

Liver fluke update

So far this autumn we have examined a lot of sheep and not seen any evidence of recently acquired liver fluke infection in sheep coming through the postmortem rooms at Dumfries and Glasgow.

- During September and October 57 ovine submissions comprising 361 individual blood samples were tested with the Fasciola hepatica antibody ELISA. Only seven samples (1.9%) spread across five submissions gave positive results.
- Overall, this suggests low liver fluke challenge so far this autumn on these farms.
- Antibodies to F. hepatica become detectable 2 to 4 weeks post infection. Due to antibody persistence the test is best targeted to animals in their first grazing season as these can be used as sentinels for recent infection.
- If temperatures remain above 10°C fluke risk may increase later on in the season.
- We would always emphasise that fluke risk needs to be considered on a farm and even field specific basis.

If you wish further detail Heather Stevenson has recorded an **On the Hoof Podcast** on the Autumn 2023 liver fluke risk. Please subscribe to our On the Hoof Podcasts available through any podcast feed and specifically available at the link below.

<https://player.captivate.fm/episode/bdb6c48b-e642-4863-94d5-01b8af167733>

The COWS and SCOPS groups have also recently release further information on the current liver fluke season available at the link below:

<https://www.cattleparasites.org.uk/cows-scops-say-testing-before-treating-for-liver-fluke-advisable-after-weird-weather-this-year/>

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