



Practical information on Iceberg diseases

Need/issue: Poor body condition (ewe & replacement).

Aim: To identify OPA, MV or Johnes disease in a flock and put measures in place to reduce impact.

How to implement:

- Investigate ill thriven ewes where there is no alternative explanation for weight loss.
- Testing can include postmortem examination of typical cases and this may be most cost-effective way of reaching a diagnosis. Blood/faecal samples can be collected.
- Learn to recognise how these diseases may present in a flock.
- Don't retain breeding replacements from known positive ewes.
- Put steps in place to minimise disease challenge and spread e.g. reducing stock density, minimising periods of housing or trough feeding.



Description:

This solution presents a series of factsheets and practical videos on how to identify OPA, MV or Johnes disease in a flock and put measures in place to reduce their impact.

How these diseases may present in a flock:

- Johnes- ewe that remains bright with a good appetite but loses weight.
- OPA- evidence of respiratory disease that fails to respond to treatment but can also present as ill thrift or sudden deaths.
- MV- presentation can be very variable and include increased incidence of pneumonia, ill thrift.



Expected benefits:

- Reducing the prevalence of disease will improve flock productivity, ewe welfare and longevity. Replacement breeding stock will be healthier.
- Eradication of disease may be possible.

Prerequisites and/or limits:

- Measures to limit/reduce disease spread may not always be practical.
- Animals vaccinated against Johnes disease will be antibody positive in a blood test.
- Lack of a diagnostic blood test for OPA.
- Much of the research into Johnes disease has been done in Australia.

Country: UK

Dairy or/and meat sheep: Meat and Dairy

Category of Animal (ewe, replacement, lamb):

Ewes

Topic:

- Health
- Nutrition
- Management

Level of solution:

- Knowledge
- Practical

Source of information:

- <https://www.fas.scot/livestock/sheep/sheep-health/iceberg-diseases-in-sheep/>
- AHDB manual
- NADIS website