for prevention and control of abortion.  
We would ask that you get your orders in ASAP, as there may be supply issues this year.
- **Clík, Clík Extra** or **Clíkzin** in sheep, to prevent blowfly strike.
- **Swish** in cattle, to reduce fly worry, summer mastitis and other fly related problems.
- **Huskvac** in cattle for lungworm control.