



Bite-size local updates from SRUC Veterinary Services

Rickets in hogs

Dumfries confirmed a case of rickets in the postmortem room last week. It is worth keeping an eye out for this condition over the next few months. Rickets is most commonly diagnosed in hill lambs (often Scottish blackface) away-wintered on good dairy grazing. However last week's case was a white faced hogg on its holding of birth. The group had been grazing a reseed for the previous 6 weeks. Improved nutrition in poorly grown lambs triggers fast growth at a time when cutaneous production of Vitamin D from sunlight is lacking, and animals are reliant on dietary Vitamin D. Vitamin D deficiency results in impaired calcification of new bone and widening of growth plates. Affected hoggs appear stiff and reluctant to move, with recumbency in some cases. Carpal valgus may be seen. In groups of away wintered hoggs the problem may not be recognised until they return home. Treatment is by supplementation of vitamin D via injection or concentrate feeding. Flocks that have had issues in the past generally supplement hoggs with vitamin D before they go to wintering.

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